

CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Asia is known to be the region most affected by disasters, experiencing 90% of the world's weather-related deaths since 1990. Rapid urbanization has left more than 70% of the urban population in Asia and Small Island Developing States in the Pacific (SIDS) located in areas prone to flooding. This has contributed to the region's vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters which will be further exacerbated by climate change. It is in particular the urban poor who live in hazardous areas, with the most vulnerable being women, children and the elderly.

KEY ACTIVITIES

In September 2008, Sorsogon City in the Philippines joined the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) as the first Asian City. A comprehensive and participatory adaptation assessment was conducted by the city identifying vulnerable locations, populations and sectors. In a series of fora, including several city-wide consultations, climate change adaptation and mitigation options were agreed upon and prioritized based on the needs of the citizens. Sorsogon commenced several initiatives addressing climate change including a livelihoods strengthening strategy for the most vulnerable groups, shelter retro-fitting in accordance with revised building codes, energy saving measures and is strengthening its disaster preparedness plans. The city is also redrafting a shelter plan and is revisiting its land-use and comprehensive development plans. CCCI has contributed to the Climate Change Act of the Philippines (2009). The Act stresses the importance of a multi-sectoral response to climate change and clearly spells out the role of local governments. Meanwhile, a vulnerability assessment tool has been developed to communicate the lessons learned in the Philippines. The tool has been shared with the Local Government Academy of the Philippines which will integrate it in its curriculum for training local governments in the development of climate change action plans.

In March 2010, cities in Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu commenced vulnerability and greenhouse gas audits to provide sound evidence for their climate change responses. In Viet Nam and China national stakeholders have joined CCCI to sensitize mayors, architects and planners on climate change issues. Discussions are advanced on including Kathmandu in the initiative, focusing in particular on the impacts of Climate Change on Water availability.

In support of city-level activities, workshops with universities in the region were held to strengthen urban planning curricula as well as mid-career training courses.



Ulaanbaatar ©UN-HABITAT/Bharat Dahiya



CCCI Activities have commenced in 11 countries in the Asian and Pacific Region ©UN-HABITAT

Participating Cities

Sorsogon City, Republic of the Philippines	Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment and Greenhouse Gas Audit completed. Key adaptation actions identified and implementation commenced. Revision of Land-Use Plan and Development plan ongoing. Strong engagement with national stakeholders. Replication in other cities planned.
Batticaloa and Negombo, Sri Lanka	Initial comprehensive Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessments completed in both cities. National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway. National Climate Change Policy to include urban issues.
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea	Vulnerability Assessment ongoing, Greenhouse Gas Assessment commenced. National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway.
Port Vila, Vanuatu	Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessments ongoing and National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway.
Apia, Western Samoa	Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessments ongoing and National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway.
Lami, Fiji	Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessments ongoing and National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway.
Pekalongan City, Indonesia	Vulnerability Assessment completed, Action Planning commenced.
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessments ongoing and National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway.
Kathmandu, Nepal	Urban Vulnerability Assessment planned with particular emphasis on water security and hydrological systems.
China	Translation of the Vulnerability and Greenhouse Gas Assessment tools and roll-out through interested cities (to be selected).
Viet Nam	National Study on Cities and Climate Change underway, supported by a comparative analysis of city-level Vulnerability Assessments to strengthen the Sorsogon-developed tool.



Sorsogon City ©UN-HABITAT/Bernhard Barth

A regional training of local government trainers was also held in preparation for further replication in the region.

REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

The CCCI regional strategy aims to have 300 cities in Asia and the Pacific with enhanced climate change plans to increase resilience and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2015. This objective is to be achieved in partnership with other support programmes such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the Rockefeller Foundation, bilateral development partners, sister UN agencies, NGOs and academic institutions. The strategy has a three pronged approach:

1. Support city level Climate Change adaptation and mitigation action with support for revised urban plans.

2. Support a national climate change and urban policy review in order to strengthen the national response to the urban dimension of climate change.

3. Support the setting up of Asia-Pacific-wide advocacy, knowledge management and capacity-development institutions which will support cities in their efforts to address climate change.

It is planned that the number of cities supported will grow in phases upto 2015. In addition, national legislative reform processes will be supported from 2011. At the regional level, advocacy, knowledge management, capacity building and technical assistance will be provided together in collaboration with regional partners. Fundraising for the strategy is currently under way.

UN-HABITAT'S CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

UN-HABITAT launched the Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net), an innovative network of global partners, promoting inter-disciplinary approaches to sustainable urban development.

The Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) is the flagship programme of SUD-Net. The initiative aims to strengthen the climate change response of cities and local governments. Cities are key drivers of climate change due to their high energy consumption, land use, waste generation and other activities that result in the release of the vast majority of greenhouse gases. At the same time, it is cities, and in particular the urban poor, in the developing world, that are most vulnerable to and have the least resilience against, for example, storms, floods, and droughts. Cities need to respond to Climate Change by cutting their greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation). The negative impact of climate change seems however unavoidable and for most cities in developing countries adaptation to the risks is a must.

The Cities and Climate Change Initiative brings together local and national governments, academia, NGOs and

international organizations with the aim to alert cities to the action they can take and by strengthening capacities of cities and their partners to respond to Climate Change. The key components of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative are:

- to promote active climate change collaboration between local governments and their associations;
- to enhance policy dialogue so that climate change is firmly established on the agenda;
- to support local governments in developing climate change action plans;
- to foster awareness, education, and capacity-building strategies that support the implementation of climate change strategies.

The following cities are currently participating in CCCI. In Africa - Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso; Kampala, Uganda; Kigali, Rwanda; Mombasa, Kenya; Maputo, Mozambique; Saint Louis, Senegal and Walvis Bay, Namibia. In Asia and the Pacific – Apia, Samoa; Batticaloa and Negombo, Sri Lanka; Kathmandu, Nepal; Lami, Fiji; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Port Vila, Vanuatu; Pekalongan City, Indonesia; Sorsogon City, Philippines; Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. In Latin America – Esmeraldas, Ecuador.



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Informal settlement in Mangrove adjacent to Lami Industrial Area ©Scope Pacific