



International
Science Council



OUTLINE

The 15th Annual Session of Global Forum on Human Settlements

&

Sustainable Cities And Human Settlements

Awards Ceremony

(GFHS 2020)

Theme:

Post-Pandemic Recovery and Transformation:

Resilient Cities, Healthy Planet

Date: October 15 - 16, 2020

Online Forum + Webcast

I. Introduction

COVID-19 that is continuing to cause human tragedy, social upheaval and economic turmoil across the globe can be considered as a once-in-a-century ecological security crisis that creates an urgent need for an in-depth reflection on the relationship between human beings and nature. But striking a balance between the two will not be possible unless the root causes - rampant destruction of nature, increasing resources depletion, sprawling cities and human settlements, unabated greenhouse gases emissions, unsustainable consumption and production patterns – are rapidly halted.

United Nations Secretary General António Guterres emphasized in the latest *UN Policy Brief: COVID-19 in an Urban World*: “**Now** is the time to rethink and reshape the urban world. **Now** is the moment to adapt to the reality of this and future pandemics. **Now** is our chance to recover better, by building more resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities.”

The international community therefore must heed to the unprecedented wake-up call that COVID-19 has offered to take decisive action to halt destruction of nature and tackle the imminent threats that undermine the health of ecosystems and disrupt the global climate, through combining the post-pandemic recovery of people’s well-being and an aggressive transformation towards sustainability. Thus we shall be able to achieve our vision of a healthy planet upon which all life depends to survive and thrive.

The year 2020 has led the world into a decade of action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the UN calls for a networked and inclusive multilateralism which will not only allow the outpouring of global solidarity to combat Covid-19 crisis, but help overcome the challenges of our current era. 2020 also marks the 15th anniversary of Global Forum on Human Settlements which has been dedicating to make sustainable cities and human settlements for all.

With the COVID-19 being projected to become a “new normal”, human society will be reshaped. Cities remain as the key battleground to strive for economic growth and sustainable development. But on the pathways towards the future, the first and foremost agenda is to ensure that cities are safer, securer and healthier, that cities become increasingly resilient to pandemic, climate, and various ecological crises, and that cities are closely linked to rural areas and nature to enable interactions in a positive and synergistic way. In the process, Resilient Cities need to be put in a better position to protect and enhance people's lives, secure development gains, foster an investible environment, and drive positive change. Only by maintaining ecological integrity and reinforcing urban resilience can we foresee a future that is safe, inclusive, prosperous,

and sustainable.

Against this background, the 15th Annual Session of Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS 2020) will be organized in a virtual format as an observance of Urban October on **October 15-16, 2020**, with the theme being **“Post-Pandemic Recovery and Transformation: Resilient Cities, Healthy Planet”**. The Sustainable Cities And Human Settlements Awards Ceremony 2020 will fall on the afternoon of October 16 (Central European Time).

Dignitaries from numerous countries, senior officials from UN and concerned international organizations, mayors of leading cities, leaders of multinational enterprises, and well-known experts and scholars will join the online thematic discussions. In the meantime, webcasting will be available to foster interactive dialogues with all stakeholders across the globe, and is expected to reach out to a much larger number of interested persons.

II. Institutional Framework

Co-organizers:

Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

International Science Council (ISC)

In Collaboration With

United Nations Economic and Social Commission in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)

United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)

UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI)

World Urban Campaign (WUC)

Global One Belt One Road Association (GOBA)

Global Blockchain Alliance (GBA)

Quality of Life and Environment Foundation (QLEF)

China Research Society of Urban Development (CRSUD)

International Ocean Institute (IOI)

World Ocean Council (WOC)

Universal Peace Federation (UPF)

World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO)

Live Streaming Media Partners



III. Objectives

1. **Draw lessons and accelerate transformation in recovery:** the forum will call on the global community to draw lessons from the current pandemic crisis to make the much-needed transformation which is essential to eradicate poverty, protect the planet, and ensure health and prosperity for all.
2. **Promote biodiversity conservation:** the forum aims to provide a valuable global platform for high-level dialogue and sharing of innovative approaches, strategies, technologies and successful local experiences, to promote the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity, advocate nature-based solutions and resource recovery, facilitate harmony between built environment and nature, and guarantee ecological security.
3. **Strengthen urban safety and resilience:** the forum seeks to offer practical solutions to how cities should be planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed so as to support a stronger and greener recovery, building up cities' adaptive capacity against all shocks and stresses, and enhance safety, resilience and sustainability in diverse urban systems.
4. **Foster partnership towards SDGs:** the forum is designed to strengthen capacity building, cultivate new type partnerships, foster urban innovation, accelerate effective actions, and to drive progress towards achieving the Sustainable

Development Goals and a better future.

IV. Content

The online forum will include an opening address, keynote speech, high-level dialogue, thematic sessions, recommendations and summaries. Simultaneous interpretation between English and Chinese will be provided throughout the online conference.

V. Scope and Key Issues

1. Preserving and sustainably managing biodiversity and guaranteeing ecological security
2. Integrated climate, hydrology and environment services for sustainable cities
3. Building urban resilience to climate change
4. Financing for resilient urban infrastructure
5. Smart, sustainable cities and communities
6. International Green Model City Initiative: inclusive, resilient, and smart cities
7. Strategies for fighting epidemics: adaptable buildings and resilient cities
8. Post-crisis healthy and anti-fragile cities
9. Blue economy and healthy ocean
10. Blockchain technology and smart urban governance
11. Energy-efficient and sustainable housing
12. Pursuing a resilient, inclusive, gender-equal and green economic recovery

VI. Programme Schedule

Day 1: 15 October 2020, Thursday

Time (CET)	Main Activity	Leading Organization
08:30–09:30	Opening Session	GFHS
	◆ Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Chairman of GFHS, Former UN Under-Secretary-General and High	

	<p>Representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Prof. Petteri Taalas, Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization ◆ Malcolm Johnson, Deputy Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union ◆ Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, former UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ◆ Dr. Bambang Susantono, Vice President for Knowledge Management & Sustainable Development, Asian Development Bank 	
09:35–11:05	<p>Keynote Speech preserving and sustainably managing biodiversity and guaranteeing ecological security</p>	<p>GFHS IUCN</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ ZHANG Xinsheng, President, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (tbc) ◆ Marco Lambertini, Director General, WWF International ◆ Chen Jiakuan, Distinguished Professor of Fudan University, Member of China National Committee for International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS), Director of Shanghai Ecological Conservation Redline Expert Committee ◆ Prof. Dr. Josef Settele, Research Scientist, Department of Community Ecology Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ 	
11:10–12:40	<p>High-level Dialogue building urban resilience to climate change</p>	<p>ESCAP</p>
13:30–15:00	<p>Thematic Forum 1A: using international standards to build smart sustainable cities and tackle climate change</p>	<p>ITU</p>
	<p>Thematic Forum 1B: blue economy and healthy ocean</p>	<p>IOI UNCTAD WOC UNEP-FI</p>
15:05–16:35	<p>Thematic Forum 2A: financing for resilient urban infrastructure</p>	<p>UNEP-FI</p>

	Thematic Forum 2B: energy-efficient and sustainable housing	ECE
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Day 2: 16 October 2020, Friday

Time (CET)	Main Activity	Leading Organization
08:30 – 10:00	Thematic Forum 3A: integrated climate, hydrology and environment services for sustainable cities	WMO
	Thematic Forum 3B: International Green Model City Initiative: inclusive, resilient, and smart cities	GFHS
10:05 – 11:35	Thematic Forum 4A: blockchain technology and smart urban governance	GOBA
	Thematic Forum 4B: pursuing a resilient, inclusive, gender-equal and green economic recovery	ADB
11:40 – 13:10	Thematic Forum 5A: will healthy and anti-fragile cities emerge from the crisis	ISC
	Thematic Forum 5B: strategies for fighting epidemics: adaptable buildings and resilient cities	GFHS
13:15 – 14:25	Summary and Recommendation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity ♦ Satya Tripathi, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Head of New York Office, UN Environment Programme 	
15:00 – 16:00	Sustainable Cities And Human Settlements Awards Ceremony 2020	GFHS

VII. Contact

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