

FINAL STATEMENT - Sustainable Cities and Human settlements (Focus Area 10)

Supporters: Local Authorities Major Group, Women's Major Group, NGO Major Group, Indigenous Peoples Major Group, Stakeholder Group on Ageing, Sustainable Transportation Thematic Cluster/Partnership for Sustainable Low Carbon Transport, Psychology Coalition at the United Nations, International Association of Applied Psychology, Global Ecovillage Network, Earth Condominium and Quercus.

Focus Area 10: Sustainable Cities and Human settlements

Thank you, co-chairs. First of all, we appreciate the recognition of Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements in its own Focus Area.

We want to emphasize the potential of a stand-alone goal on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements considering the relevance that cities and other territories have for poverty eradication, sustainable infrastructure development, climate change, gender equality and land planning, as well as in the provision of and access to services in multiple areas such as mobility, health, education, and project development.

An urban approach is not only about cities – it calls for a wider concept of public governance. Therefore we want to emphasize the importance of an integrated territorial approach, of local and subnational government cooperation, and the development of peer to peer exchanges among all levels of government.

And, it is critical that any approach to sustainable cities and human settlements intentionally makes rural-urban link and emphasizes participation of the most marginalized.

These overarching ideas and principles are reflected in our suggested edits to the targets in the co-chairs Working Document.

First, we suggest an additional word in the goal: Build inclusive, safe, **prosperous** and sustainable cities and human settlements.

We recommend changes to the targets in this focus area as follows, all are 2030 targets except where indicated:

(a) **Eradicate slum conditions everywhere by improving living conditions of slum dwellers** and ensure universal access to affordable, **equitable, and sustainable land**, housing and basic services for all urban dwellers.

(b) Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport for all **in urban and peri-urban areas and to primary rural communities**, and improve road safety, **mobility** and urban air quality, **leading to improved health and reducing the contribution of transport to climate change**.

combine (d) with (e) Reduce the ecological footprint of **human settlements** by x and increase by x the number of **human settlements** adopting and implementing policies and plans towards resilience and adaptation to climate change and natural disasters.

combine (f) with (g) **By 2020**, ensure that all cities are accessible and offer opportunities to **older persons and those** with disabilities, and enhance social cohesion and personal security and universal access to inclusive, **green** and safe public spaces.

(h) Protect and safeguard the world's cultural and national heritage, **including ancient archaeological sites, intangible and underwater heritage, museum collections, oral traditions and other forms of heritage, with particular focus on areas of spiritual or religious significance, creating inclusive societies that respect and promote diversity and urban regeneration.**

We also noted some gaps in the targets - related to equality, rights, finance, governance and accountability, and thus propose the following targets reflecting those priorities:

- Governments at national, subnational and local level have planning and budgeting that is sustainable, inclusive, participatory, sectorally and vertically integrated, gender-responsive, age-friendly and transformative.
- Increase and ensure investment in and public financing for low-carbon urban development, shifting from unsustainable investments, such as in fossil fuels and polluting industries.
- Ensure the decentralization of decision making related to urban development is coupled with decentralization of resources and develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels of governments.
- Provide equal access to independent and responsive justice systems including related to property and tenure rights, people's territorial rights, employment, business, taxation, trade and finance.
- Foster the development of an integrated multi-sectoral community-based approach to sustainable rural communities, towns and villages and in impoverished urban neighborhoods, to ensure that all people's basic human needs are met.
- Eliminate gender-based violence and all types of discrimination in any type of human settlement.
- Strengthen positive economic and social links between cities, peri urban, and rural areas creating possibilities for decent work.

In conclusion:

Good governance; effective institutions; and participatory planning and decision-making are both causes and effects of integrated urban and regional policies that address all focus areas and all dimensions of sustainable development.

Finally, we urge you to maintain an open and transparent process for the final stages, to guarantee the full participation of all major groups and civil society stakeholders. The world is at stake and we need the reflection of multiple stakeholders in the agenda setting to save it. The MDGs lacked this legitimacy. Let us not make the same mistake.

END of Statement#