UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Progress by innovation

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

BRIDGE FOR CITIES

ACCELERATING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH URBAN INNOVATION

4 - 5 September 2023
Vienna International Centre
Vienna, Austria

Concept Note

www.bridgeforcities.org

Partners

City of Vienna

AIG

CHATHAM HOUSE

UN-HABITAT

UNIVERSITY of STRATHCLYDE INSTITUTE FOR FUTURE CITIES

Background

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges that humanity faces today. Its effects are already being felt worldwide, from rising temperatures and sea levels to extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods. These changes are causing significant impacts on people's lives, livelihoods, and the environment.

Urban areas are at the forefront of the fight against climate change. With around 55% of the world's population living in urban areas and this figure projected to rise to 68% by 2050, cities are responsible for around 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, cities are also **driving innovation** and collaboration for climate action.

Cities have a unique opportunity to promote **sustainable development** and combat climate change. Urban innovation can accelerate the transition to low-carbon, resilient, and livable cities. By promoting circular economy principles, adopting smart technologies, increasing energy efficiency, and switching to renewable energy, urban areas can reduce their environmental footprint and become more sustainable and resilient.

Urban innovation can also help cities adapt to the impacts of climate change. Cities can implement nature-based solutions, such as green roofs, green walls, and urban forests, to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality. Innovative transport solutions, such as bike-sharing schemes and electric vehicles, are already reducing emissions and improving urban mobility in cities. By adopting these innovations, the quality of life in cities can improve, while contributing to the fight against climate change.

Focus

The 2023 edition of Bridge for Cities on "Accelerating Climate Action through Urban Innovation" seeks to bring together urban stakeholders from cities along the Belt and Road and beyond to discuss the latest urban development solutions and explore how urban innovation can drive climate action and create more sustainable, resilient, and livable cities.

The event will showcase examples of **climate action** and urban innovations in the area of circular economy, energy, and technology

It will highlight the critical role of **partnerships** between cities and other urban stakeholders, inc. business sector, international organizations, financial institutions, think tanks and academia, to address the urban challenges

The event will put a special emphasis on **financing** urban transformation and climate action, through innovative approaches and collaboration with financial institutions and climate funds

By fostering collaboration and **innovation**, the event aims to contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future for cities and the planet

UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Progress by innovation

Agenda

Through its many activities, including the high-level opening ceremony, mayors dialogues, exhibition, city matchmaking sessions and cultural performances, the event provides ample opportunities for participants to forge partnerships and exchange knowledge.

4 - 5 September 2023

Vienna International Centre

Central European Summer Time (CEST)

4 September

10:00 – 11:00	**Opening Ceremony**
11:00 – 12:15	**From Urban Heat to Cool 15-Minute Havens: Advancing Climate Action in Cities** ***A Fireside Chat with Eleni Myrivili and Carlos Moreno***
12:15 – 14:00	**Lunch break**
14:00 – 15:20	**Mayors Dialogue 1** **Accelerating industry decarbonization for inclusive and sustainable cities** *(see Annex 1 for Concept Note)*
15:20 – 15:40	**Break**
15:40 – 17:00	**Mayors Dialogue 2** **Advancing innovation and partnerships for a net zero transport** *(see Annex 2 for Concept Note)*
18:00 onwards	**Reception hosted by the City of Vienna (by invitation only)**

5 September

09:45 – 10:45	**Mayors Panel: Climate initiatives driving positive social and economic transformation**
10:45 – 11:00	**Break**
11:00 - 12:15	**Deep Dive Session: Sharing solutions to common urban challenges**
12:15 – 14:00	**Lunch break**
14:00 – 16:00	**Roundtable: Financing urban transformation and climate action**
16:30 onwards	**Reception at VIC Restaurant (by invitation only)**

UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Progress by innovation

Annex 1

Mayors Dialogue 1

Accelerating industry decarbonization for inclusive and sustainable cities

Sustainable and inclusive industrialization of cities provides opportunities for developing synergies, such as decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, while at the same time creating employment and fostering clean energy innovation. Cities benefit from the role of industries in local economic development through job creation and income generation. In industry also lie critical solutions towards limiting the carbon intensity of growth through effective clean energy technologies and other sustainability initiatives. Although the industry is a key engine of economic growth, the industry sector has been overlooked in sustainable cities as it consumes a large amount of energy and contributes to global greenhouse gas emissions.

Reaching net-zero CO2 emissions will not only require the development of innovative low-carbon technologies but also need to rethink product development from resource and material efficiency dimension, looping in a circularity approach, and reducing the overall carbon footprint. Urban-industrial symbiosis presents an opportunity to realign how cities and industries interact and creates a market for low-carbon industrial products especially through the exchange of waste and byproduct resources and materials from cities that are required by the industries in their production process. Likewise, cities offer great avenues to create a market demand, considering the huge infrastructure development projects foreseen by the governments and the public entities leveraging their large-scale purchasing power for opting low-carbon industrial products for retrofitting existing and new infrastructure development projects.

To explore this opportunity, session 1 of Mayors Dialogue focuses on “Accelerating industry decarbonization for inclusive and sustainable cities”. Mayors from around the world will gather to discuss their cities' innovative projects and concrete measures in the areas of urban-industrial symbiosis, improved industrial production practices through innovative technologies and renewable energy solutions.

Session 1 of Mayors Dialogue will also explore commitments to be made by government to develop procurement policies in favor of green and low-carbon industrial products for their infrastructure development projects. Discussion on successful partnerships between cities and other stakeholders that will advance greater knowledge sharing, mobilization of resources, and faster implementation of measures.

Finally, the discussions will focus on approaches, policies and technologies for hard to abate sectors and financial mechanisms to encourage and facilitate the much-needed transition and paradigm shift towards a low carbon cities and inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Key Questions:

1. Which partnerships and good practices exist on collaboration of local municipal government and industries for industrial decarbonization? How can we effectively engage and exchange the by products and waste materials for demonstrating circularity of material and better utilization of natural resources?
2. What are the challenges and needs of cities in the deployment of low-carbon innovations at commercial scale, including in hard to abate industries, to remain in line with net-zero targets?
3. What are the factors, apart from demand, are influencing the promotion a favourable business case and investment environment in key circular and low-carbon breakthrough technologies?
4. How to incentivise private sector to invest into technology innovation that would support decarbonising the industries? What are main gaps constraining investments in new technologies?
5. How local municipal government can prioritize the procurement of low-carbon products for their city development projects, and how governments and industry can work together effectively to develop a new value chain and market?

Annex 2

Mayors Dialogue 2
Advancing innovation and partnerships for a net zero transport

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity today, and cities are on the front lines of the fight against it. With over half of the world's population living in urban areas, cities are responsible for a significant portion of global greenhouse gas emissions. Urban transport is a major contributor to these emissions. According to the International Energy Agency, the transport sector accounts for around one-quarter of global CO2 emissions from energy use, and around 40% of these emissions come from the transport sector in cities.

However, cities also possess a unique opportunity to combat climate change through urban innovation and sustainable transportation. Adoption of green technologies such as electric vehicles and the expansion of public transportation systems that run on renewable energy sources such as biofuels or green hydrogen, are a few examples of initiatives being undertaken by cities. Encouraging active transport modes such as walking and cycling, promoting land use patterns that reduce the need for long commutes, and implementing innovative financing models are equally important to reducing emissions from urban transport.

To explore this opportunity, session 2 of Mayors Dialogue focuses on advancing innovation and partnerships for a net zero transport. Mayors from around the world will gather to discuss their cities' innovative projects and concrete actions in the areas of clean transport technologies and renewable energy solutions.

Session 2 of Mayors Dialogue will also explore examples of successful partnerships between cities and other stakeholders with an aim to advance greater knowledge sharing, mobilization of resources, and faster implementation of sustainable solutions.

Finally, the session will also explore how cities can ensure that clean transport solutions are accessible and affordable to all residents, including those in low-income areas. By measuring and tracking progress in reducing emissions from transport and leveraging innovative technologies and financing mechanisms, cities can create a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

Key Questions:

1. How is technical innovation, such as electric vehicles, intelligent transport systems and smart grids, contributing to achieving climate goals in cities, and what is the potential of alternative fuels like biofuels and non-polluting energy sources, notably hydrogen, towards a more sustainable mobility?
2. How can cities measure and track progress in reducing emissions from transport, and what tools and technologies are available to support this effort?
3. How can partnerships between cities and other stakeholders help ensure that clean transport solutions are accessible and affordable to all residents, including those in low-income areas?
4. What are some innovative financing mechanisms that can be used to support the deployment of clean transport solutions in urban areas?