



Future of Cities **Daily**

6 October News and highlights from the ICLEI world congress
5-7 October 2010 in Incheon, Korea

Why is the future of cities congress going meat-free on 6 October?

Some of the choices we make about what we eat are taking a big bite out of the planet's resources. It's time to start thinking about the big picture. With this in mind, the Future of Cities congress' catering will be strictly vegetarian on 6 October.

Non-vegetarian diets consume 2.9 more water, 2.5 times more energy, 13 times more fertilizer and 1.4 times more pesticides than a vegetarian diet. Water consumption is the biggest culprit and accounts for 45 percent of the overall environmental impact of non-vegetarian diets.

Here are two examples of how non-vegetarian diets are consuming the planet:

- The global dairy sector, including milk and meat production, was responsible for four percent (1,969 million tonnes CO₂) of the world's entire greenhouse gas emissions in 2007.
- The fishing industry also poses threats to the environment by way of its effect on marine ecosystems; overfishing is exhausting fish stocks while bycatching – the unintentional capture of marine life – is threatening species and resulting in millions of tons of waste.

As populations grow and people become wealthier, the world's demand for meat, milk and eggs will continue to expand: In fact, demand is expected to double levels recorded in 2000 by the year 2050. There is value in reducing the amount of meat, dairy and seafood products we eat even if becoming a full vegetarian seems too drastic.

Read more about greening events at. <http://incheon2010.iclei.org/greening>

What do you mean by...? - congress themes in focus

- Eco-efficiency - Eco-efficiency: More with less
<http://incheon2010.iclei.org/future-of-cities/eco-efficiency>
- Resilience - Eco-efficiency: More with less
<http://incheon2010.iclei.org/future-of-cities/resilience>
- Green Economy - Green Economy: Prosperity through change
<http://incheon2010.iclei.org/future-of-cities/green-economy>
- Happiness - Happiness: Well-being as wealth
<http://incheon2010.iclei.org/future-of-cities/happiness>

Today's parallel sessions explored sustainability through the lens of the Future of Cities key themes. Here's a look at what was debated, discovered and shared.

A constitution built on happiness

People's happiness has traditionally been tied to the gross domestic product (GDP), or material wealth, of states. In Bhutan, the GDP model of development just doesn't fit. "Over production and over-consumption is at the root of climate change," said Dorji Wangdi, Minister for Labour and Human Resources, Royal Government of Bhutan.

Gross Domestic Happiness (GNH) is enshrined in Bhutan's constitution, unveiled in July 2008. "The ultimate purpose of development is to bring GNH to people," says Wangdi. The four pillars of GNH – equitable development, promotion of culture, preservation of the natural environment and the promise of good governance – influence all policies in Bhutan.

Eco-friendly building materials have a 15 percent tax break, and there is also a 100 percent tax on junk food - "we have no chewing gum, no Fanta, no Kentucky (Fried Chicken)", Wangdi says.

Read more at www.grossnationalhappiness.com

Economy and ecology

Eco-efficiency combines economy and ecology. The planet has a limit to how much human life and associated consumption it can accommodate. This is 'carrying capacity'; a negotiation between human consumption and the rate of ecological regeneration.

A message that stood out at the congress today was: While we understand eco-efficiency in theory, it is not reinforced in practice. Society's choices are governed by market efficiency, not eco-efficiency. The challenge is to think differently. The city of Changwon, South Korea, has a public bicycle system whose popularity has taken off; pollution is down, there are fewer cars on the road, the local bike manufacturing industry has created jobs and people are pedaling toward better health.

Have a look at the ICLEI [case study](http://www.iclei.org/casestudies) about Changwon. www.iclei.org/casestudies

Resilience is key for urban environments

„Adaptation is a function of resilience. Why is it so important? Because. its about what communities can do for themselves,“ said Andreas Rechkemmer, Chief Senior Science and Policy Advisor, Global Risk Forum.

Disasters, he said, are a problem for the poor and marginalized, which is why finding resources for reconstruction is such a challenge. This constitutes a climate justice problem where there is significant disparity between the Global North and the Global South.

In the congress discussion it became clear again that to be sustainable, a community must improve its level of resilience in proportion to its vulnerabilities and the threats it faces. The effects of climate change are already posing a greater number of risks – many of which are unpredictable and all of which are sure to exploit the weakest points of an urban environment.

The global resilience community will met again at ICLEI's Resilient Cities 2011. Read about the 2010 congress at <http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2010>

Buying in to a green economy

What stands in the way of green public spending or 'ecoprocurement'? Wolfgang Teubner, Managing Director of the ICLEI Europe Office, says local officials often miss the significance of life cycle value of green products and instinctively reach for cheaper options.

In discussions at the congress, one aspect of green economics became very clear: there are several other factors undermining the success of ecobuying. Factors include a lack of political support, the popular view that green buying is costly, a lack of expertise in developing sustainability criteria, as well as lack of training, practical tools and information.

ICLEI's EcoProcura program offers a free life cycle costing and CO2 emission calculator at: www.smart-spp.eu

A planet of cities?

- arirang TV debate at the ICLEI world congress

Some megacities have a larger populations than many of the small UN member states. Are we heading for an 'urban world'? What will be the future role of cities in global governance? Who drives cities, their infrastructure and their business activity? Are cities developing a credible voice in the global world?

The debate will be broadcast by arirang TV on the following days and time

- **10 October 2010 at 12pm GMT/UTC**
- **11 October 2010 at 12am GMT/UTC**
- **11 October 2010 at 6 am GMT/UTC**

Here is what you can expect to hear!

“We traditionally think of cities as defined contained territories. They may have a government which defines who they are, but through the very process of urbanization, the planet is connected together.”

Jeb Brugmann, Founder of ICLEI

“Because of globalization, “we have people who invest in acquiring residences as a form of investing and then making a sale at a later date. That begins to distort the feeling of cities. Its hard to have a neighborhood when people who live there, don’t really live there. Our cities have become like a stock market or investment place.’ ”

David Cadman, ICLEI President

When making decisions that effect our future environment “Mayors need to be courageous and risk their mayor ship and, in fact, it might pay off in the end.”

Rae Kwon Chung, Director at UNESCAP

“The interesting thing that happened at the UN climate talks in Copenhagen last year was a momentum of constituency. People from our communities wanted to be a part of any game changing plan that governments were going to make.”

Valerie Brown, Supervisor, Sonoma County, California, USA