



# Future of Cities **Daily**

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

The ICLEI world congress “Future of Cities” began today in Incheon, with 800 participants from 42 countries having been registered for the next three days. The focus will be on the most pressing issues cities will have to face in the future.

We are presenting to you the news and highlights of the first congress day and hope you enjoy the read!

## Why are you attending “Future of Cities”?

“We joined ICLEI two months ago. I have come to this congress to gather ideas I can take back and use to change life in our district. Here, I have seen many members who have been involved with ICLEI for a long time and benefited a great deal. I want to go back to Tanzania and welcome other councils to ICLEI.”

**Honorina Mkunda, Geita District Council, Tanzania**

“I have come to this congress to find out how you re-shape a large, modern city that has a materialistic orientation and is technology-driven. How can we make that kind of city sustainable?”

**Kwisun Huh, Seongnam, Korea**

## We need to pursue a new future for our cities

The need for a paradigm shift was a clear key message during the opening plenary. Instead of focusing on superlatives of building larger, producing more and consuming quicker, several speakers highlighted that the aims of the future will be very different: greater eco-efficiency, stronger resilience, more happiness. Pursuing traditional economic growth must be exchanged for a green economic values.

Hong-Koo Lee, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea and Member of the Club of Madrid, said that he was glad that climate action was linked to economic development concluding: “green

growth is economic growth". Mayor of Incheon, Young-gil Song, referred to the planet as "an ailing patient". He said "its temperature is rising as if it were someone with an illness. Climate change is the cause of this illness".

A major step to tackling the climate change is a mechanism for cities to report their green house gas (GHG) emissions targets and reduction plans. Marcelo Ebrard, Mayor, Mexico City, said, referring to the climate pact for cities which will be signed at the World Mayors Summit on Climate on 21 November in Mexico, it will be an opportunity for "Cities who already have a climate action plan in place [to] sign on to make their actions measurable, reportable and verifiable."

"Our lifestyles are unsustainable and we are inviting a host of unprecedented disasters and calamities" said Dorji Wangdi, Minister for Labour and Human Resources, Royal Government of Bhutan. Bhutan is in the midst of adopting a framework for gross national happiness (GNH), rather than focusing on gross domestic product (GDP). He explained that "the duty of government is not to provide or deliver happiness as a product, but to create conditions for people to produce their own happiness".

The congress was officially opened by David Cadman, President, ICLEI, Young-gil Song, Mayor, Incheon and Ki-sin Kim, Chairman, Incheon Metropolitan City Council and Maanee Lee, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea.

Have a look at the photos of the day. ([LINK!!!!](#))

## Can low-resource urban density be the solution?

The keynote speakers of the day all highlighted that climate change is not an isolated issue but it is deeply connected with economics and development.

The action that must follow is stalled, because "our cultures are being driven by patterns of consumption and waste," said Martin Lees, Secretary General of the Club of Rome. "The growth of the middle class is devastating the environment."

"We need to think like farmers," said Mathis Wackernagel, President of the Global Footprint Network. "We need to ask how much area is ecologically productive and can support us." Preparing for resource constraints is in the best interest of cities- much more so than for individuals or companies, he said. Why? Because cities continue to exist much longer than individuals and companies.

"City design will make or break a city's ability to curb climate damage" in the future, said Richard Register, Founder and President of Ecocity Builders. Thinking of cities in a three-dimensional way and increasing density will bring people closer together, enable them to walk and cycle instead of drive, use less material in buildings and reduce urban sprawl. Register shared examples of attributes of Eco-cities that are already a reality: In Curitiba, Brazil, high-rise apartment buildings have been built along a high-density public transportation corridor, eliminating the need for cars. In Seoul, South Korea, people have a chance to appreciate their natural environment once again after the Chong e Chong river was liberated from under the expressway that had covered it for decades.

The report that had emerged from the very first ICLEI Congress in 1990 framed the organization's mission and offered bold new ideas of how future governance of sustainable development could look. 'We invented some crazy ideas- like *cities* being the global leaders in reducing and measuring greenhouse gas emissions,' said ICLEI founder Jeb Brugmann today in Incheon.

Available presentations will be accessible from the congress website shortly.

## ICLEI is 20 – memories and success stories of the past two decades

***“We started on 8 September 1990, voting to establish ICLEI in congress room six at the United Nations. We had heard the term 'sustainable development' but didn't know completely what it meant. We heard there was going to be an Earth summit, too, but nobody understood what would come from that process. We were running by the seat of our pants.”***

Jeb Brugmann, Founder and former Secretary General of ICLEI at the opening of Future of Cities 2010

ICLEI is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, having grown over the past two decades to become the world's leading local government association highlighting cities as crucial players in finding local solutions to the global climate challenge.

At the world congress in Incheon many Members have contributed stories about being part of the ICLEI network. Here are just some of their comments:

***“ICLEI has been truly supportive of Sao Paolo not only in designing policies but also sharing knowledge and giving opportunities to learn from each other.”***

Rafael Marques de Seixas Pereira, Sao Paolo, Brazil

***“Our association with ICLEI, and what it has brought to us, has become a cultural norm in our city.”***

Pam O'Connor, Vice Mayor of Santa Monica, California (one of ICLEI's oldest member cities)