

WMO Statement at the UN HABITAT-III Conference

Co-Chairs, Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The World Meteorological Organization is the United Nations system's authoritative voice on the state and behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the oceans, the climate it produces and the resulting distribution of water resources. At the core of WMO's mission lays the protection of human life and property through the provision of weather and climate services, as a prerequisite for sustainable development. And, of course, WMO pays increasing attention to the growing urbanization and its interaction with the climate and environment.

It has been stated at the conference that 90% of disasters for urban areas are of hydrometeorological nature and they have increased due to climate change. But I'd like to remind that 70% of GHG emissions are generated by cities. So, the problem has a strong feedback and these two phases of the problem should not be considered separately.

Besides, through a domino effect, a single extreme event can lead to new hazards and to a broad breakdown of a city's infrastructure.

There is a critical need to consider the problem in a complex manner with interactions of climate change and disaster risk reduction for urban areas.

WMO therefore considers the cross-cutting urban focus as one of the priorities and suggests a novel approach of Integrated urban weather, water, environment and climate services for sustainable development and multi-hazard early-warning systems for cities. Together with our members and partner cities we demonstrate the best practices in realization of such services. The 17th World Meteorological Congress requested WMO to develop a Guide for Urban Integrated Hydrometeorological, Climate and Environmental Services.

We look forward to working together for the New UN Urban Agenda to address these issues and encourage city administrations to include realisation of such integrated services for your cities to make them comfortable, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Thank you.

(Professor Alexander Baklanov, the WMO focal point for HABITAT-III)