**“Tropical cities the focus for global event”**

What: The Future of Tropical Cities side event

When: Thursday 20 October 12

Where: Room R4 Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana

Who: Professor Ian Atkinson; Dr Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, Dr Enrique Silva, Dr Carol Archer, Mr Aw Tuan Kee

A Habitat III side event on Thursday (20 October) will focus on the challenges and opportunities facing cities in the global tropics.

By the middle of the century, more people will live in the tropics than anywhere else – and most of them will live in a tropical city. This concept will be explored in depth by experts and policy makers drawn from throughout the tropics in an important side event at the world largest ever conference on human settlements.

“By their very nature, tropical cities face a unique set of challenges associated with planning, sanitation, water, extreme events and heatwaves,” said Professor Ian Atkinson from James Cook University, the chair of the event. “Rapidly growing tropical cities are critical for the successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda.”

Professor Atkinson will be joined by the Deputy Executive Director and Assistant Secretary-General for UN Habitat Dr Aisa Kirabo Kacyira who brings extensive experience and leadership in promoting sustainable cities in the tropics. The conversation will be wide ranging and the audience will be encouraged to engage with the speakers.

Professor Atkinson’s research interests cover how new systems and software can connect the physical and virtual worlds, particularly focusing on environmental monitoring with sensor networks and the development of smart, sustainable cities.

“Tropical cities, particularly secondary cities, are growing fast and the opportunity for sustainable, inclusive urban innovation is huge. Habitat III provides an amazing opportunity to not only discuss the possibilities but really start down the road to making them a reality.”

Joining Professor Atkinson and Dr Kacyira on the Panel will be: Dr Enrique Silva from Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and Harvard University, Dr Carol Archer from the University of Technology in Jamaica and Mr Aw Tuan Kee, Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities in Singapore.

The event is hosted by James Cook University and the State of the Tropics Alliance, a global alliance of leading research institutions that have come together to address key development challenges in the tropics and examine the implications of the immense changes the region is experiencing.

More: [www.stateofthetropics.org](http://www.stateofthetropics.org)/events/habitat3.