



Communauté métropolitaine
de Montréal



MONTREAL THEMATIC MEETING ON METROPOLITAN AREAS

FOSTERING METROPOLITAN
COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
URBAN DEVELOPMENT
TOWARDS THE MONTRÉAL DECLARATION
IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA
TO BE ADOPTED AT HABITAT III IN QUITO
IN 2016

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Fostering metropolitan cooperation for sustainable urban development

TOWARDS THE MONTRÉAL DECLARATION IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA TO BE ADOPTED AT HABITAT III IN QUITO IN 2016

Global metropolization

An increasingly urban world

1. We live in an increasingly urban world. For the first time in history, more than half of the world's population lives in cities. By 2050, this proportion will reach nearly 70%. At the time of Habitat II, which took place in Istanbul in 1996, the world had 2.6 billion urban residents. It is estimated that by the time the global community meets in Quito for Habitat III in 2016, that number will have risen to 4 billion. According to the OECD, by the end of this "metropolitan century", most of the urbanization on our planet will likely be completed, with around 85% of the world's population living in cities by 2100.

The rise of metropolitan areas

2. Amid growing urbanization and suburbanization, cities are now often part of larger metropolitan areas with high population densities. In these areas, the development of transportation infrastructure has boosted trade, as well as commuting distances. Metropolitan areas are usually made up of one or more central cities with high population densities and large pools of jobs; in contrast, rural communities are mainly residential. These different spaces form a relatively autonomous labour pool where most of the population lives and works. The population living in these areas is continuously growing. According to the latest UN population estimate, 50% of urban residents live in agglomerations of 500,000 people or more.

Metropolitan areas as key drivers of economic growth and innovation

3. Now more than ever, metropolitan areas are central to social, cultural, environmental and economic development at the national level. In most countries, metropolitan areas have become the key drivers of economic growth and innovation, accounting for a significant proportion of the gross domestic product (GDP). They also attract qualified workers and migrants seeking better job opportunities. In most cases, the dynamic of metropolitan areas is characterized by a concentration of higher-level economic functions.

Metropolitan challenges

Significant challenges

4. The wave of urbanization in the 21st century stands to benefit individual residents, entire countries and the planet as a whole. At the same time, however, significant challenges will have to be addressed.

Challenges facing metropolitan areas

5. More than ever, the challenges facing cities around the world in terms of urban planning, transportation and environmental protection are extending beyond local boundaries. As more people move into the growing number of metropolitan areas surrounding central cities, local governments increasingly face challenges that affect the entire metropolitan area.

Disparities of urban growth

6. The accelerated pace of urban growth, especially in developing countries, ends up magnifying disparities, exacerbating shortages of goods and basic services essential for urban life and accelerating environmental degradation. Urban growth also hinders mobility and leads to increasingly precarious housing as people migrate to urban centres or the outskirts of big cities seeking better job opportunities.

The metropolitan world we want

Goal 11 of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

7. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has identified a series of goals related to the challenges facing cities. Goal 11 seeks to make cities and other human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Among other things, the targets for 2030 address access to affordable housing; safe, affordable and sustainable transport systems; and open green and public spaces. They also focus on the protection of cultural and natural heritage and the importance of supporting positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

Metropolitan planning in support of sustainability

8. If metropolitan areas are well planned and developed, e.g. through integrated planning and management approaches, they can serve to promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies.

Holistic approach

9. In this regard, we need to take a holistic approach to metropolitan development and human settlements that provides for affordable housing and infrastructure and prioritizes slum upgrading and urban regeneration.

Therefore:

Promoting sustainable metropolitan development policies

10. We undertake to promote sustainable development policies that support inclusive housing and social services, along with a safe and healthy living environment for all (particularly children, youth, women, the elderly and the disabled), as well as affordable and sustainable transportation and energy systems. We also undertake to promote, protect and restore safe and green urban spaces; safe and clean drinking water and sanitation; healthy air quality; the creation of decent jobs; and improved urban planning and slum upgrading.

Responding effectively to growth

11. We recognize the importance of increasing the number of metropolitan areas, cities and towns that are implementing policies for sustainable urban planning and design in order to respond effectively to the expected growth of urban populations in the coming decades.

Ensuring sustainable transportation and mobility

12. We recognize that transportation and mobility are central to the sustainable development of metropolitan areas. Sustainable transportation can enhance economic growth, improve accessibility and foster better economic integration while respecting the environment. Therefore, we must work to facilitate the free movement of people and goods, along with access to environmentally sound, safe and affordable transportation infrastructure with a view to improving social equity, health, city resilience, urban-rural linkages and productivity of rural areas.

Mixed-use planning

13. We recognize the importance of encouraging mixed-use planning and non-motorized mobility, e.g. by promoting pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Waste management

14. We support the sustainable management of waste through the application of the "3 Rs" (reduce, reuse and recycle).

Disaster risk

15. We recognize the importance of integrating disaster risk reduction in urban and metropolitan planning, along with resilience and climate risks.

Rural/urban balance

16. We recognize the efforts of metropolitan areas and rural regions to achieve balanced development.

Eradicating poverty

17. We undertake to work towards improving the quality of human settlements, including living and working conditions within the context of poverty eradication so that all people have access to basic services, housing and mobility.

Conserving natural and cultural heritage

18. We recognize the need to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of human settlements, to revitalize historic districts and to rehabilitate city centres.

Integrated planning approach

19. We undertake to promote an integrated approach to planning and building sustainable cities and metropolitan areas, e.g. by supporting local authorities, increasing public awareness and enhancing the participation of urban residents, including the poor, in decision-making.

Citizen participation

20. We recognize the importance of citizen participation in urban and metropolitan planning.

Involving multiple stakeholders

21. We recognize that sustainable urban and metropolitan planning benefits from the involvement of multiple stakeholders, as well as from the full use of sex-disaggregated data on demographic trends, income distribution, informal settlements, etc.

Role of municipalities and national governments

22. We recognize the important role of municipalities and national governments in setting out a coherent vision for sustainable metropolitan areas.

Metropolitan cooperation through partnerships

23. We recognize that partnerships among cities, communities and national governments play an important role in promoting sustainable development at the metropolitan level. In this regard, we underscore the need to strengthen existing cooperation mechanisms and platforms, partnership arrangements and other tools with a view to advancing the coordinated implementation of metropolitan cooperation, in accordance with the Habitat Agenda. This will be achieved with the active involvement of all relevant United Nations entities and with the overall aim of achieving sustainable urban development.

Implementing metropolitan mechanisms

Metropolitan areas contributing to Goal 11

24. The Habitat II Declaration recognized local authorities as key partners for sustainable urbanization. Therefore, the New Urban Agenda to be discussed at Habitat III must take into account necessary mechanisms in response to metropolitan challenges.

***Metropolitan
governance cooperation***

25. Amid increasing urbanization, metropolitan governance cooperation may help to address issues extending over local boundaries in several strategic areas with a view to ensuring the competitiveness and attractiveness of the entire metropolitan area, in keeping with sustainable development principles.

For example, such cooperation mechanisms may facilitate the construction and operation of public transportation links, reduce disparities in public service provision, help manage urban growth, facilitate land use coordination with transportation projects and protect and enhance natural assets.

***Metropolitan policy and
resource distribution***

26. Therefore, metropolitan policy must become the cornerstone of international and national macroeconomic policy since metropolitan areas are the drivers of innovation and productivity worldwide. Metropolitan areas can also produce and distribute resources with a view to ensuring better livelihoods for urban and rural residents alike.

Metropolitan financing

27. To achieve the full potential of the planning process, metropolitan financing mechanisms must also be implemented, particularly in terms of transportation, social housing and other related amenities.

New partnerships

28. National governments, together with local, regional and metropolitan officials, must develop cooperation mechanisms to meet the challenges they face at the metropolitan level. Such partnerships may include metropolitan governance mechanisms aimed at managing sustainable urban growth, coordinating land use and transportation projects and protecting and enhancing natural assets, for example. This will entail higher levels of democracy, public participation and decentralization policies.

***Effective leadership in
support of successful
cities***

29. The success of metropolitan areas depends on effective public, private and civic leadership. Local, regional and metropolitan institutions, together with elected officials from cities and national governments, must be committed to coordinated action and embrace a shared vision aimed at accommodating diverging viewpoints. A strong framework is required to support urban areas and concerted action is needed from all levels of government.

A new multilevel metropolitan cooperation partnership

Metropolitan cooperation

30. The Montréal Thematic Meeting on Metropolitan Areas recognizes the importance of increasing the number of metropolitan areas implementing policies for sustainable urban planning and development in order to respond effectively to the expected growth of urban populations in the coming decades. Sustainable urban planning benefits from the involvement of multiple stakeholders. Metropolitan cooperation plays an important role in setting out a vision for sustainable urban regions, from the very outset of the metropolitan planning process through to the revitalization of older cities and neighbourhoods, e.g. by adopting energy efficiency programs for building management and developing sustainable and locally appropriate transportation systems. We further recognize the importance of mixed-use planning and of encouraging non-motorized mobility, e.g. by promoting pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Statement for the New Urban Agenda

31. The Montréal Thematic Meeting on Metropolitan Areas proposes that the following statement be included in the New Urban Agenda to be adopted at the Habitat III Conference in Quito in 2016:

Shared vision and multi-level collaboration

32. The Montréal Thematic Meeting on Metropolitan Areas recognizes that the challenges of global urbanization require a shared vision and multi-level collaboration at the metropolitan level in order to establish strategies aimed at improving the quality of life in urban areas.

Relationship with all levels of government

33. If we are to meet these many challenges, we must step up our relationships with all levels of government. This is a necessity because economic, social, cultural and environmental development is governed by interdependent public policies. Metropolitan areas thus require concerted action from all levels of government.

Comprehensive partnership agreements

34. The Montréal Thematic Meeting on Metropolitan Areas recognizes that multi-level metropolitan cooperation partnerships (MMCPs) should be implemented to promote the benefits of metropolitan cooperation. MMCPs are intended to improve the standard of living and quality of life of metropolitan residents. They also aim to:

a) Role of metropolitan areas

- Recognize the role of metropolitan areas in the sustainable economic, social, cultural and environmental development of urban areas and countries.

b) Importance of businesses, labour and community stakeholders

- Recognize the importance of businesses, labour and community stakeholders, particularly from the education, social, cultural and environmental sectors, as partners in implementing MMCPs.

c) Effective metropolitan governance

- Implement effective metropolitan governance structures, mechanisms and arrangements aimed at facilitating the adoption of successful policies addressing the challenges of sustainable urbanization.

Follow-up, monitoring and research

*Follow-up committee
and research institute
for the advancement of
metropolitan
cooperation*

35. Following the Montréal Thematic Meeting on Metropolitan Areas it is recommended that a committee, consisting of representatives from all levels of governance and civil society, be created to follow-up and monitor the progress of this declaration. Moreover, this committee would be mandated to assess the opportunity of setting up a research institute for the advancement of metropolitan cooperation to support the implementation of sustainable metropolitan development policies that respond effectively to the expected growth of urban populations in the coming decades. The committee will report its findings to the Habitat III Secretariat.



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