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— HABITAT III —
SIDE EVENT REPORT

Submitted by Lead Organization	
Name of the lead organization	James Cook University
City and country where the lead organization is based	Townsville, AUstralia
Title of the event	The Future of Tropical Cities
Date	10/20/2016
Room number	R4
List of partner organizations	State of the Tropics Alliance - a consortium of eleven research institutions focussing on tropical research and development challenges headquartered at James Cook University
Number of attendees	81-100
Percentage of women participating	41-50%
Background information on the event (themes, issues, context).	Recognising that nations and cities in the tropics face unique shared challenges and opportunities the event brought together a panel of experts from across the tropical region and from diverse disciplines to explore the implications of the major transformative trends (eg rapid population and economic growth, urbanisation) the region is experiencing, particularly as these relate to the New Urban Agenda and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It sought to highlight exemplar initiatives and strategies developed by tropical cities to improve sustainability, prosperity and equality and how these may be more broadly applied to other parts of the tropics and beyond.



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Concise summary of the event proceedings, including key points discussed

The panel discussion began with an overview of the State of the Tropics project which seeks to shine a light on the unique shared challenges and opportunities shared by nations and cities in the tropics, and make the case for why tropical nations should work more closely with each other to tackle these shared issues drawing on lessons learnt from successful and failed initiatives from across the region. In light of these aims, each panelist discussed specific issues from the perspective of their own professional background and geographical location in the tropics. Dr Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, through a statement delivered by Dr Remy Sietchiping stressed that the physical dimensions of the tropical environment result in a unique set of circumstances and challenges which the impacts of climate change will exacerbate. Given that the tropics are home to many of the most vulnerable people and most pressing urban sustainability issues are, it is critical that the needs of the most marginalised people are addressed, and this is why UN Habitat's focus is so strong in this region. Dr Carol Archer discussed Jamaica's approach to training and research, focussing particularly on urban design and housing. She highlighted that many small developing island states of the Caribbean are limited by a shortage of resources, technology and capacity, which are partly addressed through partnerships with organisations from North America and Europe, but also emphasised that many issues are unique to the Caribbean and the tropics and that these need to be explicitly recognised. Drawing on his extensive experience from across Latin America and the Caribbean Dr Enrique Silva discussed the central importance of land and land policy in addressing broader societal issues including poverty, housing, segregation and increasingly, the impacts of climate change. Mr Aw Tuan Kee shared his perspectives from South East Asia, in particular relating to water management challenges in Singapore. The remarkable development of Singapore over the last 50 years, including many innovations, technologies and services developed to address local challenges, has positioned Singapore as a leading exemplar of how urban development can occur in the tropics.



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<p>Recommendations that emerged from these discussions.</p>	<p>Dr Kacyira proposed a series of actions: 1. As part of the implementation of the new urban agenda and the maxim "Leave no one behind" this includes not only not leaving the poor behind but not leaving the development of tropical areas behind, therefore a more concerted effort in the region, as UN Habitat appreciates, is warranted. 2. Planning plays a key role in addressing the key challenges faced in tropical areas and the skills needed in tropical areas are not necessarily the same as in other areas. Capacity development in the region is critical. 3. Appropriate land regulation laws to ensure that they are not competing against each other, and that planning is implemented for the benefit of all. 4. The issue of tenure security in slums, access to water and sanitation and durable housing. 5. Insufficient data. Reliable information is required in order to make effective, evidence based decisions and informed actions. There is a clear need to build more evidence and capacity to collect data. The role of higher education institutions in the tropics, such as James Cook University, is critical to help advance this agenda.</p>
<p>Partnerships or collaborations that emerged from the event.</p>	<p>The event provided the opportunity for speakers to learn about the State of the Tropics initiative and its take on development issues in the tropics. Subsequent follow up will seek to potentially engage speakers and their institutions in subsequent events and initiatives relating to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the tropics, including potential collaborative research projects tackling key issues.</p>
<p>Name, nationality, title and organization of the 1st speaker at your event.</p>	<p>Dr Aisa Kirabo Kacyira Rwandan Deputy Executive Director and Assistant Secretary General UN Human Settlements Program</p>
<p>Name, nationality, title and organization of the 2nd speaker at your event.</p>	<p>Professor Ian Atkinson Australian Director of EResearch Centre, James Cook University</p>
<p>Name, nationality, title and organization of the 3rd speaker at your event.</p>	<p>Dr Carol Archer Jamaican Associate Professor, University of Technology Jamaica</p>
<p>Name, nationality, title and organization of the 4th speaker at your event.</p>	<p>Dr Enrique Silva USA Lincoln Policy Institute</p>



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Name, nationality, title and organization of the 5th speaker at your event.	Mr Aw Tuan Kee Singapore Director, Centre for Liveable Cities, Ministry of National Development of Singapore
Dissemination of the outcomes of your event?	Summary report to be posted onto our website (stateofthetropics.org) and promoted through our social media channels and that of James Cook University