

Essential Research to Implement the New Urban Agenda

Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development

(Habitat III) – Quito (Ecuador) – October 17th-20th

Press Release | October 11th, 2016



The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development ([Habitat III](#)) will be held in Quito, Ecuador from 17 to 20 October 2016. As the first international meeting since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted, Habitat III's main aim is to give new momentum to the global commitment for sustainable urban development. The French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD) will be present in Quito alongside other French actors in urban development, led by The French Alliance for Cities and Territorial Development (PFVT). With its partnerships in developing countries, and through various scientific and public events, the institute intends to strengthen support for the co-production of knowledge to help implement and monitor the new urban agenda.

To study southern cities

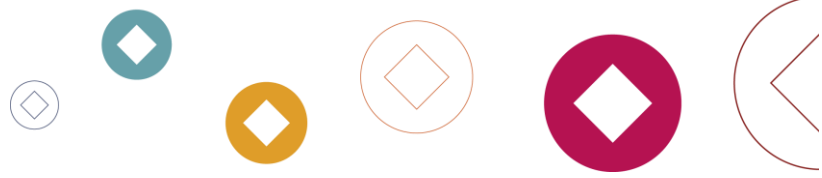
Half of humanity – 3.5 billion people – currently lives in cities. By 2050, this proportion is expected to reach two thirds of the world's population. 95% of urban growth is concentrated in large African, Latin American and Asian cities. The major challenges of the 21st century lie in these urban areas. Not only do they represent drivers of economic growth and innovation, they are also places with significant levels of insecurity and vulnerability, social instability and inequality, environmental pollution, etc.



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To “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (Goal no. 11 of the SDGs adopted in September 2015), we then have to, from now on, look at the inequalities, failures and transformations that are currently occurring. There are many challenges ahead. These include sharing urban markets, access to housing, work and basic services (water, energy, health, education), risk management and urban disaster management...

IRD researchers, their academic partners (universities and research centers), their development partners (PNUD, AFD), with decision-makers and local operators, gather information, describe and analyse urban development in southern countries. Taking advantage of the thematic research alliances, as Allenvi and Aviesan, scientists provide their expertise and train, through research, the designers and "builders" of the city of the future.



Habitat III: IRD Highlights

Jean-Marc Châtaigner, IRD Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, is a member of the French delegation to Habitat III, led by Emmanuelle Cosse, the French Minister for Housing and Sustainable Habitat. He will also accompany André Vallini, Secretary of State for Development and Francophonie. Through its scientific presence (around fifteen researchers) and institutional presence at this conference, the IRD wishes to show the role and importance of research (particularly French and French-language research) in decision-making, especially for urban areas. The aims of this are:



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- **To encourage cross-disciplinary** research on urban and peri-urban issues, in order to better understand the complexity of today's cities.
- To call for better support for research, so that it can contribute to measuring the social and ecological impacts of urban evolutions, to implementing the new urban agenda, and to **the emergence of global solutions.**
- **To promote the co-production of knowledge** between scientific communities from Africa, Asia and Latin America, since the urban dynamics taking place in Latin America or Asia partly herald the changes to come in Africa.

Present on the French Pavilion managed by the PFVT and the French Development Agency (AFD), **the IRD and its partners will hold several scientific workshops** during the Habitat III conference. These will include:

- UN side-event "Co-production of knowledge on diversity in precarious neighborhoods: a key to renewed urban thinking and policies" (17 October at 11:00 a.m.)
- Workshop by the regional university, scientific and technical cooperation network in the domain of sustainable cities in South America (17 October at 4:30 p.m.)
- Side-event "Water as a focus for adaptation to climate change in the Andean context: resources and uses" (18 October at 4:30 p.m.)
- Breakfast with presentation of the IRD's city-related activities: "Living with earthquakes and volcanoes" (19 October at 9:00 a.m.)
- Debate on the challenges of housing and sustainable urban development policy: The case of Argentina (19 October at 2:00 p.m.)
- Side-event "Co-production of knowledge on diversity in precarious neighborhoods: a key to renewed urban thinking and policies" (20 October at 9:00 a.m.)

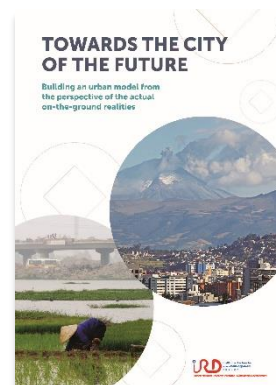
In addition, the IRD is offering the general public the chance to discover the photo exhibition: "Ecuador: A Laboratory for the World" and the IRD's resources on cities, thanks to digital tables available at Quito Mariscal Sucre airport.



Available resources!

For Habitat III, the IRD is publishing the brochure "[Towards the City of the Futuree : Building an urban model from the perspective of actual on-the-ground realities](#)", available in French, English and Spanish. In three parts, it presents the major challenges faced by cities in the southern countries: rising inequalities, environmental and health risks and the consequences of climate change, as well as the expertise provided by IRD researches and their partners.

With the Ecuadorian journal Ñan, the IRD is also publishing a special edition entitled "Ecuador: Laboratory for the World".



Finally, the IRD has numerous resources to raise public awareness about the challenges of research for development in southern cities, including its "La nouvelle ville" ([The New City](#)) exhibition, books, films and photographs.

These can be found in the **dedicated space** on the IRD's website : <http://en.ird.fr/ird.fr/towards-the-city-of-the-future>

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For more information

- Photo selection available for journalists :

<http://indigo.ird.fr/fr/spotlight/38034/villes-d-aujourd-hui-et-de-demain/page/1/SN/COLLECTIONS>

