

[Forward this message to a friend](#)[Click to view this email in a browser](#)**18 June 2012****Sustainable Urban Development Day kicks off Rio+20 Global Town Hall****Making sustainability happen in Chinese cities**

The session opened the debate on how Chinese cities can enhance resiliency, attain low carbon growth, build smart infrastructure and foster a green urban economy. Mr Zhang Jianfei, Mayor of Changsha presented dozens of initiatives his city is undertaking to become an eco-city, from building more bike lanes and hiking trails, to buying and producing green. Coming from a business perspective, Mr Liu Yimiao, Chairman of the China Entrepreneurs Union, supported the notion that shifting to a green urban economy is the only way forward. A green urban economy is the crucial contribution of cities to global sustainable development, the panel agreed.



*Organized by CEU, United Nations Environment Programme and ICLEI*

**Cities and biodiversity outlook: a sneak preview!**

CBD Executive Director Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Professor Thomas Elmqvist of Stockholm Resilience Center and Cecilia Herzog, author of the Rio de Janeiro city assessment provided a sneak preview of the Cities and Biodiversity Outlook - the first global assessment of the links between urbanization, biodiversity and ecosystem services. Mr. Dias motioned that while many success stories are already out there, there is still a lot to be done in creating a resilient, biodiverse and sustainable future. Bridging science and policy and promoting cities as agents of biodiversity, the report will set out recommendations for the way forward.

*Organized by Convention on Biological Diversity, Stockholm Resilience Center and ICLEI*

## Gwangju, Korea leads the way to resource efficiency; reads out their voluntary commitments at Rio+20

Mr. Un-Tae Kang, Mayor of Gwangju, Korea spoke about Gwanju's long list of achievements as well as plans to becoming a carbon neutral city. The session builds on the gains of Urban Environmental Accord (UEA) Summit held in Gwangju, and co-organized by UNEP. Energy efficiency, waste management, and sustainable infrastructures are just some areas where Gwanju has committed to strong action. Also part of its voluntary commitments at Rio+20, Gwangju commits to zero-energy through a resource circulation system; green car and clean fuel; improvement of air quality; and water quality innovation. Initiatives like this are welcome addition to the move towards resource efficiency, however, panelists have noted that there is still a pressing need to come up with common tools and metric for measuring sustainability in cities.



*Organized by City Government of Gwangju, United Nations Environment Programme and ICLEI*

## The Nordic solutions for sustainable cities



Governing Mayor Stian Berger Rosland, City of Oslo, Norway talked about the journey of eight Nordic cities in championing green growth. Outlining the importance of city to city exchange, he presented the catalogue, "[Nordic solutions for sustainable cities](#)" as a useful resource in steering the path of many other cities towards sustainability. Rosland emphasized that the catalogue presents transferable solutions that other local governments can implement, with the 8 Nordic cities leading the way.

*Organized by the City of Copenhagen, City of Helsinki, City of Mariehamn, City of Nuuk, City of Oslo, City of Reykjavik, City of Stockholm, City of Tórshavn*

## The green challenge: business and cities together towards sustainability

The path towards sustainability is treaded more easily when different sectors work together. Cities, business and sustainability is proving to be a powerful mix. Karen Weigert, Chief Sustainability Officer of the City of Chicago, detailed the gains of Chicago by piloting the ICLEI Green Business Challenge. Many more businesses, including Office Depot, are taking up the challenge with positive results - lowered carbon footprint and reduction of electricity and other costs, among others. Yalmaz Siddiqui, Senior Director, Environmental Strategy for Office Depot, one of the primary funding sponsors of the Chicago Green Office Challenge, praised the initiative as an innovative and highly scalable model for public-private partnerships focused on sustainability.



*Organized by City of Chicago (USA), ICLEI USA and Office Depot*

## What's new?

### **GreenClimateCities : advancing the path to climate action!**

ICLEI launched the GreenClimateCities Initiative in response to the Appeal for Urgent Action on Climate Change by a task force of experts convened by Green Cross President Mikhail S. Gorbachev. The launch took place alongside the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro. The Initiative unites cities worldwide in joining the efforts of local governments worldwide to take voluntary climate action now and not wait for governments to eventually come to a global climate agreement.

[www.iclei.org/greencimatecities](http://www.iclei.org/greencimatecities)

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## What's on?

### **Join us at the Local Action Day on 20 June!**

At the Local Action Day, discover the experiences and capacities of local governments, as well as their concrete contributions towards a sustainable future by 2030. The day is packed with examples of successful cases such as the cap and trade in Tokyo, Auckland's liveable city vision, and many more!

Visit [www.iclei.org/rio](http://www.iclei.org/rio)

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Read live updates from the Rio+20 Global Town Hall: [www.iclei.org/rio](http://www.iclei.org/rio)

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