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**RIO+20 GLOBAL TOWN HALL**  
RIO DE JANEIRO 18-22 JUNE 2012

# Newsletter



## Cities Leadership Day Highlights

<p>The question of who <b>WILL</b> choose the the future is different from who <b>SHOULD</b> choose the future!</p> <p>Martin Lees former Secretary General, Club of Rome</p>	<p>We don't have time to lose and we are losing time! This is not time to talk, it is the time to take action!</p> <p>Marcelo Ebrard, Mayor of Mexico City, Mexico</p>	<p>National Governments are paralyzed that makes your (local governments) presence more important and with higher impact</p> <p>Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary, United Nations Climate Change Secretariat</p>	<p>The road to sustainability runs through the world's towns and cities. By building sustainable towns and cities, you will build global sustainability</p> <p>Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General.</p>	<p>Yes, I do place more faith in the local governments</p> <p>Britanny Triffold, winner of Date with History and Rio +20 youth speaker:</p>	<p>Let's walk away motivated to continue embracing sustainable development as part of our daily lives</p> <p>Ideli Salvatti, Minister of Institutional Relations, Brazil</p>
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**21 June 2012**

## Cities Leadership Day

*Highlights of the high level dialogues, statements and debates at the Rio+20 Global Town Hall*

Featuring UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Brazilian Minister Salvati, heads of international organizations, business and mayors from all around the world, the Cities Leadership Day was successful in bringing the needs of a strong local leadership to guarantee a sustainable future.

Not only statements but also lively debates among high level panelists and the audience on issues such as eco-cities, global and local governance, climate and low-carbon cities, green growth and urban resilience organized in cooperation with the daily program partners made this day the key stage to bring urban issues at the core of the Rio+20 scene.

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## UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon praises cities for leading sustainability action

Under the headline 'Sustainability leadership for the urban world 2030', the Cities Leadership Day saw the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon engaging in a dialogue with key sustainability leaders at the Rio+20 Global Town Hall.

**“Local is global and global is local,”** Ban Ki-moon said, explaining that in today’s globalized world, there is little difference between local and federal governments, and therefore cities play an equally important role in achieving sustainability.

At the historic Rio+20 summit, countries have come up with a scope of agreement that will chart sustainable development in the next years. But Ban Ki-moon fears that this would merely be another piece of paper, unless cities lead by example, and take their over 500 voluntary commitments for action seriously. **“The country is the sum of cities. If cities do not work, then countries cannot work”**, he added



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## Cities are key drivers of sustainable development!



It is cities who have made the real mark in Rio+20! Mayors from cities worldwide came to speak at the Global Town Hall to attest that cities, being the level of government closest to the people and local issues, are the implementing agents of sustainable development. Marcelo Ebrard, Mayor of Mexico City spoke of cities' commitment to measurable, reportable, verifiable climate action. Marcio Araujo de Lacerda, who delivered the ICLEI World Congress Message to Rio+20, highlighted how his city is building smart urban infrastructure. James Nxumalo, Mayor of Durban, South Africa, emphasized the relevance of the Durban Adaptation Charter in building urban resilience and adaptation to climate change. These, and many more examples show that local governments are implementing decisions impacting on sustainable development locally every day, and they will continue to implement solutions even without a much needed

global framework that involves and appropriately supports them.

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## Climate as a key focus of the sustainability debate: a special panel featuring UNFCCC, WWF, Philips, national and local leaders

Cities are taking leadership and raising ambitions for a low-carbon urban world 2030. Featuring mayors and climate leaders including UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres, the talk outlined challenges and good practices to achieve a low-carbon urban future.

Cities are not only meeting challenges but also exceeding them, says Figueres. According to Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, cities have stepped in where nations fall short. Through ICLEI partnerships and programs, cities have made their commitments transparent, comparable and measurable. The next big challenge for cities is to further push clean efforts in a clean effective manner and in a way that integrates the work of the private sector.



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### Quotes of the day

**The road to sustainability runs through the world's towns and cities. By building sustainable towns and cities, you will build global sustainability.**

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General

**The question of who WILL choose the the future is different from who SHOULD choose the future!**

Martin Lees, Former Secretary General of Club of Rome

**We don't have time to lose and we are losing time! This is not time to talk. It is time to take action!**

Marcelo Ebrard, Mayor of Mexico City and Chair of World Mayors Council for Climate Change

**Yes, I do place more faith in the local governments.**

Brittany Triffold, Date with History contest winner and Rio+20 youth speaker

**Governments are paralyzed, and that makes your (local governments) presence more important and with higher impact.**

Christiane Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary

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## What's new?

### **Announcement of the Global Initiative on Urban Resilience**

ICLEI and partners unveiled a new initiative that will catalyze urban resilience action worldwide at the Rio+20 Global Town Hall today. The Global Initiative on Urban Resilience (GIUR) bolsters disaster resilience - one of the hallmark themes of the historic Rio +20 summit. Konrad Otto-Zimmermann, Secretary General of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, representing an association of over 1220 local government Members, observed that, “Urban resilience must apply not only to climate change, but to all other shocks and stresses that affect community systems.”

[Read more.](#)

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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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