

Local-Level Integration and Systems Change for Urban Sustainability and Climate Action

May 10, 2022 9.00 am - 12.00 pm

Venue: House of Sweden, Washington DC

This seminar explores recent case studies of collaborative action by local stakeholders from government, business, academia, and civil society to promote urban sustainability and climate action. As the saying goes – "think globally and act locally" – seminar participants will discuss the vital importance of local-level strategic policy development and program implementation to achieve by 2030 the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Climate Agreement, New Urban Agenda, Sendai Framework, and other major global climate and sustainability commitments.

Case studies will be drawn from the Swedish strategic innovation program's Viable Cities, Sweden's and UN-Habitat's Climate Smart Cities Challenge, Global Urban Development's Sustainable Innovation Zones initiative, and the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Resilient America and Sustainability Roundtables.

This international dialogue will focus on sharing key best practices and lessons learned about stakeholder engagement and consensus-building, strategic action generating effective results, resource constraints and financial opportunities, green economic development for inclusive prosperity, and many other key issues and challenges that can help inform and inspire future local initiatives. This seminar will explore global perspectives, with examples from Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Sweden, Uganda, UK, and US.

Exploration of these case studies will be followed by a panel of international climate and sustainability financing experts reflecting on how to expand and improve public and private financial support for local-level integration and systems change for urban sustainability and climate action. Questions to be considered include:

- Are global financial institutions well designed to provide extensive resources for local transformational activities?
- How can local-level stakeholders be better prepared to engage with and effectively utilize both sub-national and global financial investments and support?
- What are key policy and organizational research needs and opportunities that can better advance a local agenda strengthened by global investments?

Moderator: Franklin Carrero-Martínez, Senior Director, Global Sustainability and Development, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

Speakers:

- Olle Dierks, Manager for Large-scale Investments, Viable Cities
- Chris Williams, Director, New York Office, UN-Habitat
- Marc Weiss, Chairman and CEO, Global Urban Development
- Wendy Howard, Executive Director, One Montgomery Green

Panel:

- Ekaterina Gratcheva, Lead Finance Officer, Climate Investment Funds
- Maitreyi Das, Practice Manager, Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience, and Land Global Practice, The World Bank
- Gaia Larsen, Director, Climate Finance Access and Deployment, Sustainable Finance Center, World Resources Institute

Organizers:

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Viable Cities; UN-Habitat; and Global Urban Development