# Concept Note

## 6th International Forum on Low Carbon Cities

### Enhancing Connectivity for Low-Carbon Urban Transformation amid Paradigm Shifts

23-24 November 2026, Moscow, Russian Federation

## Organizers

The City of Moscow, Incheon Metropolitan City, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Subregional Office (as Secretariat for NEASPEC)

***With Collaborative Partners*** *UNDP, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress (iGDP), The Incheon Institute, World Resources Institute (WRI), WHO Asia-Pacific Centre for Environment and Health*

## Background

The Asia-Pacific region is undergoing profound paradigm shifts driven by rapid technological advancement, demographic change, climate challenges and evolving patterns of economic and regional integration. These shifts are increasingly concentrated in urban areas, where growing populations, expanding infrastructure needs and climate and environmental pressures are creating both challenges and opportunities for sustainable development[1].

In this context, cities play a critical role in advancing sustainable development while responding to increasingly complex urban challenges. As the primary sites where policies on land use, housing, transportation, public services and local governance are designed and implemented, cities are at the forefront of translating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into tangible outcomes. To track and strengthen this progress, an increasing number of local governments are undertaking Voluntary Local Reviews, highlighting the important role of cities in advancing and monitoring SDG implementation[2]. Meaningful progress toward sustainable development depends largely on the capacity of cities to mobilize stakeholders, coordinate local action and scale up effective solutions, with the cumulative impact of these efforts contributing to broader regional and global transitions toward a more sustainable future[3].

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[1] Huang, C.Y.; Eisenberg, R. M.; Velasco, G. (2025). Reimagining Central Asian Cities for a Resilient and Low-Carbon Future (English). World Bank Group. Available at: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099020525094063731.

[2] Ortiz-Moya, F., Yang, Y. (2025) Cities' review of the sustainable development goals and insights from voluntary local reviews. npj Urban Sustain 5, 58. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1038/s42949-025-00243-7.

[3] United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2020). Urbanization and Cities: Trends of a New Global Force. Available at: https://doi.org/10.18356/93e0a206-en.

Aligned with the theme of the eighty-third session of the ESCAP Commission in April 2027, *"ESCAP at 80: Navigating paradigm shifts, promoting connectivity and accelerating sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific,"* the Sixth International Forum on Low-Carbon Cities (IFLCC-6) will explore how enhanced connectivity can support low-carbon urban transformation. Connectivity is an essential enabler of sustainable, resilient and inclusive urban development. It is also inherently multidimensional, as such, connections through physical infrastructure across transport systems, energy networks, digital structure is equally as important as connections through partnerships, institutional cooperation and knowledge-sharing networks.[4]

Connectivity should be viewed not only as an enabler of urban development, but also as a transformative instrument for accelerating climate action. It can support climate change adaptation, strengthen urban resilience, advance sustainable mobility, enhance ecological monitoring and enable integrated ecosystem management, thereby helping cities respond more effectively to complex and interconnected environmental challenges. Experiences from cities across Asia demonstrate that successful urban transitions depend not only on the deployment of smart technologies and physical infrastructure, but also on effective connectivity enabled by data sharing, institutional coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration. Strengthening these multidimensional forms of connectivity can help cities translate sustainable development objectives into concrete actions and accelerate progress toward low-carbon and resilient urban futures[5].

Looking ahead, there is also a need for new development approaches that can advance resilient, inclusive and green development pathways in the face of compounding risks and challenges. Cities are well positioned to drive such paradigm shifts, ensuring that decarbonization goes beyond achieving environmental objectives to also serve as a catalyst for economic growth, resilience, innovation and social inclusion.

## Objectives/Expected Outcomes

The Sixth International Forum on Low Carbon Cities aims to:

1. enhance knowledge exchange of experiences and good practices on multidimensional forms of connectivity (i.e., infrastructure/physical connectivity, institutional linkages, multi-networked coordination) in accelerating low-carbon urban transformation in cities;

2. showcase city-led approaches that leverage decarbonization as a catalyst for achieving broader development objectives, including economic growth, resilience, innovation and social inclusion; and

[4] ESCAP (2026). Dates and venue of and theme for the eighty-third session of ESCAP (2027): Note by the secretariat, ESCAP/82/89. Available at: https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/2600047E.pdf.
[5] Shadiya A. (2024). Integrating Smart Transportation and Sustainable Development Goals: A Literature Review, 4th International Conference on Smart City and Green Energy (ICSCGE). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1109/ICSCGE64239.2024.11064301.

3. identify practical opportunities of city-to-city partnerships and collaborative initiatives to strengthen connectivity and accelerate sustainable development through city-led decarbonization efforts.

# Programme

| Monday, 23 November | |
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| 09:30-10:00 | **Registration *(Light refreshments to be offered)*** |
| 10:00-10:30 [30mins] | **Opening**<br><br>• Opening and welcome remarks<br>  ○ Mr. Sergey Cheremin, Minister of the Government of Moscow and Head of the Department for External Economic and International Relations of Moscow, or his representative (TBC, subject to availability)<br>  ○ Mr. Dmitrii Tetenkin, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation<br>  ○ Mr. Riccardo Mesiano, Officer-in-Charge, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office<br>  ○ Mr. Park Chan-dae, Mayor, Incheon Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea (video message)<br>• Group photo |
| 10:30-12:00 [90mins] | **Session 1: Harnessing Connectivity for Low-Carbon Urban Transformation High-Level Roundtable Discussion**<br><br>The session will showcase city-led experiences and stakeholder initiatives demonstrating how physical and digital connectivity can accelerate low-carbon urban transformation and climate change adaptation. It will highlight innovative approaches to sustainable transport, clean energy infrastructure, digital solutions and smart urban systems that strengthen connectivity while reducing emissions and climate risks and, in turn, fostering economic dynamism, enhancing urban resilience and promoting inclusive development.<br><br>Guiding Questions:<br>1. How are cities leveraging transport, energy and digital connectivity to accelerate low-carbon urban transformation?<br>2. How have low-carbon solutions and infrastructure investments enhanced connectivity, accessibility and efficiency within and across cities?<br>3. What innovations and enabling conditions are needed to scale integrated connectivity solutions for low-carbon and resilient cities?<br><br>• Moderator: Mr. Riccardo Mesiano, Officer-in-Charge, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office<br><br>• Speakers<br>  ○ Mr. Puntsagnamjil Mend-Amgalan, Dean for Research & International |

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| | Affairs' Office, Darkhan Campus, Mongolian University of Life Sciences & Advisor for Darkhan-Uul Province Governor & Darkhan City Mayor Darkhan-Uul Province, Mongolia<br>○ Mr. Batchuluun Munkhdalai, Deputy Governor of Orkhon Province, Erdenet City, Mongolia<br>○ Ms. P.A.G. Fernando, Chief Secretary, Uva Province, Sri Lanka<br>○ Dr. Konstantin Romanov, Deputy Head of Directorate, PJSC "Gazprom", Russian Federation<br>○ Ms. Milena Milich, Special Representative of the Governor of the Sakhalin Region on Climate and Sustainable Development, Russian Federation<br>○ Moscow City representative (one of the following, TBC subject to availability)<br>- *Mr. Evgeniy Danchikov, Minister of the Government of Moscow and Head of the Main Control Department of Moscow*<br>- *Ms. Yulia Urozhaeva, Head of the Department of Natural Resources Management and Environmental Protection of Moscow*<br>- *Dr. Evgeniya Semutnikova, First Deputy Head of the Department of Natural Resources Management and Environmental Protection of Moscow* |
| *12:00-13:00 [60mins]* | *Lunch* |
| 13:00-14:30 [90mins] | **Session 2: Connectivity for Collective Action: Strengthening Partnerships, Knowledge and Multi-Networked Cooperation**<br><br>The session will explore connectivity in its broader sense, encompassing partnerships, institutional cooperation, knowledge-sharing networks, and cross-sectoral collaboration. By highlighting practical experiences and successful initiatives from cities and other stakeholders, the session will examine how connected approaches can help cities mobilize resources, scale solutions, strengthen institutional capacities and translate knowledge into action. It will also reflect on how city-led decarbonization efforts can foster new partnerships, networks and forms of cooperation.<br><br>Guiding Questions:<br>1. How has connectivity—through partnerships, institutional cooperation, knowledge-sharing or other networks—helped accelerate low-carbon transformation in your city or initiative?<br>2. What new forms of connectivity, collaboration or partnerships have emerged as a result of city-led decarbonization efforts, and how have they contributed to wider urban transformation?<br>3. What lessons, institutional mechanisms and opportunities can strengthen collaboration and translate shared knowledge into collective action for low-carbon urban transformation? |

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| | • Moderator: Rashid Ismailov, Chairman, Russian Ecological Society, Russian Federation<br><br>• Speakers<br>National association<br>○ Mr. Alexey Borisov, First Deputy Chairman of the United Nations Association of Russia (UNA-Russia) and Vice-President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)<br>Private sector<br>○ Mr. Yuriy Akinshin, Chief Sustainability Officer, En+ Group, Russian Federation<br>○ Mr. Vitaliy Burmistrov, Senior manager of sustainable development, PJSC SIBUR, Russian Federation<br>NEA-LCCP Partners<br>○ Mr. Wen William Hua, Director of Sustainable Cities Program, World Resources Institute (WRI), China<br>○ Ms. Siqiao Yuan, Program Manager, ICLEI East Asia Secretariat<br>○ Ms. HU Min, President and Co-Founder of iGDP (Online) |
| *14:30-15:00 [30mins]* | *Break* |
| 15:00-16:30 [90mins] | **Session 3. Navigating Paradigm Shifts: From Challenges to Opportunities for Low-Carbon Cities**<br><br>The session will examine how cities can navigate these paradigm shifts and turn emerging challenges into opportunities for low-carbon urban transformation. Cities are operating in a rapidly evolving development landscape, from conventional growth-centred approaches towards development models that place greater emphasis on decarbonization, climate change adaptation and resilience, resource efficiency, digital and technological innovation, inclusiveness and quality of life. At the same time, emerging economic, technological, environmental, and climate changes are creating new uncertainties as well as opportunities for cities.<br><br>Guiding Questions<br>1. What major shifts in development paradigms, priorities and approaches are shaping the future of cities and their pathways towards decarbonization and climate resilience?<br>2. How are cities adapting their development strategies and leveraging emerging trends to turn challenges into opportunities for low-carbon transformation and climate change adaptation?<br>3. What lessons and enabling factors can help cities anticipate and navigate future paradigm shifts while maintaining momentum towards their low-carbon and climate resilience goals?<br><br>• Moderator: UN-Habitat (TBC) |

| Monday, 23 November | |
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| | • Speakers<br>National government perspectives<br>○ Dr. Zhou Ying, Deputy Director, Guangzhou Municipal Development and Reform Commission, China<br>○ Ms. Adiyasuren Otgon, Foreign Relations and Partnerships Specialist at the Kharkhorum City Mayor's Office, Mongolia<br>○ Ms. Fen Li, Director, Shenzhen Institute of Building Research, China<br>○ Ms. Veronika Ginzburg, Deputy Director, Institute of Global Climate and Ecology, Russian Federation<br>○ Ms. Tatiana Krupnova, Senior Researcher, Pacific branch of the FSBSI "Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries and oceanography", Russian Federation<br>○ Ms. Wenxiu Li, Senior Project Manager, Green Hunan sssEnvironmental Protection Association, China<br>○ Mr. Oleg Kobiakov, Director of the FAO Office with the Russian Federation, Russian Federation<br><br>Looking Ahead to APUF-9 and IFLCC-7 in Yokohama (2027)<br>○ Mr. Tatsuya Yanase, Director, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, Japan |
| 16:30-17:00 [30mins] | **Closing session**<br><br>• Closing remarks<br>○ Mr. Sergey Cheremin, Minister of the Government of Moscow and Head of the Department for External Economic and International Relations of Moscow, or his representative (TBC, subject to availability)<br>○ Ms. Abidat Magomedova, Deputy Director, Department for International Cooperation in the Sphere of Natural Resources and Nature Conservation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation<br>○ Mr. Riccardo Mesiano, Officer-in-Charge, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office |

| Tuesday, 24 November | |
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| 10:00-15:00 | **Technical Tour**<br>Environmental Monitoring System and Moscow Shipyard |
| 17:00-19:00 | **Golden Turtle International Wildlife Festival** *(Optional)* |

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