



dpu

The Development Planning Unit
University College London



UN-HABITAT

SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION

Bridging the Green and Brown Agendas

MESSAGE

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) constitutes a milestone to assess progress in response to Agenda 21. Over the last decade, this Agenda has inspired innumerable global initiatives and local innovations in the search for more sustainable forms of social, economic and environmental development. Since the adoption of the Habitat Agenda, a systematic effort has also been made to document these initiatives and innovations, providing a wealth of knowledge, experience and lessons for further reflection, action and consolidation. This book examines some of these lessons and their institutional and policy implications in the belief that more sustainable forms of development will increasingly depend on creating strong links between local initiatives and national and international responses.

Prefaced by Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director UN-Habitat, this book is a companion of *Implementing the Habitat Agenda: In Search of Urban Sustainability*, also jointly produced by the Development Planning Unit (DPU) University College London and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) with financial support from the Infrastructure and Urban Development Department (IUDD) of the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Like its companion, this book is intended for decision-makers at all levels, community leaders and women and men concerned with and engaged in environmental and development issues, be it in preserving the global commons or in improving the local living environment. We hope that the ideas and case studies presented stimulate further action and debate for a sustainable and urbanised world.

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The world's development and environmental communities came together for the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. The Summit produced a comprehensive vision for the future under the banner of Sustainable Development. Agenda 21, a global action plan for the implementation of this vision, was endorsed by more than 160 countries. It emphasised the importance of the role of local authorities and communities in working towards a more sustainable future, especially through the development of Local Agendas 21. Indeed, the phrase 'think globally act locally' popularised by the Earth Summit advocates local action as the path towards sustainability.

Four years later, the Habitat Agenda and its political statement - the Istanbul Declaration - endorsed and expanded on Agenda 21 and highlighted the importance to be given to urbanisation and the related issues of land, housing and urban management. It called for effective action to provide adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanising world. These two agendas set the stage to bridge the so-called 'green' and 'brown' perspectives on urbanisation, environment and development.

Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda are milestones in a significant shift in perspective that took place during the 1990s. This change in perspective moved the traditional 'environment versus development' approach to one that recognises that environmental concerns are inextricably linked to social and economic development processes. Furthermore, the Habitat Agenda recognises that, in an increasingly urbanised world, cities are the locus of critical social, economic and environmental problems, as well as the source of unique opportunities for a more sustainable future.

The new perspectives embodied in Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda also highlight the link between sustainability and governance. Rather than being the exclusive domain of governments and experts, sustainable development is now seen as a process involving ordinary people in their every day lives. Both agendas underline the need to combat poverty and to include

those people who are traditionally disenfranchised and excluded from mainstream decision-making processes. In this context, sustainability and governance become the two overriding policy considerations for the international community in the new millennium.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio+10, constitutes a unique opportunity to assess the outcomes and impacts of Agenda 21 and to provide renewed impetus for implementation. How much has the consensus that was reached in 1992 resulted in a more socially just, environmentally sound, economically vibrant and politically accountable world? When measured in terms of tangible outcomes, the answer is far from satisfactory. Many have therefore argued that the agendas for a sustainable future have failed to fully mobilise people, governments and the business community in addressing the urgent problems affecting cities and societies today and in the future.

The argument of this book is that the main problem does not lie with the principles advocated by the sustainable development paradigm *per se*, but rather the structural barriers that have inhibited local actions towards sustainability. One key barrier is the different approaches of environmentalists and development planners. A major aim of this book is to build a bridge between these two by exploring the added value of integrating both approaches. Another key barrier is the political and institutional context within which local communities and cities operate. As cities and local communities do not function in isolation from the wider spheres of power and decision-making, much of what can be achieved through local action can only be sustained, institutionalised and scaled up by removing the obstacles at the national or international levels.

Throughout its four chapters, the book explores how to move from 'localising' to 'globalising' local action towards sustainability.



Chapters

1

BRINGING SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION INTO FOCUS

This chapter sets the challenges faced to enhance the role played by cities and local actors in the realisation of sustainable development and calls for a new understanding of the environment and urbanisation.



Michael Saifer



Adriana Allen

2

LOCAL AGENDA 21 AND THE HABITAT AGENDA: A COMMON BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION?

Here the contents of Agenda 21 and Habitat Agenda are examined vis-à-vis the green and brown agendas, highlighting the scope for them to complement each other.

This chapter explores the blueprint for action that has emerged from the implementation of both agendas and examines the steps and tools that can be used in practice.

Case studies

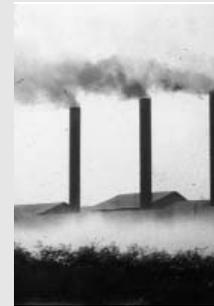
The Steps that Create the Process

- Canada: Stepping beyond our cities' limits: Vancouver's ecological footprint
- Chile: Applying ecological footprints at the city level in Santiago de Chile
- Uruguay: Rapid Visual Diagnosis in Montevideo
- Canada: VISION 2020 in Hamilton Wentworth
- Mexico: The Compatibility Matrix - Urban Agriculture in Mexico City
- United Kingdom: Local Environmental Auditing
- Australia: Small towns, Big Picture in the State of Victoria

3

LOCAL STRATEGIES FOR GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY

Drawing on a multitude of experiences from cities around the world, this chapter explores how the five dimensions of urban sustainability – ecological, physical, economic, social and political – unfold in practice.



Adrian Atkinson

3.2 Sustainability and the Built Environment

- International: Eco-Neighbourhoods
- USA: Land value taxation in Pennsylvania
- Colombia: The 'TransMilenio' bus system in Bogotá
- International: Innovations in urban transport
- International: Cycling and health in cities
- Bangladesh & Tanzania: Communities managing their water supply and sanitation
- Mauritania: Community managed water supply for informal settlements in Nouakchott
- Brazil: Slum upgrading in Guarapiranga
- China: Turning disaster into a new, green beginning in Baotou
- United Kingdom: new approaches to urban design in Sutton
- International: Innovative building technologies: low-tech approaches
- South Africa: Nurturing environmental ideas in Johannesburg
- Canada: Healthy housing in Toronto
- Ecuador: Recovering historic treasures in Quito

3.1 Working with Nature

- Ghana: A 'nutrition' cycle in Kumasi
- Tanzania & Ecuador: Urban agriculture & food security in Dar es Salaam and Quito
- Cuba: Urban agriculture
- Sri Lanka: Land use planning for disaster mitigation in Rathnapura
- Canada: Planning a liveable region in Greater Vancouver
- India: Catching rain in the drain in Chennai
- Philippines: Watershed management in Nueva Vizcaya
- India: Minimising waste, disseminating experience
- Zimbabwe: Benefiting communities by recycling waste in Mutare
- Cyprus: Large-scale utilisation of solar energy
- USA: Sustainable consumption of energy: green pricing in California
- Philippines: Phasing-out polluting fuels in Manila
- International: Cities for climate protection
- China: Greening the mother river in Taiyuan

Anna Soave

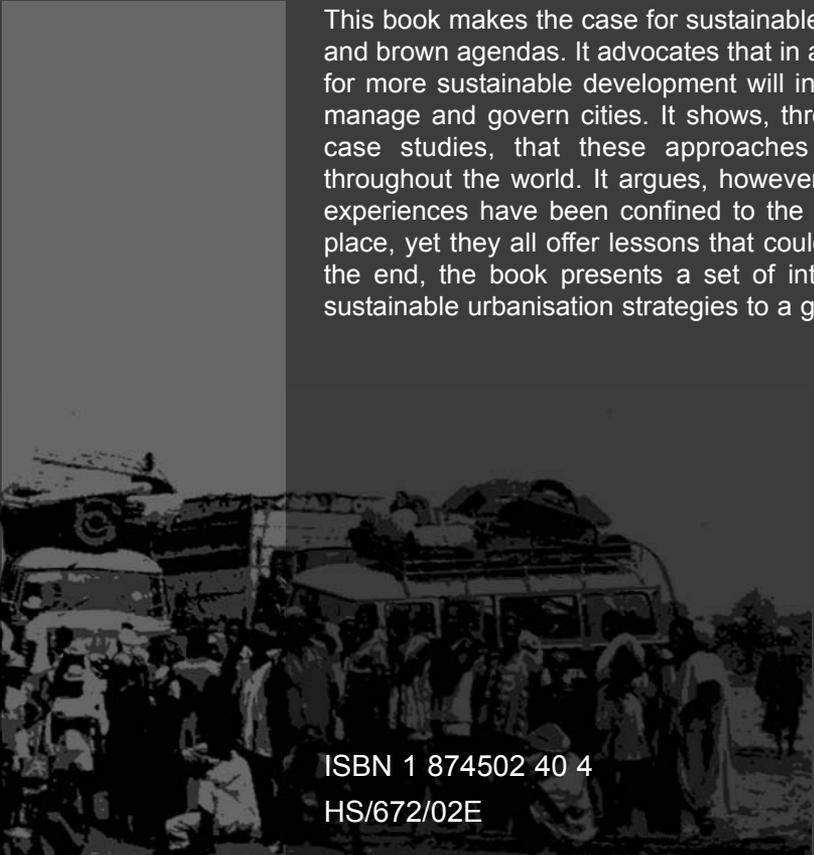
Anna Soave

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Sustainable Urbanisation: Bridging the Green and Brown Agendas

New and far-reaching approaches to the participatory governance of cities are essential to the sustainability of urban life. This is the unequivocal message that emerged from both Agenda 21, that was endorsed by more than 160 countries at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, and the Habitat Agenda that came out of the City Summit in Istanbul in 1996. Sustainable urbanisation means recognising and acting upon the need for strategic alliances and partnerships between central and local government, NGOs and civil society organisations, urban communities and households, and the private sector. It means addressing urban economic development, social justice and cultural diversity as parts of the same political process of development. It means bridging the gap between urban environmental degradation (the Brown Agenda) and changing attitudes to the patterns in the use and reuse of the earth's resources (the Green Agenda).

This book makes the case for sustainable urbanisation by bridging the green and brown agendas. It advocates that in a rapidly urbanising world, the quest for more sustainable development will increasingly depend on how well we manage and govern cities. It shows, through the analysis of more than 70 case studies, that these approaches are already being implemented throughout the world. It argues, however, that the impact of many of these experiences have been confined to the place and society where they took place, yet they all offer lessons that could be transferred to others. Towards the end, the book presents a set of interlinked approaches to scaling up sustainable urbanisation strategies to a global level.



ISBN 1 874502 40 4
HS/672/02E

DFID Department for
International
Development

Published in 2002 by the
Development Planning Unit
University College London
9 Endsleigh Gardens
London WC1H 0ED
United Kingdom
www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu

Designed by
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Printed by
Jenner City Print Ltd
Tiptree, Essex (UK)



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For more information on the publication: www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/rio10.htm