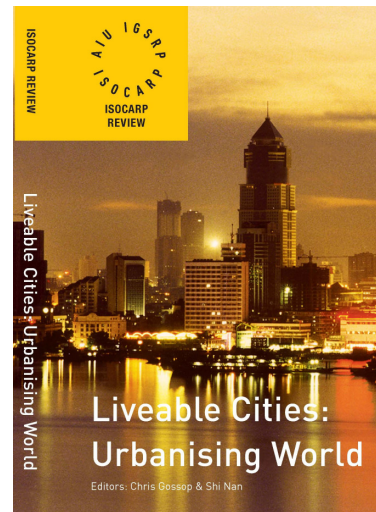




ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

**ISOCARP Review 07 Liveable Cities:
Urbanising World**
edited by Chris Gossop and Shi Nan



Review 07, published in conjunction with ISOCARP's 47th World Congress held in Wuhan, China in October 2011, is about the task of shaping our cities and city regions in ways whereby they can be made more sustainable and more liveable. The challenge for planning and city management is to accomplish this in the face of a scale and pace of urbanisation that almost overwhelms the imagination. The predicted outcome of current trends is many new cities of over 10 million population ('megacities') amid very many smaller, but still substantial, settlements.

In environmental terms, the cities are a major source of the greenhouse gases that are contributing to climate change, and they will have to be a major part of any solution. They will require more, and better, planning as one ingredient on the vital pathway towards more sustainable, lower carbon cities, where there is a diminished use of finite resources, especially oil. Moreover, many cities will be directly threatened by the effects of climate change, with those in coastal areas particularly at risk.

Climate change will often impact worst on the urban poor, generally those least able to cope with its effects. The inexorable move in developing countries from rural areas to the cities has meant, in many places, the rapid growth of slums and squatter settlements having minimal infrastructure and often in places that are most vulnerable to floods and landslides. Another characteristic of this urbanisation is the often extreme spatial polarisation – between the wealthier and poorer housing areas, the up market suburban areas, on the one hand, and the tenements and slums on the other.

On the economic front, globalisation and economic restructuring have had complex effects upon the world's cities and their labour markets. Big disparities have emerged in terms of income while the economic downturn that began in 2008 has led to further restructuring and a widespread increase in unemployment. An accompanying feature has been the rapid growth of the informal economy. While this has been perhaps a 'saving grace' for some economies, it has trapped many millions in low profit, very insecure activities offering few prospects for the future.

These issues underlie the 16 case studies in Review 07. These are drawn from around the world with an emphasis on the fast developing countries, the economic superpowers of the near future.

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