

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONGRESS

By General Rapporteur Stefan RAU, Germany/Philippines/China

Senior Urban Development Specialist Consultant to CDIA and to Chinese Universities, Director of Metropolitan Synergies Shanghai, Guest Professor Lanzhou UT

“The second and third decades of the 21st Century will be an unprecedented moment in human history when the global population moves from 50% urban today to 70% urban in little over a generation from now. Arguably the greatest challenge facing humanity, a collaborative, sustainable approach to all aspects of this rapid urbanization is needed.” (UN Habitat, 2012)

A glance at the topic: Rapid urban change & the need of a “fast forward” planning

The 2012 ISOCARP congress focuses on high-speed urban change and the associated question of how planning professionals can cope with hyper-dynamism while guiding urbanization effectively and responsibly. It is common ground that environmental and climate change along with rapid social and economic transformations demand a “Fast Forward” planning paradigm. Swift and efficient action is required from planners, policy makers and many other players in unison to navigate physical structures and operational practices of urban territories, infrastructures, services and lifestyles towards low-carbon ecological efficiency, economic sustainability and social inclusiveness.

Orientation to the new congress format – more plenary sessions, topic tracks, exhibitions

The 2012 ISOCARP congress has a slightly different format compared to previous years.

New this year is a total of four plenary sessions on four successive afternoons that allow us to engage many highly regarded experts to deliver inspiring keynote speeches advancing the discourse on the topic and explore its relevance to the host country.

A valued continuity at ISOCARP congresses and their hallmark is the high level professional exchange and discourse in parallel paper presentation sessions with case studies and theory followed by vital professional discussions. This year five parallel sessions will be held on three successive mornings.

New this year is the organization of the various sub-topics into three tracks. Some focus on the main congress topic “Fast Forward – Planning in a (hyper) dynamic urban context” (tracks 1a1, 1a2, 1b/c/d) while one relates the topic to the host country, Russia (track 2) and another is an open forum for any relevant contribution to the planning discourse (track 3) – this time it was possible to gather papers around an abstracted version of the main topic “Managing Urban Dynamics”.

This year there will also be a few special working events like a Forum for Russian Mayors hosted by ISOCARP and RUPA, a Forum on Education inspiring Planning Schools in Russia hosted by the ISOCARP Institute and the LOC, a workshop on Urban Planning and –Design Regulations in Russia, a workshop on Planning for Shrinking Cities, a workshop for the strategic and integrated development of underground space and others. In the evenings there will be sessions on various ISOCARP activities like the Awards, UPATs and YPPs.

New this year are also some planning exhibitions that were made possible through the enthusiasm of the local organizing committee. On show are selected Russian cities and their planning activities and Housing in Russia from a West-European perspective as well as sponsored exhibitions. Special

displays document some of ISOCARP's latest highly successful activities such as Awards, UPATs, YPPs etc.

The positive response from planners around the world

The 2012 ISOCARP congress enjoys much interest from all currently populated continents. More than 200 authors from more than 40 countries responded to the call for abstracts and 150 were accepted for paper submittal. Over 110 full papers are now available on the paper platform at www.isocarp.net. We are very happy that many authors come from those developing and emerging countries currently experiencing rapid urbanization, i.e. China, India, Africa, SE Asia. And the many excellent contributions from Russian and East European colleagues and the valuable experiences from Europe, the Americas and Oceania make this a must-go high-level, diverse and colourful international exchange for planners.

More on the topic: On the magnitude and directions of urban hyper-dynamism

At the 2012 ISOCARP congress we gather knowledge and best practices cases and advance the discourse contributing to turn the challenges of hyper-dynamism into real opportunities for positive impact.

The global process of rapid urbanization is overwhelming with an added estimated urban population of 2.7 billion between 2011 and 2050 (UN DoESAP 2012), unprecedented in the history of human geography both in magnitude and in speed. Everybody on the planet will be tangibly affected by this "last human movement of this size and scope" (D. Saunders, 2011) and the larger than life challenges acting in urgency to cope and respond to environmental and climate change, resources scarcity and social disparity.

We know from various calculations published by international agencies that a dramatic change from "business as usual" needs to be achieved and "fast forwarded" to mitigate and possibly reverse trends of climate change and adapt to its effects (J. Dawkins, 2011). This involves a fundamental change to some of our basic beliefs in our economic and financial systems, monetary valuations, mindsets and lifestyles. One main message from some of the champions promoting a green economy (i.e. A. Steiner, UNEP) is that we cannot afford to continue based on the growth principle we relied on as a mode of general economic development. In this next wave of rapid urbanization we need to be changing it, "fast forwarding" the "growth" era into an age of "post-growth" (N. Paech, 2012) venturing into a globally sustainable and inclusive pattern that holistically values quality and not quantity. Towns, cities, metropolises and megacities are necessarily the focal points of these new movements and there is a serious opportunity that the next 2.7 billion urbanites can be participants in these new modes. The responsibilities of planners together with many others from different disciplines is to understand, conceptualize, communicate, implement, monitor and showcase best practices of successful response patterns to high-speed situations and disseminate that knowledge from on the ground to potential adaptation in many other places fast.

Maybe one of the biggest challenges to changing patterns is to de-couple the increase of per-person consumption from the increase of individual wealth as documented with regards to space consumption by Shlomo Angel and his team in 2011. Counter to the demand of reducing the footprint we can observe that with increasing wealth compactness decreases. "At present rates, the world's urban population is expected to double in 43 years while urban land cover will double in only

19 years. The urban population of the developing countries is expected to double between 2000 and 2030 while the built-up area of their cities can be expected to triple.” (S. Angel, 2011). And lower densities and larger urban areas coincide with an increase in fuel consumption (Newman & Kenworthy, 1989) - although some of the myths of car-dependence have been dispelled by the same authors in 2000.

While we know what attracts people to cities and to ever larger cities is that bigger cities produce more wealth and urbanites are richer with higher salaries and more creative jobs. However, on the down-side we also know that big cities produce more pollution and waste. However, cities and urban areas are more efficient with respect to per-person needs of infrastructure following the rule-of-thumb: doubling the population of a city leads to doubling of infrastructure minus 15% (L. Bettencourt, G. West, 2011).

Depending on the world region, we can observe various models of rapid development based on political and economic contexts. In cases of many emerging and developing regions urbanization is migration driven overlaid with natural population growth and the leadership is trying to catch up with infrastructure and service provision. Other models are infrastructure, development and market driven and migration and investments follow these opportunities created. An output of city components is produced in a manner that may be compared to that of assembly lines of Fordism and Taylorism. In the regions that are already highly urbanized there are still rapid urban change processes under way as cities are constantly re-inventing themselves to stay competitive in the new economy and improve infrastructure, services, culture and liveability. That challenge, the competition for investments and businesses that reaches across all spatial layers global, regional and domestic is indeed defining much of the urban acceleration action. In the fight for capital, the place with the highest and fastest speculative return on investments can attract most funds and thus build infrastructure and assets and develop human capital. Accelerating urban development thus has taken on the notion of accelerating the expected investment returns.

Encouraging however is that in the past few years a lot of spatial, ecological and socio-economic knowledge has been generated and concepts seem to converge on the need for low-carbon eco-efficient, socially inclusive and economically sustainable urban territories addressing climate change mitigation and adaption with quantifiable indicators to plan, implement and monitor the performance of cities.

A critical parameter for a sustainable rapid urbanization is to learn fast from the resilience of informal settlements and to develop planning and policies that ensure social and environmental safety and security and enable upward mobility for rural migrants. They are eager to work themselves up rung by rung. This way ‘arrival cities’ (D. Saunders) turn into ‘transition cities’ with middle class neighbourhoods as ‘destination cities’. It is of utmost importance that we develop mechanisms that enable migrating rural poor and their offspring to turn into a stable future middle class constituting the future cities in Sub-Saharan Africa and South, East and Southeast Asia.

On the ‘urban speedometer’ and ‘throttles’ & ‘breaks’ to benefit from/mitigate speed

Our ‘urban speedometer’ measures a variety of socio-economic and ecological dynamics using a few key indicators. The primary indicators typically used to describe the speed and trajectory of urban

change are gross regional product, population, public and private assets investments, jobs/unemployment as well as urban area development over various time periods. Secondary indicators characterize the standards and dynamics of many subsystems and included are further socio-economic and physical factors. Demographics, population- and built densities, Gini co-efficient, literacy and education levels, education, health care and culture facilities, road and rail length, vehicle ownership, commercial and residential space per capita, green space, green infrastructure and street trees, brown-fields redeveloped, environmental pollution levels etc. each measured as developments over time.

The various drivers of high-speed urbanization or rapid decline are financial, economic, social, institutional and environmental in nature. There is a wealth of experience and sectoral studies about how the factors interplay and about typical phasing patterns. However the inner mechanics of speed in urban processes within and across subsystems is largely undiscovered and there is a significant research gap. We observe that economic growth leads to corporate and institutional asset investment activities and that has cascading effects on infrastructure, housing and later on cultural investments etc.

We also have developed some tools we could call ‘throttles’ that accelerate development and ‘brakes’ that slow down development. So far they seem to have been primarily economic accelerators to stimulate economic vitality and decelerators to cool down real estate markets. Various economic theories have been the basis for different interventions mostly to accelerate economic and urban growth. Accelerators, for example are interest rate cuts, city marketing, tax incentives, process simplifications, land mobilization, industry and knowledge clustering, stimuli for innovations in science and technology, infrastructure construction, culture and quality of life improvements. They were attempts to promote and harness the positive effects of high speed development especially economic benefits. Decelerators have been imposed by policy makers as instruments to minimize the negative impacts of high speed and overheated developments. Examples for tools are interest rate increases, taxes, fees, regulations, bureaucratic procedures, restrictions of individual land title holding, and strict lending rules. More on the urban speedometer and its indicators along with 16 Hypotheses on its interpretation can be found in the ISOCARP Review 08 for inspiration (S. Rau, 2012).

Track-topics: Incidences of urban hyper-dynamism and discussion-inspiring questions

The 2012 ISOCARP congress organizes the main topic of ‘urban hyper-dynamism’ and planning ‘fast forward’ plus the relevance to the host country and an open forum along three tracks. Here is a brief overview of the ideas for the tracks and sub-tracks including some questions that may stimulate the discussions in the sessions.

TRACK 1: Fast Forward – High Speed Change

TRACK 1A1: Rapid urbanization. Steering high-speed growth towards low-carbon, eco-efficient liveability

During rapid urbanization over the past 200 years, fast growth has been organized around a dominant planning paradigm of a respective zeitgeist along with an economic model for development and typically a simple set of planning and building codes. During and after deceleration periods, it seems that a mode of reflection of the previous models of development occurs and adjustments are made that reflect new paradigms and possibly neglected aspects. An example might

be the period following the 1970's with Europe's rediscovery of the compact, walkable mixed-use city as a desirable model. Today, there might be an opportunity to 'fast forward' the period of reflection into periods of fast growth as they indeed exist simultaneously in different regions.

Stimulating questions

- What lessons can be learned from various cases of rapid urbanization and planning practice?
- Does planning in hyper-dynamic situations promote incremental project planning – with functional separation and segregation, and with investment products executed by the private sector – rather than integrated urban planning?
- How can plans, infrastructures and buildings made in high-speed situations have an inherent resilience and adaptability so they can respond to the changing needs of later phases?
- What best and simple instruments can planners apply to harness the positive effects of high speed while minimizing the negative impacts?
- How can planners accelerate and decelerate selected dynamics to optimize the benefit for the city, the community, the economy and the environment?
- How can hyper-fast global finance be tamed to limit the negative impacts on cities while retaining the positive effects?
- Do we need a 'speed limit' and 'breaks' for various indicators of urban dynamics – and if so, how can they be applied?

TRACK 1A2: Rapid urbanization. Don't postpone at high speeds: social inclusion, cultural & ecological conservation

High-speed urban processes may come at the cost of social exclusion and a loss of community and culture. Local identity, cultural and natural heritage, pedestrian-friendly public space, local transit and bicycle access may all be sacrificed to speed and known business models.

Stimulating Questions:

- How can social inclusion be organized in fast planning and decision making processes and top-down structures?
- How can the need for rapid economic development and poverty alleviation be harmonized with goals for eco-efficiency?
- Is it a contradiction to attempt the conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage at high speed change?
- How can high-speed construction of infrastructure and transportation be phased such that sustainable urban typologies are ensured in all stages of development?
- How can eco-mobility be ensured under the conditions of rapid urbanization and decline?

TRACK 1B/C/D: Planning challenges in Shifting Dynamics: reverse growth, slow-motion- and abrupt disasters

Shrinking cities, environmental degradation, climate change as well as man-made and natural disasters are perplexing problems for planners. They are fairly new tasks and require new trains of thought than managing growth.

Sub Track 1B: Economic decline and population loss: An opportunity for 'post-growth' pioneers?

Shrinking cities and regions are calling for new kinds of interventions and new styles of planning. Spatial polarization tends to characterize contemporary economic geography from the level of global

regions down to cities. We observe the swift rise of economic activities and new economies in one place and equally rapid decline of another. We know of 'ghost towns' in various places. We saw the breakdown of entire industrial regions and a subsequent dramatic loss of population and investments, for instance in heavy industry areas of Europe and the USA. We see Asia's dynamic rise while North America and Europe is decelerating. We see growth and decline within metropolitan regions. It seems we have to accept the existence of two speeds for geographies, on one hand hyper-dynamic, economically prosperous urban territories and static areas maintaining the status quo or experiencing decline.

Stimulating Questions:

- Could 'slow territories' provide testing grounds for post-growth regional economies?
- What specific lessons can be learned from declining regions and planning responses in USA, Europe, East-Europe?
- How can cities and regions develop innovative ways of enriching urban life under conditions of negative growth?
- Is there potential for ecological and cultural regeneration based on a notion of 'post-growth'?
- Or can migration and economic policies balance growth and decline, fully utilizing assets of shrinking cities by welcoming new residents and businesses?

Sub Track 1C: Environmental change: 'slow-motion catastrophes'. Needed: fast forward planning

Climate change, environmental loss and degradation accelerated and are diminishing the resources of life. A 'fast forward' of planning and implementation of a more eco-efficient human habitat is needed timely.

Stimulating Questions:

- How can planners act in light of scarcity of natural resources, loss of land for ecological functions, farming and urban development?
- How can urgent climate change risks be assessed and addressed in built-up urban areas?
- How do natural resources scarcities and a rapid decline in ecological functions constrain urban dynamics?
- How can the process of diminishing ecological infrastructure functions be mitigated, compensated or redirected?
- What kinds of land use patterns and urban operations can minimize the effects of environmental change or even reverse degradation?

Sub Track 1D: Disasters natural and manmade: Immediate action and long-term guidance

Droughts and floods, cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcano outbreaks as well as manmade disasters like wars and acts of terror seem to occur with higher frequencies and impact on urban areas and human life. The aftermath of disasters pose extreme challenges to planners requiring ad hoc decision making and drastic prioritizations.

Stimulating Questions:

- How can planners act in chaotic situations that demand ad hoc answers to solve immediate necessities?
- What are the essential principles for managing rapid rehabilitation and redevelopment involving many different players?
- How can planners effectively offer short term solutions while providing a strategic path for a sustainable medium and long term recovery?

- What core professional principles are universally applicable in such situations of emergency aftermath?

TRACK 2: Fast Forward for Planning in Russia and Eastern Europe

This track explores the transformations taking place in Russian planning – the culture and practice of planning, the Russian planning system, and education for urban and regional planning. Three topics are explored in this track: 1. Creative Synthesis Fast Forward: Masterplanning in Perm, 2. Innovative Integration of Planning Cultures and Institutional Change through East-West Dialog, 3. Post-socialist transformations - acceleration of economy and transportation. Within this track there will be an Education forum discussing opportunities for innovations and international exchange with Russian planning schools.

Rapid urban change may also occur as a consequence of socio-political change, which Russia experienced about 20 years ago and the cultural aftermath and the transition can still be felt to this day and it may not be completed with regards to the reality of spatial planning. Leadership for planning and planning culture after abrupt or slowly changing socio-political systems provides an opportunity for strategic change of the planning system. Planners from Eastern European countries will share experiences of how to bring about post socialist transformations in urban planning.

Stimulating Questions:

- What can planners do to proactively shape reforms once a country's political system changes?
- Are there universal principles that may be applied, generic planning systems and practice?
- What are tools to analyze and apply the "new rules" of a country and can planners influence the legal framework for planning?
- What case studies from which transition countries may provide which types of lessons and can be used and transferred to other countries and Russia?

TRACK 3: International Planners' Forum – Understanding & Managing Urban Dynamics

This track is organized along three topics: 1. Ensuring Quality of Urban Transformations: Innovative Participation and Place-Making, 2. Strategies and Methods for Managing Urban Dynamics, 3. Tools and Instruments – Organizing and Visualizing Data.

The latter session focuses on theories and methods and can be related to questions interpreting the 'urban speedometer' which measures a variety of indicators such as growth and decline of population, jobs, demographics, urban area, constructed floor area, land and green coverage, roadway and railway length, car ownership, transit ridership, GRP, GRP by sector, tax income, Gini coefficient, academic enrolment etc. They indicate the dynamics of systems and subsystems. A better understanding of the mechanisms may result in better options for points of strategic intervention by planners. Papers are invited on research and scholarship related to high speed urban process analysis and modelling to enhance our understanding of system and subsystem speeds.

Stimulating Questions for the theoretical and tools session related to urban dynamics:

- How fast is slow (too slow?) or fast (too fast?) for which aspects of urban change?
- How does the speed of urban change relate to the scale of urban agglomerations?
- How do respective systems and subsystems interrelate with regards to acceleration and deceleration?
- Are there phase-patterns that can be identified?

- Are there threshold speeds at which processes of different quality are being triggered?
- Are there successful models that simulate speeds, acceleration and deceleration of parameters?
- How can our understanding of the impact of the speed of urban change on various dimensions improve the effectiveness of urban planning, i.e. what kind of intervention at what phase in what subsystem is most effective?

Selected special sessions, forums, workshops and exhibitions

A series of special sessions are held at the congress to facilitate intensive and focused interaction and exchange among a selection of policy makers, academics and practitioners. The sessions include:

Mayors' Forum – Lessons from best practices to tackle challenges in Russian Cities

Education Forum – International Inspirations for Russian Planning Schools

Special Session – Innovative concepts for planning shrinking cities

Special Session – reform of codes and regulations to ensure quality in Russian cities

Exhibitions on planning for Perm, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Skolkovo, Russian Housing

Exhibition of ISOCARP Activities – Awards, UPAT, YPP

A message to leaders and planners from the congress participants at the closing session

The 2012 ISOCARP congress will summarize recommendations at the end of the congress and relay these to international leaders and planners. Maybe there is a need to raising awareness about the need to know more about the mechanics of speed in urban processes? Maybe successful response patterns and instruments as well as lessons learned from mistakes as laid out in the contributions to the congress and the new ideas generated in the discussions during the sessions and events could be identified? Maybe a message should include some guidance for how leaders and planners can act effectively and responsibly to benefit from high speed urban change and to mitigate the potentially negative effects? Maybe a message that includes that planning needs to be “fast forwarded” to successfully guide rapid urbanization towards low-carbon, eco-efficient, socially inclusive, economic sustainability?

Greetings to the congress participants

Together with the entire congress team, ISOCARP EXCO and VP Jeremy Dawkins, the Local Organizing Committee and Andrei Golovin, RUPA and Alexander Antonov, ISOCARP headquarters Gaby Kurth and Monica Ornek and many others allow me to thank all congress delegates for your valuable contributions and for your engaged participation. We are looking forward to seeing you in Perm and wish you all a successful, inspiring, pleasant and unforgettable time in Europe's easternmost city. And we further look forward to seeing you in Brisbane, Australia in 2013 at ISOCARP's 49th congress.

Stefan Rau
Manila, August 2012



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