

## SUMMARY REPORT TRACK 4: INTERNATIONAL PLANNING EXCHANGE

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### Challenges

Having in mind the topic of the congress, frontiers of planning can be perceived in different ways, as territorial borders and planning in the cross-border areas, but also as an evolution towards new concepts and approaches in planning theory and practice. Current trends are reflected in planning practice which should rime with reality, change it and improve it.

Many cities are changing and transforming at fast speeds. There are growing and shrinking cities and each faces different challenges. Both the growing and the shrinking cities should be transformed to make them livable. Both growth and decline in number of inhabitants bear specific risks in the development of cities. Illegal settlements with issues of legalization, ownership or crime (examples from Nigeria, Turkey and South Africa) are often present in growing cities and the growth of population that could be an advantage, if not followed by economic growth creates difficulties. Shrinking cities are more present in countries where economic growth has already created some assets, but the sustainability of the economic growth can be questioned. Livability of cities is a complex issue which demonstrates the need for exchanges, for understanding cities in their regional, national and international contexts. Shrinking cities increasingly depend on growing cities, and vice versa, since growing cities have been already influenced a lot by the cities which are currently shrinking or stagnating. Concept of sustainable livable framework, social housing strategies and other issues presented in the international planning exchange seek for answers on livable cities and their networks.

Numerous risks can be identified in cities. These may include risks arising from climate change, social unrest, crime and terrorism, lack of security and of rule of law. Fear is present in everyday life, through media, looking for security and improvement of life quality. Planning has the component of future in itself. Being ready for potential crisis (example of food sovereignty in Singapore) is an example of planning for future both future generations and future of current generation. Minimizing the risk of lack of basic needs should be among priority issues in planning. Once basic needs are assured for everybody and everywhere, humanity will be able to look further into the future and truly continue to improve the quality of life.

Implementation of green solutions (examples from Caribbean, China, and Singapore) has become an obvious need with its numerous advantages. Investment in renewable energy infrastructure, communal infrastructure, waste management and public transport present in long term financial savings and improvements of life quality, therefore livability. Promotion of public transport (particularly in polycentric cities) is necessary and still not enough widespread. Changes in governance, consumers' attitudes and business environment are some steps towards the green economy.

Planning proposals should be based on adequate and thorough spatial analysis. Although politics and public participation play their role in generating planning solutions, the best use of innovative tools should be made. Geographic information systems – GIS and Earth Observation (EO) with the examples from South Africa, Vietnam and Australia (hydrology and floods) are some tools that facilitate spatial analysis and enable better monitoring, evaluation and further planning in order to make best proposals and strategies for further development.

Planners today work in a political environment confronted by different vested interest parties. Short sighted time span for political decision making. Reach policy and decision makers, participation (challenge is the inclusion of NGO or civil sector) and building capacity particularly in local governments represent challenges. Participation makes planning slower, but more effective. Innovative tools can again help better participation and raising awareness of need to improve planning practice and to make its results more obvious, although they usually come much later and without real guarantee.

### What We Learned

The urban era faces diverse cases of urban development. Already mentioned shrinking and growing cities can be recognized in cases of Istanbul and Lisbon. The issue of urban redevelopment has been shown in the example of Rio de Janeiro. Resilience to crisis situation was presented through the example from Singapore and activities of urban agriculture.

Contemporary technologies and innovation are redefining space in cities. Innovation is a driver of sustainability. Inventions may lead to social and technological innovation. Some old concepts, such as urban metabolism, can be applied. New technologies may be used for research and spatial analysis as well as for direct improvement of life quality in cities. Green solutions like greenways (in the Chinese city of Dongguan) or environmental deck in Singapore are forms of innovation which contribute to well-being and sustainability.

Politicians should understand (learn) the planning decision making process. Building capacities, particularly in local governments is therefore essential for coordination of interests. Conflicts of interests are often present between central and local government, or between private and civil (non-governmental) sector. Interests of local population should be taken into account in priority, for example when facilities are being planned for some mega-events, when a lot of attention is turned towards tourists.

### What We Needed

The awareness about the need for comparative studies is becoming increasingly obvious. Congresses of ISOCARP and particularly international planning exchange sessions are perfect places for gathering case studies from around the world. Some papers are explicitly using comparative approach, comparing Florida and Queensland or Stuttgart and Washington DC, as well as comparative overview of spatial changes in time for Rio de Janeiro in Brasil and Hangzhou in China.

We need adequate standardization of planning practices, procedures and planning tools in order to be more efficient, to obtain better results and to avoid unnecessary waste of time and energy. Standardization should be adequate and intelligently applied to diverse situations. Modeling in accordance with standards is supposed to facilitate spatial analysis.



Old concepts (like urban metabolism) and terminologies (like land use management) should be re-examined and a comprehensive approach in planning be re-formulated. Solutions such as green economy, greenways, e-deck should be seriously taken into account in sake of sustainability. Capacity building (especially in governments) is also needed, as well as collaborative governance (Indonesian example) and multi-stakeholder approach (example from Columbia). Those are some of needs which were indentified in international planning exchange in Brisbane which will additionally move the frontiers of planning.

