

Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda: can planning deliver?

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...to reinvigorate the global political commitment to the sustainable development of towns, cities and other human settlements, both rural and urban.

HABITAT 111

- **The Post-2015 Development Agenda.**
- **Sustainable Development Goal 11 on cities and human settlements.**
- **The New Urban Agenda.**
- **Role of planning...**



Why is this of interest?

For a long time planners around the world have been arguing that governments should take cities and planning more seriously.

And now it has happened!



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030.



**Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities:
Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and
sustainable**

The fight for an urban goal in the SDGs

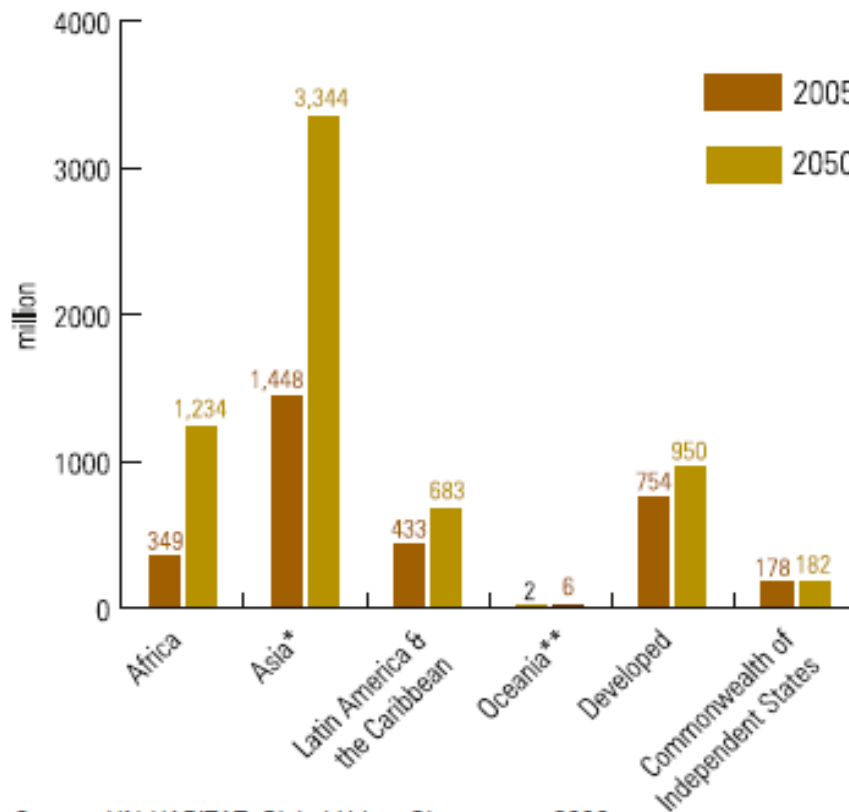
Shifting 50 years of anti-urban bias in development policy

In 2013, 84% of governments in less developed regions had anti-urban policies to lower migration from rural to urban areas (United Nations)

Countered by the urban ‘tipping point’ and new urban interest – cities as ‘growth engines’ in the global economy and cities as vehicles for achieving global sustainable development .

The global urban tipping point: over 50% of the world's population lives in urban areas

FIGURE 1.1.3: URBAN POPULATION (MILLIONS) BY REGION, 2005 AND 2050



Source: UN-HABITAT, Global Urban Observatory, 2008.

Data from UN Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects, 2007 revision.

Note: *Asia doesn't include Japan. ** Oceania doesn't include Australia and New Zealand.

And 75% of urban dwellers are in the global South.

What is SDG Goal 11 ?

Spelt out in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) 23p

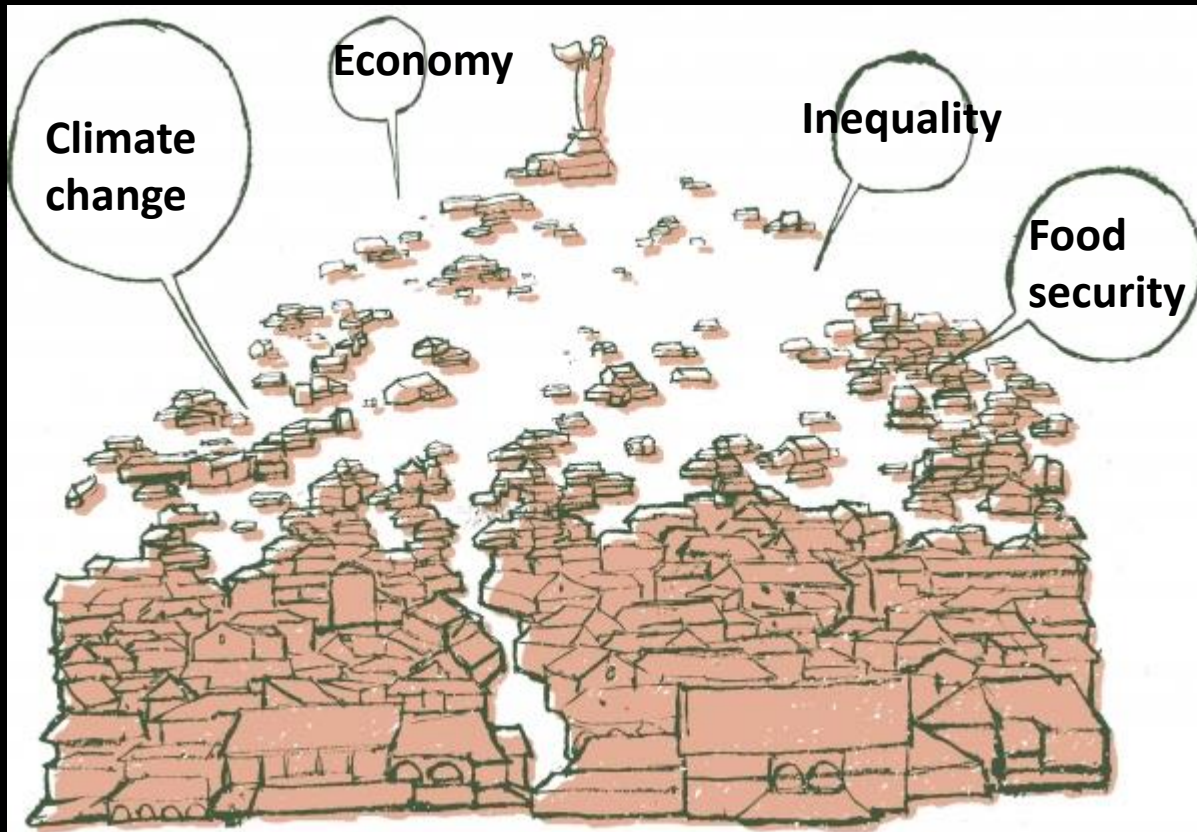
A UN process led by UN Habitat, negotiated through: regional representatives; policy experts; Habitat 3 bureau – 10 member states; stakeholders. To be adopted at Habitat 3 in October.

Major shifts:

- From a shelter and 'slums' focus in the global South to all urban areas globally.**
- From only sectoral goals to a view of all goals through the spatial lens of 'the urban'.**
- Hence new focus on local government.**

The new role of cities anticipated by SDG 11

Urban areas (and planning) will be expected to deal with ALL the key global issues. It is assumed cities are the major contributors to these, and offer the greatest potential to address them...



All global processes work horizontally through places – urban places

The NUA (3rd draft): CITIES FOR ALL

Highly progressive, even radical, although disputes eg over the 'right to the city'.

.... All urban citizens must have just, safe, healthy, accessible, resilient, sustainablecities.

.... People centred vision of cities ... equal rights and opportunities ... accepts social function of land... civic engagement ...quality public spacesgender equality ...
...recognize informal economy... balanced and integrated territorial development... adopt disaster risk and climate change and adaptation measures... minimize environmental impact....

Paragraphs 90 - 120 the role planning must play as the key implementer

“We commit to an **Urban Paradigm shift...**”

Shift in **urban outcomes** to acceptance and inclusion of informality, density, mixed use, public transport, environmental priorities, plans shaped by connected and high quality public space.

Very different from much current planning practice!



OUT !!!

ECO-ATLANTIC - LAGOS

KIGALI – PLAN FOR CAPITAL OF RWANDA



Monofunctional suburbia



What kind of plans in the NUA?

In the NUA and in the *International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning*, adopted by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in April 2015.

Implies a nested hierarchy of state-led, regulation-driven, spatial plans, starting at the top: national, regional and local (urban) scales

83. We will anchor the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda in inclusive, implementable, and participatory urban policies, as appropriate, to mainstream sustainable urban and territorial development as part of integrated development strategies and plans, supported, as appropriate, **by national, sub-national, and local, institutional and regulatory frameworks**, ensuring that they are adequately linked to transparent and accountable finance mechanisms.

106. We will promote the development of adequate and enforceable regulations in the housing sector, including, as applicable, resilient **building codes, standards, development permits, land use by-laws and ordinances, and planning regulations**, combating and preventing speculation, displacement, homelessness

119. We will include culture as a priority component of urban plans and strategies in the adoption of planning instruments, **including master plans, zoning guidelines, building codes, coastal management policies, and strategic development policies ...**

A strong state role rather than just market liberalism may be necessary, but:

- 1. How does this kind of planning respond to the goal of cities as economic drivers and sites of greatly reduced poverty and inequality ??? Where is the economy in all this??**
- 2. Where is the institutional capacity and degree of decentralization to roll out national, regional and local spatial and law-driven plans and their implementation ??**



Does the NUA assume a form of planning stuck in the past?

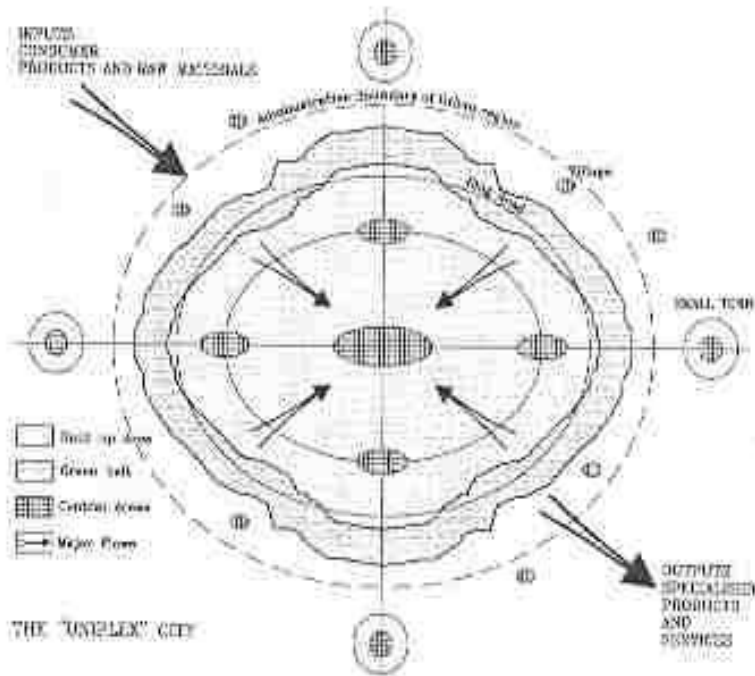
Has it forgotten about the global economy and how this impacts on cities and regions?

Does it assume an institutional and regulatory capacity available in Europe, and maybe the US and China, but not in many parts of the global South?

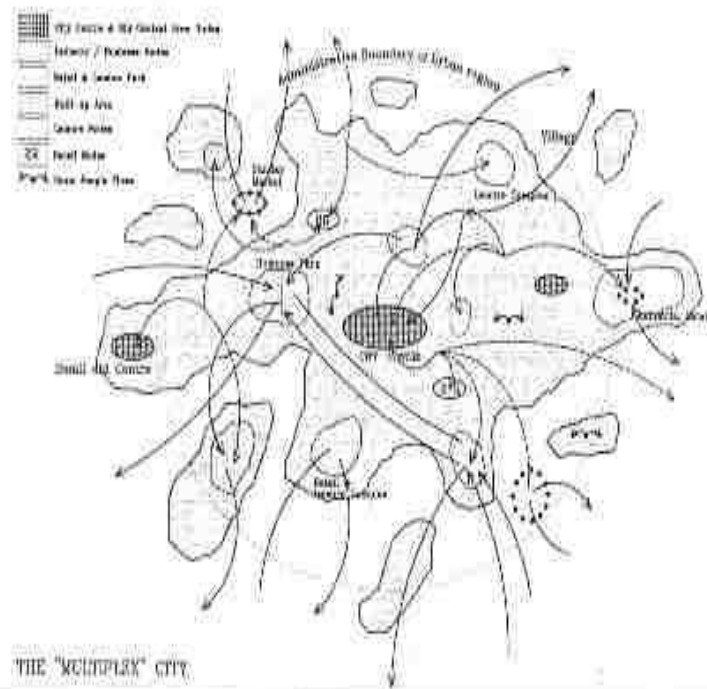
Can planning deliver on NUA goals given these major gaps?

Have major critiques of past planning been forgotten?

“We must shift from a ‘uniplex’ conception of the city to a ‘multiplex’ concept”



A uniplex conception of the city



A 'multiplex' conception of the city

'We need new ways of thinking about both cities and societies, as open systems, social milieux and symbolic identities. We need to move away from the comprehensive planning of spatial arrangements'

Graham S and P Healey (1999) Relational concepts of space and place: Issues for planning theory and practice. *European Planning Studies* 7(5) 623-46.

Graham and Healey (1999) – key points:

- Planners do not grasp the complex dynamics of contemporary urban change...they retain the assumption that cities can be considered unproblematically as single, integrated, unitary material objects to be addressed by planning instruments... They assume a concept of cities managed from the nation-state downwards through a hierarchy of territorial plans, and tightly linked to their rural hinterlands.
- Cities and regions are conceptualised as ‘containers’, bounding the activities which go on inside them. The economic and social lives of city residents are assumed to equate with this physical and locational conception of urban life.
- Planners need to come to grips with the reality of the ‘multiplex city’. .. Economic activities in cities and regions can be linked in to international circuits of trade and innovation ... as well as local factors and forces..

Conclusion...

GOAL 11 AND THE NUA IS A MAJOR SHIFT IN GLOBAL POLICY THINKING.

PLANNING AS THE MAIN IMPLEMENTING TOOL IS NOW CENTRE-STAGE IN THIS.

THE SDG PROCESS IS NOT JUST A TALK-SHOP: A MASSIVE ROLL-OUT OF INDICATORS AND MONITORING MECHANISMS WILL START RIGHT AFTER OCTOBER, WITH A POSSIBLE NEW GLOBAL INSTITUTION TO MANAGE THIS.

MEETING GOAL TARGETS WILL BE REINFORCED BY INTERNATIONAL AGENCY RATINGS AND POSSIBLY LOAN REQUIREMENTS.

THE NUA GOALS ARE SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY POSITIVE AND WORTH SUPPORTING....

BUT THE NATURE OF PLANNING ENVISAGED IN THE NUA IS UNLIKELY TO DELIVER ON THESE VERY AMBITIOUS EXPECTATIONS.

THIS COULD BE CHANGED -- BUT A GLOBAL DEBATE ON THIS IS NEEDED URGENTLY!