

GPN Newsletter No. 4

December 2010



GLOBAL PLANNERS NETWORK
Sharing new ideas about communities across the world

FROM THE EDITOR

As we prepare to welcome in a New Year, I hope all readers will resolve to do at least one additional thing in 2011 that will help their fellow planners in another part of the globe.

Once again, I am pleased to report that this newsletter is getting to planners far and wide. Our last edition prompted responses from Indonesia and Zambia. Thank you to all those who are passing it on.

My very best wishes for 2011.

I welcome your views on all topics covered here.

Contact me at editor@globalplannersnetwork.org.

Ron Tate (Editor)

NEWS FROM PLANNERS

The Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) is an umbrella for initiatives to reduce energy consumption and mitigate the effects of climate change in countries across the Western Hemisphere. Firmly believing that urban and regional planning can play a key role in achieving these objectives, the **American Planning Association** launched the *ECPA Urban Planning Capacity-building Initiative* in Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of November. [Read more](#)

Australia Consultation on Future Sustainable Cities

With input and encouragement from the **Planning Institute of Australia**, the Major Cities Unit of the national Department of Infrastructure and Transport has published a consultation document *Our Cities - building a productive, sustainable and liveable future*. [Read more](#)

Planners in Indonesia

The **Indonesian Association of Planners (IAP)** helped to organise an international conference in Jakarta in October. *Southeast Asia Metropolises and Urbanization: Challenge and Tools in the Context of Climate Change*, co-organised with the French Embassy in Jakarta and the National Committee on Climate Change attracted 250 participants from France, Japan, India, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, USA and Indonesia to consider development challenges and opportunities and management of climate change. IAP also presented its 'Most Livable City Index 2010' showing big cities in Indonesia with the highest livability score.

IAP now plans a 5-day international training programme from 22nd-28th February 2010 in Sanur Bali with input from the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific. This capacity-building programme is for planners, government, NGOs and academics in the region, encouraging them to take into account climate change factors in planning and use appropriate planning tools. The programme will include field visits to Denpasar and Nusa Penida. For more information contact Dani Muttaqien, Executive Director, IAP, Jl. Tamba No.21 (2nd Fl.), Pegangsaan, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia. Tel +62-21-3905067, fax +62-21-31903240. Website: www.iap.or.id.

UK Government review of Humanitarian Emergency Response

The **Royal Town Planning Institute** has joined the UK professional institutes for engineers, architects and surveyors to lobby the UK government review of response to Humanitarian Emergencies, emphasising the role that the built environment professions can play in disaster recovery and disaster risk reduction. [Read more](#)

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Every five years, the world planning education body GPEAN (Global Planning Education Association Network, uniting 9 different regional bodies) holds a world congress. The next one is in July 2011, in Perth (Australia). Already more than 600 abstracts have been received from more than 50 countries. The organisers are keen to involve professional planners in policy research to enhance relations between the academic and policy worlds. [More information](#)

Two Eco-Cities events next year, with deadlines for calls for proposals in January ...

Papers are invited for **Eco-Cities in Pan-Asia** on 17th-18th June 2011 at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (USA). The focus will be on eco-city initiatives all over Asia including comparison of governance and innovation across national and cultural boundaries. Offers from early career researchers and practitioners are particularly welcome via a travel bursary competition. The deadline for abstracts is 14th January 2011. [More info](#) (click 'International Conferences' under Eco-Cities).

People-Ecology-Urbanity: Moving Towards Ecocities

is the title for the Ecocity World Summit 2011 to be held in Montréal (Canada) on 22nd-26th August 2011. More than 1,500 participants will have an opportunity to showcase research projects and achievements that will help governments, researchers, and professionals answer the challenges they are facing in the search for sustainable urban development. The deadline for proposals is 31st January 2011. [More info](#)

POST-CONFLICT PLANNING

In response to our call for news of planners working in post-conflict countries, we received two examples of the good that planners can do: building up the capacity for local government and establishing viable economic development are both vital for former conflict areas.

RTPI member Ron McGill worked in the post-conflict state of Southern Sudan with the UN Capital Development Fund which invests in the least developed countries to help them achieve the Millennium Development Goals. 'Performance Budgeting' strengthens the capacity of local authorities through *accountability* and *measurability*. It also encourages publicly-supported delivery of infrastructure and services, with local community participation being built into planning, budgeting, managing, implementing and

monitoring of their services. At the end of the first phase of the work in 2006 Ron McGill edited **Achieving Results: Performance Budgeting in the Least Developed Countries** and it has now been made available free of charge [on-line](#).

APA member Mike Crane has worked on reconstruction in Tikrit, birthplace of Saddam Hussein, and is now supporting an eco-tourism project in Northern Iraq. A 'self-confessed river rat from Vermont', Mike is now helping Azzam Alwash, an Iraqi-American engineer and environmentalist, open up a beautiful – and safe – area to visitors. [Read more](#).

NEXT ISSUE

The special topic in the next issue of the Newsletter will be **Food & Planning** and will include a report on the online conference for World Town Planning Day 2010 organised by GPN partners and others. We would be very glad of your links and references too: send them to editor@globalplannersnetwork.org.

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS ROUND-UP

To mark World Habitat Day 2010, Taylor & Francis (publishers of journals for two GPN partners, APA and RTPI), have made available 100 of the best papers on improving cities and the quality of urban life for free 90-day access (but hurry, because the 90-day clock starting ticking on World Habitat Day, 4th October!) [Read more](#)

WORLD-WIDE PLANNING NEWS

AFRICA

Egypt Overcrowding and pollution in Cairo have inspired planners to push out into the desert, raising two brand-new cities out of the sand. [Read more](#)

Nigeria Amnesty International fears that waterfront redevelopment in Port Harcourt will leave 200,000 homeless. [Read more](#). Research at the Max Lock Centre at the UK University of Westminster suggests another approach which would allow ordered relocation of informal settlements and release of land for urban renewal, or permit a reduction in density and upgrading to decent modern standards, with a major boost to the local economy and employment. [Read more](#)

ASIA-PACIFIC

Asia's coastal megacities will flood more often, on a larger scale, and affect millions more people, if current climate change trends continue, a new report warns. [Read more](#)

China Expo 2010 'Better City – Better Life' closed with a [Declaration](#) on harmonious cities, and a proposal that 31st October should be World Better Cities Day.

Cambodia The first segment of a new international standard railway officially opened in Cambodia in October 2010, a major step towards the creation of a long-awaited Pan-Asian railway network. [Read more](#)

Indonesia Plans to relocate government, parliament and public offices have been proposed on and off since the 1930s because of problems in Jakarta including overcrowding and rising sea level, which has led to worsening flooding. Environmentalists now say a move is urgent to soften the impact of climate change on the congested city of 9.6 million people. [Read more](#)

AUSTRALASIA

Australia BREAZE - Ballarat Renewable Energy And Zero Emissions – based in Ballarat, Victoria is a

community organisation working on local ways to reduce greenhouse emissions. [Read more](#)

EUROPE

Russia The rich heritage of wooden buildings of Samara on the River Volga is under threat. [Read more](#)

Spain Citiwire looks at the 'blossoming of Barcelona' and attributes much of its attraction to the vibrant life of its public spaces. [Read more](#)

LATIN AMERICA

Colombia Once notorious for drug crime, Bogotá is now a popular tourist destination, especially the historic La Candelaria district with its mixture of cobbled streets, historic squares and 400-year-old churches alongside cafes, hotels and modern high-rise blocks. It benefits from a new wayfinding strategy. [Read more](#)

NORTH AMERICA

Planner Toni Griffin faces the challenge of remaking Detroit, a city that has seen its population decline by half over 60 years. In September, she helped Mayor Bing's administration launch the Detroit Works Project to map the city's future, beginning with a series of well attended public forums. [Read more](#)

The latest issue of the RTPI journal *Planning Theory & Practice* includes a free 'Interface' section on planning in the USA under the Obama Administration. [Read more](#)

SOUTH ASIA

India Shimla, 'Queen of the Hills', struggles as the state government of Himachal Pradesh prepares to lift the ban on construction in the city's 'green pockets'. [Read more](#).

With little undeveloped land left in Mumbai, brownfield development is the norm. Slum re-development can rehabilitate housing for families living in the poorest conditions and open up space for residential and commercial development. [Read more](#)

A UNESCO publication aims to promote and support revitalisation of historic districts in India using an interdisciplinary approach based on sustainable development, social equity and justice to achieve balanced development of historical districts to prevent social exclusion and avoid gentrification. [Read more](#)

WEST ASIA

United Arab Emirates The new Ice Land Water theme park in Ras al-Khaimah, based on the story of a clan of penguins who lose their home and settle in the waters of the Arabian Gulf, attracts criticism for taking the world's most pressing environmental problem and turning it into a plaything (not to mention erroneously implying that there are penguins in the Arctic). [Read more](#)

Global Planners Network

To find out more about GPN, please visit our website www.globalplannersnetwork.org.

If you know someone who would find this useful, please pass it on. If you have comments on it, or contributions for a future edition, please contact Ron Tate at editor@globalplannersnetwork.org.

There are practical difficulties in trying to do too much, not least an inability to meet resource implications. A newsletter cannot provide individual advice or a brokerage or introduction agency, nor can it vouch for or attest to the quality of every project, study, guidance note or research paper identified. Readers must make up their own minds on such issues.