

CONCEPT NOTE
for the Plenary Session
at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention
on Climate Change (COP28)
«Sustainable Cities and Climate Challenges: comprehensive planning and
management»

Date: 06/12/2023 (9:30am – 11:00 am)

Location: CAREC-Central Asia Pavilion (MA19G3), Blue Zone COP28
UNFCCC, Dubai Expo

1 INTRODUCTION

This workshop will be an open panel discussion on the challenges associated with rapid urbanisation of Central Asian cities. The session will be an opportunity to showcase and discuss initiatives responding to urban challenges and generating engagement in further projects. The main objectives are to promote knowledge exchange and partnerships, both public and private, particularly in green urban development best practices and technology.

Sustainable urban development is a global challenge, but the situation is particularly pronounced in Central Asia, where urban centres are experiencing rapid growth. The availability and sustainability of essential infrastructure, especially in the transport and energy sectors, pose significant challenges. Air pollution and the decline of green spaces within Uzbekistan's cities are critical concerns, affecting the health of both people and the environment. Additionally, the lack of expertise in sustainable city planning hampers Uzbekistan's ability to effectively monitor urban environments and to integrate environmental assessments into infrastructure planning. However, the Central Asian region also possesses a unique *opportunity* to blend its rich cultural history of local and traditional architectural design to guide locally adaptive sustainable urban development.

Uzbekistan is making progress in sustainable city management through various initiatives. For instance, the "Yashil Makon" ("Green Space") project aims to increase urban green spaces by 30% by 2030. Additionally, the country is involved in an EBRD training program for city impact assessments. Moreover, Uzbekistan is demonstrating its commitment to capacity-building in urban sustainable development through initiatives like the establishment of the 'Green Central Asian University' and the upcoming 'Ethnoecological Research Centre' project, emphasising locally adaptive traditional architecture.

International expertise and backing are vital for the success of these educational endeavours, and imminent public-private partnerships for knowledge and technology sharing are necessary to prevent Central Asian 'lock in' to unsustainable infrastructure.

2 OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate knowledge exchange, particularly on urban environmental monitoring and environmental impact assessments.
2. Assess interest in the upcoming 'Twin Green Cities' program that will be announced at the Climate Forum.
3. Establish partnerships with research specialists to support Green University's master's program in 'Sustainable Development' and the research initiatives of the Ethnoecological Research Centre.
4. Explore potential partnerships for technology transfers.