

# Inspire Regenerative Urban Development



A regenerative vision of cities to ensure that future generations inherit a robust and intact world in which cities pursue sustainable urban development.

Human impact on the world's landscapes is dominated by the ecological footprints of urban areas that now stretch across much of the globe. The planning and management of new cities, as well as the retrofitting of existing ones, needs to undergo a profound paradigm shift. The urban metabolism must be transformed from its current operation as an inefficient and wasteful linear system into a resource-efficient and circular system.

Even as cities increasingly rely on goods and resources from all over the world, there is an alarming lack of knowledge and prioritisation to ensure the long-term availability and vitality of these supplies. In order for cities to develop sustainably, they must not only stop their extraction of natural resources faster than ecosystems can recover, but reverse the trend by improving the regenerative capacity of ecosystems.

The road to regenerative urban development begins with a switch in our thinking, so that by-products conventionally considered as 'waste' can be re-framed and reused as resource inputs. Regenerative cities are productive centres that help to regenerate the materials and resources they use and foster a mutually beneficial relationship between urban areas and their surrounding territories. Considering that 70 percent of the world population will be living in cities by 2050, this is the only way we can continue to prosper and thrive within our urban environment.

## **Our Recommendations**

The WFC considers the following six recommendations as the fundamental enabling factors for a successful transition towards regenerative urban development:

## #1 Adopt local solutions that engage citizens and encourage democratic participation

Complex, large scale issues can be solved more easily when broken down into smaller scale problems that can be tackled at the local and regional level.

While a national framework is important in facilitating a move towards tangible local targets, citizen participation and community engagement are necessary in ensuring an inclusive, fair and democratic process.

A community-based approach goes hand-in-hand with the idea that we need to create more regenerative communities which are more reliant on their own means and regional resources.

## #2 Work together with diverse actors and communicate effectively

A broad alliance of different actors and interest groups at the local level helps ensure diverse needs are taken into consideration in the decision-making process. Each stakeholder group has a unique role to play in the regenerative transition, and certain individuals can also act as multipliers.

Approach issues in an accessible way and emphasise solutions. Positive communication is more likely to motivate people to become active and be supportive. ‘Seeing is believing’ is sometimes the most effective way of getting a message across. Interactive, responsive and transparent communication helps build trust and buy-in.

## #3 Adopt targets and indicators that reflect our values and real needs

Targets such as continuous economic growth – measured with indicators such as GDP – need to be replaced. New indicators that reflect what we value as individuals and as a society, as well as the long-term impact of our actions, should be adopted to measure real individual and societal well-being.



## #4 Set a clear long-term vision

A long-term vision creates a shared objective that inspires, streamlines and channels various individual efforts towards the implementation of a common regenerative future.

Coordination is essential given the variety of the multiple actors involved in the transition and demands clear political leadership.

## #5 Reconcile policy-making and research

Timing is everything: Policy-makers and researchers should commence a dialogue early on in the process in order to establish common goals of the collaboration. This helps target research towards solving concrete problems and ensures results are used in local development decisions.

## #6 Change behaviour through dialogue, education and awareness-raising

Small individual changes add up and can shape a collective outcome with a much greater impact. Local and national authorities are responsible for delivering conditions that enable citizens to adopt environment friendly habits. They can also help educate citizens to alert them to the true impact of their actions and how a change in behaviour could improve quality of life. A sound and honest dialogue between public authorities and actors and citizens has to be established.

### Exemplary Policies

 Norway's E-mobility Programme Future Policy Award

 Zero Waste Plan – Scotland, 2010

### Global Pact

Implementing sustainable solutions in regenerative urban development contributes to the progression of our interconnected global movements.

The World Future Council invites you to join us as a voice for future generations. The ‘Global Pact’ aims to build an effective **‘Coalition of the Working’** based on our common values in an effort to move from competition to collaboration, individualism to holism, all in the aim of securing our shared future through mutual successes.

Please [contact us](#) if you are interested in working together to further the urgent priorities of the [Global Policy Action Plan](#).

### Future of Cities Forum

The annual [Future of Cities Forum](#) brings together mayors, city councillors, urban planners, researchers, practitioners and representatives of



civil society and the private sector to discuss key challenges and solutions for urban development. The Forum enables policy dialogue on comprehensive implementation strategies that foster an enhancing and mutually beneficial relationship between urban systems and the ecosystems they depend on.

### World Urban Campaign



The World Urban Campaign is the advocacy and partnership platform for cities in the twenty first century. Its goal is to place the urban agenda at the highest level in development policies. It is coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by a large number of committed partners from around the world. The World Urban Campaign serves as the partners’ platform toward the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in 2016.

### Further Resources

