



EMS-SEMA



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## Sustainable Urban Partnerships: from a shared vision to action

The Barcelona 2004 Habitat World Urban Forum (WUF) invites us to look at cities both in terms of their environmental sustainability and their combat against poverty. This Forum follows an effort initiated in Istanbul and repeated in Nairobi in 2002, that stems from recognizing AL21 (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) as cornerstone and beacon for sustainable development. The transit from Nairobi 2002 to Barcelona 2004 is marked by the support the 2002 World Urban Forum got during the Sustainable Development Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 and to its articulation with commitments resulting from the Millennium Development Goals.

Problems prevail and grow; therefore, the agenda must be adapted. One of the challenges facing the new phase relates to how to persuade the international community as a whole to adopt and implement the commitments embodied in this ambitious international agenda with realism and responsibility. This requires the necessary incorporation of local realities--together with their authorities, actors and networks-- to the institutional framework of the debate; in particular, those cities in developing countries. Though this is not an easy recipe to apply given the growing complexity, the suggested instruments must be improved simultaneously with the institutional process: we refer to partnerships. To this end, it is necessary to build on the capacity of local governments to secure the effective implementation of the agenda and the sustainability of partnerships.

There are obvious differences in the process toward urban sustainable development, as experienced over the last 20 years, both in the evolution and achievement of results: differences among regions, their respective actors and systems; their political, cultural, social, economic and environmental differences when seeking that objective. For example: the proposal of indicators to monitor the scope of objectives is necessary but not sufficient in itself to steer the process toward the proposed objective. The form and method of the strategy to be implemented must also evolve.

In multi-sectoral partnerships, the EMS places priority on the leading role of municipal governments together with their actors, integrating research centers as independent actors that ensure sustainability of the process initiated. Ken Kaplan (2003)<sup>1</sup> says: "...the biggest problem faced by urban environmental partnerships does not relate to creating the initiative to solve the urgencies in terms of installing a public service but rather on the initiative's sustainability to secure the supply of such services in the medium and long terms."

The EMS offers municipalities and their networks an instrument that is an incubator for multi-sectoral partnerships that also invites cities from industrialized countries, starting with their own urban environmental service companies to join these commitments within the framework of international conventions.

The International Development Research Center (IDRC) has been supporting the multi-sectoral partnership approach since 1998 and has steadily achieved a growing interest of the international community made manifest through collaboration with fostering and development institutions. A short time ago the support of the Ministry of the Environment and Territory of Italy (MATI) was secured through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the IDRC and MATI, in order to support this approach in compliance with the Millennium Goals and CSSD 2002. Consequently, the EMS presents this instrument that will be available to municipalities in small and medium-sized cities in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and their associations as from next year. In order to guarantee this process, the EMS --apart from working with UN agencies--invites the genuine municipal networks of LAC to join similar networks in cities of industrialized countries through this program.

Walter Ubal Giordano, EMS Executive Director

<sup>1</sup><http://www.bpd-waterandsanitation.org/english/docs/plottingo.pdf>

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## EMS SPECIAL: TOWARD THE WORLD URBAN FORUM: AN INTERVIEW WITH STELA GOLDENSTEIN



Stela Goldenstein, Permanent Member of the Advisory Technical Committee, Former Secretary for the Environment in the city of Sao Paulo.

Two years after the Johannesburg 2002 Summit, which resolutions would you suggest for this UN-Habitat 2004 World Forum to make a priority within the environmental agenda for urban sustainability?

I think that for the poorest countries, the most urgent issues to be solved have to do with the guarantee to consolidate democracy, both political and social. As part of this concept, we have included reducing inequity which means on the one hand, the generation of new income and employment opportunities and on the other, access to a healthy environment. To this end, we need financial investments in basic sanitation, housing, transport ... But we also need investment to expand the urban management capacity, in the definition of their own models to solve problems.

In many cases the concept of sustainable cities seems to be limited to cities of the industrialized world. However, in Latin America in particular some cities are moving toward a sustainable city plan. Where can we find that element or

## fundamental “secret” that has allowed some cities to reach this concept of sustainable cities?

In my opinion, we still do not have “sustainable” cities in Latin America. The challenge to overcome inequity and social injustice results in a much greater effort in comparison with cases in developed countries. Accordingly, we still do not have public and private policies. Cities whose experiences we can value are those that have been implementing sectoral and specific policies geared to sustainability.

Some good examples are provided by local policies in solid waste management, programs to recover water production areas and also certain public policies that foster and value social participation in decisions of public interest. On the other hand, one can say that there is an evident global trend to review the attributions of different government spheres, to expand that of the local sphere, despite the fact that this is a slow and conflictive process.

## In the light of experiences studied in Latin America, what role would you define for and which areas would you consider a priority in public-private partnerships at the local level so they can become a real lever to spur sustainable urban development?

We know today that to expect public institutions to solve all matters of collective public interest would be a mistake. The participation of different forms of social organizations is growing and gaining over the political arena, as does the responsibility and initiatives in the management of goods and public services.

However, to this end, it is necessary to strengthen State instruments in terms of regulation and control. Likewise, it is necessary to build on the capacity of the civil organization so it can participate and be represented. In this sense we witness different initiatives that have been successful, both in the health care area and in that of water resources, just to mention two subjects where municipalities have increased their responsibility over the last few years.

## Though the Millennium Development Goals incorporate objectives that engage the cities, the local governments have little involvement and leadership in these processes. What instruments or measures would you suggest to facilitate the involvement and leadership of local authorities during these processes?

The fact is that international agreements and national policies are established without listening to local powers. The national governments find it hard to make an effective recognition of the capacity that local governments have in terms of action, as this would entail a division of power and loss of income and international financial benefits.

At the same time, local powers still have a limited capacity to implement policies that depend on fiscal, taxing and economic procedure changes. Networks that articulate and support the activities of municipal powers have special importance in terms of training, promotion of experience exchange, strengthening of municipalities so that they can present their demands to the central governments. Likewise, they can organize the support to accompany and monitor the goals set, by strengthening the role of municipalities. This will happen especially when the networks are created not just by a group of local public institutions but rather have the active participation of non-governmental public entities.

## EMS AGENDA AT A GLANCE

### Sustainable Cities Initiative, SCI – Mission to Porto Alegre



Joan Verle, Mayor of Porto Alegre; Mrs. Heather Schoemaker, Director, Sustainable Cities Initiative; Ron Davidson, Canadian General Consul; and Carlos Vieira, Secretary for Planning, Porto Alegre.

From August 10 to 13, 2004, the EMS was member of the Canadian delegation of the First Mission (from Industry Canada) to the city of Porto Alegre (POA) in Brazil, in relation to the Sustainable Cities Initiative.

The First Mission to Prepare a Route Map aimed at exploring, together with municipal authorities and technical staff of POA, potential

cooperation areas between the city of POA and Canada, through the SCI network connecting public and private sectors, NGOs and academic partners.

The Canadian delegation was integrated by the General Consul of Canada in Brazil, the SCI Team of the city of Porto Alegre, private sector companies with expertise in areas such as solid waste management, water and waste water treatment, transportation, Information Technologies, development planning, urban planning and technology enhancement. The delegation also included members of the academic community, the International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) and the + 30 Network, Planning for Long-Term Urban Sustainability.

Through plenary sessions and six thematic working groups, the exchange between the Canadian delegation and the authorities in Porto Alegre ranged from issues such as water/waste water management, Information Technology (community access to the Internet), economic development and tourism, solid

waste management/recycling, integrated transport and construction technologies (social housing).

### The Ministry of the Environment and Territory of Italy supports the EMS in the promotion of Municipal Environmental Partnerships

Last July, IDRC-Canada and the Ministry of the Environment and Territory of Italy signed a Memorandum of Understanding that benefits the EMS. This agreement confirms the support granted by MATI to the EMS so the latter develops activities to promote multi-sectoral partnerships between Municipalities in order to create partnerships in local environmental areas.

To this end, the meeting of the EMS Board of Directors will take place in Rome, Italy, on Tuesday, October 26 this year.

### Environmental Millennium, second issue (Milenio Ambiental)

Issue N°2 of Environmental Millennium, the EMS magazine, will be available next October. This issue will feature two core questions facing cities in Latin America and the Caribbean: job creation and alternate sources of energy. These questions will be addressed from a different perspective: the management of urban solid waste.

Environmental Millennium aims not only to illustrate visions and experiences on how to solve urgent problems related to job creation and energy production but also tries to analyze the way to generate conditions that favour the sustainability of mid and long-term policies.

This new issue will present and promote those activities that, in responding to their particular realities, become innovative management experiences that resort both to traditional associative structures and to new ones, but can be replicated or adapted to other realities.

You can visit Millennium at:

<http://www.ems-sema.org/milenioambiental/index.html>

## NEW UNDERTAKINGS

### UNEP-EMS PROJECT: Training of Municipal Experts in the Management of Hazardous Waste in the Framework of the Basel Convention

Activities on the "Training of Municipal Technicians in Appropriate Environmental Management of Hazardous Waste" Project started in September. This project is endorsed by the United Nations Environment Program through the Trust Fund of the Basel Convention, the Ministry of Housing, Land Management and Environment of Uruguay and the Environmental Management Secretariat for LAC of the International Development Research Centre (EMS-IDRC).

The project consists of developing and applying a training methodology that allows direct outreach to the largest possible number of municipal technicians involved in waste management. This training will be approached in two ways: one will be by means of face-to face courses organized within the framework of a proposal by the Competent Authorities and the other, by means of distance courses using the existing regional communication-dissemination networks. This will be a pilot experience and a proposal will be prepared to analyze whether it is replicable in order to conduct a broader coverage with this type of training.

The general objective is training municipal technicians in adequate environmental management of hazardous waste in response to the needs of the local actors and to strengthen the articulation with the Competent Authorities in enforcing the objectives of the Basel Convention. It is jointly implemented by the Training and Technology Transfer Coordinating Centre of the Basel Convention for Latin America and the Caribbean and EMS-IDRC.

## ONGOING INITIATIVES

### Project: Environmental Services Management for Vulnerable Populations in Central American Cities

*By Víctor Manuel González, Project Chief  
BID-FEMICA-EMS Technical Cooperation Agreement*

The development of this Project responds to the demands contained in the Regional Central American Agenda and to the mandate of local governments to participate in issues relative to risk management and management of vulnerability in marginalized human settlements in urban areas in those municipalities where disasters are more likely to occur. To this day, some intermediate outputs have been achieved, namely:

Task 1. Identification of case studies relative to successful practices in alleviating risks and environmental vulnerability in cities of Honduras and Nicaragua, to develop a municipal/country diagnosis.

Outcome 1. Selection of urban centers in Honduras and Nicaragua. In Honduras: La Mamuca, El Progreso, Comayagua and Puerto Cortez. In Nicaragua: Ocotal, Condega, Managua and Estelí.

Outcome 2. Method for identification and diagnosis of best practices in managing Environmental services for vulnerable populations in cities of Central America.

Task 2. General Good Practices Diagnosis.

Outcome 3. General diagnosis on good practices in the prevention and mitigation of environmental risks and vulnerability. This result consists of two separate reports, one for each country, covering a total of eight municipalities.

Output 1. First Consultancy Report

The achievement of this output is reflected in the report that is part of the results of the first phase of the Consultancy, according to the terms of reference for the consultancy, in the BID-FEMICA-EMS Cooperation Project.

Outcome 4. Presentation and delivery of the methodological proposal and working plan to prepare case studies on good environmental practices in Honduras and Nicaragua to the Project Coordinating Committee for the latter's approval.

These achievements have been possible thanks to the permanent support provided to FEMICA by the Project Coordinating Committee; consulting firms, active participation of municipalities selected in both countries, AMHON, AMUNIC, neighbourhood committees and different sectors involved that helped in the analysis and evaluation of lessons learnt from experiences to reduce environment vulnerability.

In addition to having completed the tasks and activities stated in the Terms of Reference and programs in the Project Working Plan for this phase, the scope of the study and the methodological basis have been expanded and complementary activities that proved significant to improve work and the quality of output obtained have been added, namely:

- Definition of a conceptual framework on good environmental practices, as a step prior to the selection of municipalities and the preparation of diagnosis methodology. This conceptual framework was not originally contemplated but was found indispensable as a point of departure to justify the process by which the municipalities were chosen, during which the criteria on the existence of good practices were expanded, as was the case with the methodological process to proceed with the diagnosis in each country.
- The expansion of the general diagnosis on good practices to prevent and mitigate environmental risks and vulnerability to cover four municipalities in each country, instead of the two that were foreseen in the Terms of Reference. This means that in total eight municipal diagnoses were conducted instead of the four originally planned. This initiative was approved during the first coordination meeting on the Consultancy work, with the participation of representatives from FEMICA, EMS, AMHON, AMUNIC, CATIE, CINET and FUNDEMUN.
- Workshops to validate the results of diagnoses at the level of each selected location. This initiative appeared as an indispensable step in the methodology that was prepared for the implementation of municipal diagnoses, in addition to the regional validation of results included in the Project. As a result of the diagnosis expansion to four municipalities per country, a total of eight validation workshops were held at the municipal level.
- Internal meetings and workshops for coordination, reflection and systematization of experiences. In addition to internal meetings planned for the coordination of Project activities, there was an extra meeting in December 2003 in Managua, with the participation of CINET and FUNDEMUN, to carry out the agreements reached in the Managua meeting and the San Pedro Sula workshop. Another workshop was held in April 2004 to prepare the reports and reflections on lessons learnt in the processes to select municipalities and development of diagnoses.

Future stages: case studies and training programs:

During the second semester of this year, and after the analysis by the Regional Coordination of the Project, the Coordinating Committee approved the implementation of case studies in the Municipalities of Managua and Estelí in the Republic of Nicaragua and in El Progreso and Puerto Cortez in the Republic of Honduras. This phase will last 75 days as from August 2004.

At the end of October of this year, the workshop on validation of case studies results and the proposal and design of the Municipal Training Program will take place in Managua, Nicaragua. The process to train municipal workers in risk management and handling of environmental vulnerability in the Central American Isthmus will develop as from November.

## EMS NEW FINDINGS FOR POLICY MAKERS

In the framework of its Small Research Fund Grants, the EMS supports applied research proposals at the municipal level. Through a public call system, proposals are jointly formulated by local governments, research centers, the private sector and civil society. Thus, the EMS has been supporting over forty projects in questions of critical importance in terms of urban environmental management: handling of solid waste, sustainable management of water, sanitation and public-private partnerships in municipalities of Latin America and the Caribbean. During its last call for proposals, two were as follows:

### "Public-private partnership to start an integrated water management in Pergamino (Argentina)" Proposal.

Partners in the Project: Municipality of Pergamino and Centro de Estudios Sociales y Ambientales – CESAM.

Objective: Enhance the management capacity of the local government through the implementation of mechanisms of association and participation and through the development of instruments oriented to reducing vulnerabilities related to excess water management in the city of Pergamino (to reduce the risk of flooding and control water pollution during floods). Installation of a GIS-based Hydro-meteorological Warning System.

### "Scientific bases for the preparation of a Plan to Mitigate Pollution of the Gran Lago in Nicaragua, in the area of influence of the Ometepe Island" (Nicaragua) Project:

Partners in the project: Association of Municipalities of the Gran Lago de Nicaragua (AMUGRAN) and the Water Resource Research Centre of Nicaragua, National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (CIRA/UNAN).

Objective: to produce scientific and technical information on this specific area that may be used as basis to understand the processes that have influenced the quality of water of the Gran Lago de Nicaragua. To strengthen local governments and other social actors, providing basic tools for integrated management of basins, to ensure the latter's sustainable development.

## OF INTEREST

### National Plan to Implement the Stockholm Convention



The "National Implementation Plan – Uruguay chapter" Project developed by the Ministry of Housing, Land Management and the Environment, National Environment Bureau, Department of Hazardous Substances, is a project in the area of chemical substances

management, within the framework of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Its core objective is the formulation of a National Implementation Plan (NIP) in order to comply with obligations stemming from the Stockholm Convention. It was developed with an inter-institutional, inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary approach and aims at the formulation of the National Plan for the year 2005, to improve the management of chemical substances and products in Uruguay, through prevention and control during the whole life cycle. For further information: [www.nip.gub.uy](http://www.nip.gub.uy)

### MERCOCITIES – Environment Thematic Unit



Last July, in the framework of the URBIS 2004 International Congress on Cities and Fairs, held in Sao Paulo, the Environment Thematic Unit of the Mercocities Network met. The meeting revolved around two axes:

The Seminar on "Socio-environmental indicators as instruments of Participatory Management in cities"; and the meeting itself of the member cities in the Thematic Unit.

This last meeting defined priorities and a working schedule to be developed during the second semester in 2004, up until the 10th Mercocities Summit, that will take place next December in the city of Buenos Aires.

Minutes of the Meeting: <http://www.ems-sema.org/eventos/utma/>

## CITY PRESS

### PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- ✦ United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP-PNUMA)
  - Program Officer (P-5, P-4 and P3) Nairobi
  - Senior Program Officer (POPs), P-5
- ✦ Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
  - Chief of Rural Development Unit
- ✦ Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
  - Researcher for Climate Policy Project

### COMING EVENTS

- ✦ First Seminar on Local Management
- ✦ World Urban Forum
- ✦ Water World Congress
- ✦ Plans for Integrated Management of Municipal Solid Waste (PGIRS)

- ✦ VII Paraná Meeting on Environmental Education
- ✦ International Meeting on the Implementation of the Macro Guidelines on Water
- ✦ Consultative Meeting on Water and Sanitation
- ✦ Municipal and Sub-national governments' funding
- ✦ Inter-American Water Day
- ✦ Understanding ground water flow from the local to the regional scale
- ✦ Public-private partnerships, American Summit
- ✦ 2nd Global Meeting of PPPUE collaborators
- ✦ World Forum on key OECD indicators
- ✦ Regional Meeting on "Cooperation in the Coastal Space"

- ✦ CARA Congress - Hydro-geology and Handling Water Resources in Central America.

### TRAINING

- ✦ Course: Economic Bases to Manage and Value Environmental Goods and Services
- ✦ Specialization in Local Development
- ✦ Specialization in Local Development with a Gender Perspective
- ✦ Environmental Management and Planning Program

### AWARDS / FELLOWSHIPS

- ✦ PANDA Awards for Environmental Communications
- ✦ Cervantes Scholarships for Post-graduate Studies
- ✦ Stockholm Water Award

The mission of the Secretariat is to foster a correct environmental management in Latin America and the Caribbean, by providing support in decision-making (policy formulation and implementation) in relation to the environmental effects of the different human activities, through a more dynamic relation between research, horizontal cooperation and a growing availability of relevant information.

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