

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SECRETARIAT (EMS-IDRC) PARTICIPATION IN URBIS 2003 - INTERNATIONAL FAIR AND CONGRESS OF CITIES

**SAO PAULO – BRAZIL
July 22- 25, 2003**

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I. Purpose, objectives and members of EMS mission to URBIS 2003.

The EMS was present at URBIS 2003, invited by the Sao Paulo City Government, the organizers of the event.

URBIS is an international event, organized by the Government of Sao Paulo City, which objective is to provide a common space for local governments, private sector, international organizations, to exchange and disseminate innovative approaches and practice in urban management. Topics like urban planning, decentralization and citizen participation are at the core of the debates. <http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/Urbis/2003/>

The purpose of EMS participation was to make good use of the opportunity provided by URBIS as a platform to share with local governments and make public two of the EMS' current research activities:

- launching of the 2003 Small Research Grants Call.
- launching of the SIGA Manual, an integrated system for planning and management of risk in environmentally vulnerable areas.

The objectives were

- to make public presentations of the SIGA Manual and the 2003 EMS Small research Grants Call, at the URBIS International Fair
- to make presentations of the SIGA and the EMS Call in specific meetings of Local authorities that were to take place during URBIS.

Members of EMS mission to URBIS 2003:

Alicia Iglesias Peralta – EMS-IDRC Research Officer

Gabriela Fernández – Consultant and one of the researchers involved with the SIGA Manual.

II. Number of cities and visitors in URBIS.

Under the title, **Macro-politics for Local Development**, the 2003 edition of URBIS gathered a high number of city governments from all over the world, as well as international and regional organizations.

Organizers of URBIS estimate that average of daily visitors to the International Fair was 3,500, surpassing 17,000 people during the 4 days' event.

Number of registered people to the Congress was about 2500, including more than 60 thematic presentations from international speakers.
<http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/Urbis/2003/congresso/congresso/>

More than 120 cities were present at URBIS International Fair, of which 26 cities were from outside LAC region, as it was the case of Milan, Barcelona, Lisboa, Beirut, Paris, Lyon, Maputo, Nanging (China), among others. The vast majority of LAC countries were also present at the Fair and participated in the Congress and side events.

A wide range of international organizations participated in URBIS: World Bank Cities Alliances Program, UN-Habitat, PGU, UNESCO, UNCTAD, European Union, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, International Union of Local Authorities – IULA, etc.

The conferences and debates were organized around three main thematic units, and their corresponding subtopics:

1. Financing Local Development

- Limits and possibilities for financing Local Development
- Fiscal and Tax System Policies and the Strengthening of Local Governments
- Financing Housing and Urban Infrastructure Policies
- Local Governments and International Cooperation
- Favourable Institutional Conditions for public-private partnerships

2. The Democratic management of Cities and Social Control

- The Social Control of Public Services
- The right to the City
- Social Agreement and democratic management
- Democratic Regulation of Municipal Public Services

3. Local Governments as political actors

- The rol of collective representations of Local Governments
- Local Governments and regional development
- The rol of cities in the regional integration
- Local Development and social inclusion
- Economic development and income and employment generation

III. SIGA (Integrated System for Environmental Management) impact on visitors and local governments' technicians.

A) Presentations in the EMS booth

The EMS' booth at URBIS was visited by a wide range of people: municipal technicians, mayors of municipalities, representatives from international organizations such as UN-Habitat/PGU, UNESCO, World Bank / Cities Alliances, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, ICLEI, among others.

Three main activities were carried out in the EMS booth:

- Brief training sessions of SIGA (Integrated System for Environmental Management), a manual designed to support the work of municipal technicians involved with environmental planning and management of risk and vulnerable areas.
- Presentation of the zero edition of EMS Milenio Ambiental magazine
- Launching of 2003 EMS Small Research Grants Call

As a result of presentations, we received requests from municipalities to obtain specific training sessions of the SIGA for their technical staff.

B) Presentations at the XVIII Council Meeting of Mercocities Network

(July 23, 2003)

The XVIII session of the Council Meeting of the Mercocities Network was carried out during URBIS. Mayors of around 20 city governments attended the meeting.

EMS staff introduced the SIGA Manual, obtaining positive response from the delegations, as well as specific demands for training for some municipalities. The current Small Research Grants Call, recently launched, was also presented.

The zero edition of *Milenio Ambiental*, the new EMS magazine was also presented.

C) Presentations at Mercocities' Environment Thematic Unit Meeting (Unidad Temática de Medio Ambiente)

(July 24, 2003)

The Environment Thematic Unit is coordinated by the Sao Paulo City Government. The meeting was chaired by the Sao Paulo Secretary of Green and Environment, Mr. Adriano Diogo.

EMS did a 50 minutes presentation of the SIGA to the public, who were mainly technical staff from the environment offices of the municipalities, members of ICLEI Latin America regional office, and general public who attended the congress.

EMS is at present organizing a regional workshop to share the SIGA with experts and relevant municipal staff, in order to further advance in the fine-tuning of the manual.

EMS was asked to actively participate in the next meeting of the Environment Unit to be carried out in September 2003, as part of the activities of the Summit of the Mercocities Network.

D) Presentation at the Municipality of Sao Paulo to the technical staff of the Green and Environment Secretariat (Secretaría de Verde e Meio Ambiente)

July 25, 2003

At the request of the Secretary of the Green and Environment Secretariat, Mr. Adriano Diogo, the EMS did a detailed presentation of the SIGA Manual for the staff of the Secretariat.

In this occasion, given the technical nature of the meeting, a very important exchange of information and points of view took place with a multidisciplinary audience. In particular a very fruitful exchange was carried out with the team in charge of the elaboration of the Sao Paulo Environmental Atlas (www.atlasambiental@prefeitura.sp.gov.br)

We received many positive comments as well as new inputs and suggestions from them on how to carry out the next phase of validation and fine-tuning of the SIGA tool.