

14 July 2008, Pattaya, Thailand

# Green Cities Workshop

*Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change  
Impacts and Related Natural Disasters in Asia*

*Organized by*



United Nations  
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

**GFDRR**  
Global Facility for Disaster  
Reduction and Recovery



WORLD BANK GROUP



Regional Section

## Overview of the Green Cities Workshop

The threat that **climate change** poses to sustainable and inclusive development has moved to the forefront of the international agenda. Coping with a warmer and more volatile climate will impose a heavy burden on developing countries. As the world warms, economic activity will be affected by a host of challenges, ranging from sea level rise to water stress, from higher uncertainty about optimal crop choices to more severe and costly extreme weather events. In addition, these direct effects will often combine with other stress factors to reduce economic opportunities in developing countries. The **poor are especially vulnerable**. They tend to be more dependent on climate-sensitive sectors and have less capacity to adapt, whether through access to information, technology and capital, or through the ability to diversify income sources.

Given the unequivocal evidence of climate change and its impact on the poorest communities, the integration of climate change issues into development planning and programming is a high priority. The links between climate change, **disaster risks**, and poverty highlight increased social, economic and environmental vulnerability, especially in **cities** due to their high concentration of assets and population. City managers need specific, locally driven strategies to assist them to identify, reduce, manage, and respond to risks through **planning** efforts in order to reduce their vulnerability to, and manage the potential impacts of, climate change and natural hazards.

To address this issue, the World Bank's East Asia Sustainable Development Department, in partnership with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the UN/ISDR, has produced a **Primer** on Climate Change Impacts in Urban Areas of East Asia that targets city managers and focuses on reducing vulnerability to climate change impacts and related disasters.

The Primer will be officially launched during this one day Green Cities Workshop on July 14, 2008 in Pattaya, Thailand, in conjunction with the UCLG ASPAC Congress. The purpose of this workshop is to create awareness and interest in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and investments and to gauge the thematic areas where the cities' interest is strongest to ensure efforts are demand-driven. The participants will engage in dialog on these key issues in order to shape the future direction of the primer and its application at the local level.

The content of the Primer is based on a stocktaking of existing literature and analysis of practical tools for climate change mitigation and adaptation and disaster prevention and coping strategies. The Primer also includes self-assessment tools to engage city officials in determining their cities' level of exposure and vulnerability; based on the outcomes of the assessment, the Primer guides the user through actions that can be taken to reduce the potential risks identified. The scope of actions include mitigation and adaptation measures like the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, land use plans, energy efficiency, emergency management and preparedness plans, structural and non-structural interventions, and risk financing options. Case studies of global cities that offer best practice examples from which East Asian cities can learn have also been included.