



ICLEI RESPONSE TO THE “HABITAT3 ZERODRAFT OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA (NUA)”

*Rich in aspirations for action,
Weak in mechanisms for implementing a transformative urban agenda
As of 12 May 2016*



This statement builds upon the [Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments \(GTF\) initial reactions as of 9 May 2016](#), with which ICLEI fully aligns.

Hereunder are further specific comments and proposals from ICLEI which we wish to share within the GTF, our constituency representatives, the UN Member States and all stakeholders who will be attending the Local Authorities Hearings on 16-17 May 2016.

ICLEI welcomes the [Zero Draft](#), in particular, because of:

- 1- **The stipulations around the inclusive and innovative consultation process to carve the H3 Zero Draft and to comment it further:** the use of mechanisms, such as the policy units with broad stakeholder involvement, the various thematic meetings hosted by local governments, the online consultations, engagement with and recognition of the GTF and the Global Assembly of Partners (GAP), engaging with the Earth Negotiations Bulletin to cover the sessions starting from April 2016. The process was nonetheless impacted due to a very tight time frame as the rules of procedures were adopted only in December 2015.
- 2- **The integration of new and innovative concepts around urban development:** The Zero Draft text stipulates innovative concepts such as the right-to-the-city, the need for a territorial-approach (city-hinterland and regional), as well as the need for an increased metropolitan governance. Since H2 in 1996, these concepts have indeed gradually emerged in the urban world.
- 3- **The inclusion of proposals from stakeholders:** The Zero Draft text refers to a number of innovative proposals made by GTF and General Assembly of Partners (GAP), such as; reserving 20% of national budgets to local governments, the adoption of UN Decade for Sustainable Urbanization, the set-up of an International Multi-stakeholder Panel on Sustainable Urbanization.



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ICLEI strongly recommends that in the further negotiations towards a relevant H3 Outcome Document, this Zero Draft is further strengthened with the following points:

- 1- **The SDG:11 on cities and the other SDGs must be more strongly anchored in the New Urban Agenda (NUA):** Whilst there is a brief reference in the preamble, the Zero Draft text does not provide explicit links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular the SDG:11 on cities. In our view, however, the organization of H3, just one year after the adoption of a universal SDG:11 on cities by Heads of State in September 2015 at the UN General Assembly, presents a unique opportunity to commend, as well as discuss and identify the linkages and specify further implementation mechanisms of the SDGs. The process of H3 and the outcome documents should therefore lead to more detailed guidance, recommendations, processes and mechanisms on the implementation of the SDGs and in particular SDG:11 as part of the NUA by all levels of government. Without such a clear linkage, the NUA may be seen as a duplication of efforts rather than providing a coherent and integrated global strategy that builds upon existing multilateral efforts.
- 2- **National governments must make real commitments to action and specify concrete mechanisms for implementing the NUA:** The outcome document of H3 will not have the same level of enforcement (non-binding) for nations as have the SDGs or the Paris Climate Agreement. Therefore, commitments and implementation must be defined clearer, such as in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Declaration. Otherwise, we have concerns that H3 and the NUA may not lead to the effective implementation of a transformative urban agenda.
- 3- **Local and subnational sustainability action enhances global, multilateral efforts:** Since the Rio Summit in 1992 and H2 in 1996, numerous sustainability actions have been undertaken by local and regional governments worldwide, many of them as part of Chapter 28 of Agenda21 (Rio Declaration). There is clear evidence that national and global sustainability efforts can be scaled-up when local and regional governments are effectively empowered, capacitated and resourced. The H3 Zero Draft text must be strengthened with a vision and proposals from national governments on how they intend to better engage with other levels of government to achieve a multilevel, holistic, and integrated approach to sustainability. Also, today's urban reality and the fact that urban areas contribute to significant portion of global prosperity and opportunities, but are also at serious risks and challenges, should be reflected in the UN governance and bodies. The H3 Zero Draft document, in particular the Declaration, does not yet provide such a vision for a new governance.