

Introduction to the San Francisco Urban Environmental Accords



The 21st century marks the first time in human history that the majority of the world's population will live in urban areas. Today, cities already consume 75% of the planet's natural resources and discharge 75% of the waste. By 2030, 60% of the world's population will live in cities. More than one million people are moving to cities each and every week – the equivalent to adding a Hanoi-sized city to the urban landscape. Parts of the Asia-Pacific region are experiencing “hyper-urbanization” – where it took London 130 years to grow from 1 million to 8 million inhabitants, this same leap took Seoul only 25 years. This rampant urbanization forces cities to make stark choices that will determine whether they become livable environments or magnets for disease and poverty.

The most important legacy of San Francisco's World Environment Day will be the Urban Environmental Accords. These Accords will represent a list of concrete and achievable implementation goals for critical environmental areas that will be signed by the mayors of the world's 100 largest and most environmentally innovative cities. The Accords embody a seven-year process focusing on the urban environment that will be launched at World Environment Day 2005.

The Urban Environmental Accords signify a new concept in the framework of international environmental cooperation. Unlike nearly all other international efforts on this issue, the Accords forge a cooperative framework among cities instead of nations. While there are currently more than 400 international environmental treaties, agendas and conventions on record, there is a disparity between the political commitments made at the international level and the fulfillment of these obligations where they really matter. Thus, the vision for the Accords is that by creating a grassroots political movement through Mayors and local government, cities can work together to solve and implement common-sense solutions to common problems. The Accords will become a living and dynamic process that incorporates mechanisms for ongoing follow up, technology transfer and information exchange.

In order to make these Accords reflective of the will of the people we look to you for input! We ask that you keep in mind the following parameters when commenting on the two compendium documents, which make up the SF Urban Environmental Accords:

Please be concise (2-3 sentences) when modifying any action

Remember that the actions are targeted at CITIES.

Keep in mind that we will only be asking the Mayors and cities to commit to a maximum of 21 Actions

Each action should have an achievable target (timeframe, % change, etc)

Please email all comments to accords@wed2005.org by January 25, 2005 after which time we will revise the Accords and repost them for further review and comment.

Urban Environmental Accords Declaration



United Nations Environment Programme
World Environment Day, June 5th, 2005

SIXTY YEARS AGO nations came to San Francisco and founded the United Nations. Today, on World Environment Day 2005 in San Francisco, cities are coming together in global environmental cooperation to advance solutions that effectively address the nexus of the environmental, economic, human and social impacts.

CIVILIZATION IS UNDERGOING UNPRECEDENTED TRANSFORMATION.

For the first time in history, the majority of the human population lives in cities. The current rate of hyper-urbanization results in one million people moving to cities each week. Acknowledging this fact the Urban Environmental Accords offer a range of opportunities for mayors to provide leadership in realizing harmony between human and ecological needs through locally appropriate actions.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE EXISTING EFFORTS to advance sustainability, the integration of vibrant economies and the planet's natural systems, that were adopted by nations at Rio de Janeiro 1992, at Istanbul 1996, by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in 2000, and in Johannesburg 2002. Through these efforts, we recognize the power of collective action and the progress that can be made by sharing experiences and strategies so that we perpetually learn from each other.

TODAY, WE WRITE A NEW CHAPTER in the history of global environmental cooperation by forging an alliance of cities to make tangible and implement the goals and possibilities of sustainable development through the Urban Environmental Accords.

BY SIGNING THE URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACCORDS in San Francisco we commit our cities to moving vital issues of sustainability to the top of our legislative agendas. Through implementation of the Urban Environmental Accords the signatory cities aim to realize:

Policies and operations that honor and lead to regenerative production systems that meet societal demands.

Cost-savings through leadership in the development of sustainable resource consumption and minimization.

Equal access to basic resources for all of the Earth's inhabitants.

WE THE SIGNATORIES will call to action our colleagues around the world to join us in a continuum of sharing and collaboration. As ambassadors of the Urban Environmental Accords we will drive change recognizing that our respective actions are parts of one whole leading to a more ecologically sustainable, economically dynamic and socially equitable future for the Earth and its inhabitants.



San Francisco Urban Environmental Accords

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Signatory cities shall work to implement the following Urban Environmental Accords.
Each year, cities shall pick three actions out of the following list to adopt as goals, policies or laws.

Energy Renewable Energy | Energy Efficiency | Climate Change

Recycling Zero Waste | Manufacturer Responsibility | Consumer Responsibility

Urban Design Green Building | Smart Growth | Land-Use Planning

Urban Nature Parks | Urban Forest | Wildlife

Transportation Public Transportation | Clean Vehicles | Reducing Congestion

Environmental Health Toxics Reduction | Healthy Food Systems | Clean Air

Water Clean Water | Water Conservation | Waste Water

Energy

Action 1 Adopt and implement a policy to increase the use of renewable energy to 10% of City's peak load within seven years.

Action 2 Adopt and implement a policy to reduce your city's peak load by 10% through energy efficiency and conservation measures within seven years

Action 3 Adopt a city-wide greenhouse gas reduction goal plan that either meets or exceeds the Kyoto Protocol targets (either independently or through the Cities for Climate Protection program of _____).

Recycling

Action 4 Establish a policy to achieve zero waste to landfills and incinerators by 2040.

Action 5 Adopt a city-wide law that reduces the use of a disposable product category (e.g. grocery bags, fast food packaging, chop sticks) by at least 50% in 7 years.

Action 6 Reduce per capita solid waste disposal to landfill and incineration by 20% in 7 years.

Urban Design

Action 7 Adopt of green building rating system standard to be applied to all new municipal buildings (e.g. LEED, BREEAM, Green Star). [City Codes].

Action 8 Develop and adopt a set of smart growth principles for your city that encourage community and stakeholder collaboration, mix land uses, support vibrant city centers, preserve open space and farmland, create walkable neighborhoods, strengthen existing communities, and promotes compact building design.

Action 9 Each city shall have a law in place requiring environmental impact reports where a project will have significant effects on the environment. The law should require the project sponsor identify alternatives to the project and indicate the manner in which significant effects can be mitigated or avoided.

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Urban Nature

Action 10 Adopt the goal to ensure that there is an accessible park or recreational open space within half-a-kilometer of every city resident by 2015;

Action 11 Conduct an inventory of existing canopy coverage in your city; and, then establish goal based on ecological and community considerations to plant and maintain canopy coverage in not less than 50% of all available sidewalk planting sites.

Action 12 Promote urban design and greenscaping plans that provide physical linkages for urban wildlife. Promote favorable habitat characteristics (e.g water features, food-bearing plants, shelter) and utilize native species where possible.

Transportation

Action 13 Develop and implement a policy to expand public transportation coverage (residents within half-a-kilometer of public transportation) by 5% in seven years.

Action 14 Adopt a procurement policy for passenger vehicles and light duty trucks fleets that operate within the city requiring that at least 40 percent of the fleet purchases or leases are models that are rated as ultra-low emission vehicle or zero emission vehicles.

Action 15 Implement a policy to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles at rush hour by 10% in seven years.

Environmental Health

Action 16 Identify the products, chemicals, or compounds that are used within your city that represent the greatest risk to human health and adopt a law to eliminate their sale and use in the city.

Action 17 Establish an Air Quality Index (AQI) to measure the level of air pollution in your city and set the goal of reducing “unhealthy” to “hazardous” category days per year by 10% in seven years.

Action 18 Ensure that 10% of all the public schools within your city serve only organic food within seven years.

Water

[Adopt policy that recognizes water as a basic human right, which sets to achieve access to a safe, water supply for 100% of the population for their minimum domestic needs.]

Action 19 Undertake a project to preserve or restore the ecological integrity of your city’s key drinking water source (groundwater, rivers, lakes, wetlands and associated ecosystems).

Action 20 Adopt and implement a policy to reduce citywide consumption of potable water by 10% by 2020. Ensure that the additional water needs stemming from new growth are met through alternative sources of supply, demand management, and local resource development.

Action 21 Develop a water resources planning process based on sound economic, social, and environmental principles that considers alternative sources of supply (such as recycled water and demand-side water management, among others) and integrates sanitation, groundwater management, and pollution control. Process should be transparent and include participants of all affected communities.