



Press Release for NIUA-NZCC MoU for ‘Sustainable Cities India Program’

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WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM’S AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF URBAN AFFAIRS’

‘SUSTAINABLE CITIES INDIA PROGRAM’ TO HELP INDIAN CITIES MEET NET ZERO GOALS

Sustainable Cities India program, a collaboration between the World Economic Forum and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) will create an enabling environment for Indian cities to decarbonize to achieve greater climate resilience.

New Delhi, 24 February 2022: Today, the World Economic Forum and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on a jointly designed ‘Sustainable Cities India program’ which will aim to create an enabling environment for cities to generate decarbonization solutions across the energy, transport, and the built environment sectors.

This initiative is particularly noteworthy as it comes after the Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated India’s commitment to turn net zero by 2070 as a climate mitigation response at COP26.

The ‘Sustainable Cities India program’ intends to enable cities to decarbonize in a systematic and sustainable way that will reduce emissions and deliver resilient and equitable urban ecosystems. The Forum and NIUA will adapt the Forum’s **City Sprint process** and **Toolbox of Solutions** for decarbonization in the context of five to seven Indian cities across two years. The City Sprint process is a series of multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder workshops involving business, government, and civil society leaders to enable decarbonization, especially through clean electrification and circularity. The outcome of the workshop series will be a shortlist of relevant policies and business models, which not only reduce emissions but also maximize System Value, such as improved air quality or job creation. City Sprints will help to jumpstart and/or accelerate net zero planning and action. The City Sprint process uses the Toolbox of Solutions - a digital platform containing over 200 examples of clean electrification, efficiency and smart infrastructure best practices and case studies across buildings, energy systems and mobility from over 110 cities around the world. The City Sprint process will also enable cities to run pilot solutions and, based on findings, India will be able contribute 10 to 40 best practice case studies which will be integrated into the Toolbox of Solutions and showcased across the world.

Speaking at the MoU signing event, Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary & Mission Director (Smart Cities Mission), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, said, “*India is*

committed to become Net Zero by 2070, aligning with its vision for a ‘future ready’ India set by the Honorable Prime Minister during the COP26 summit in Glasgow. In realizing this vision to accelerate the clean energy transition, conversation and more importantly, action amongst all actors of the quadruple helix is critical. This partnership between NIUA and WEF is an important step towards that direction. This collaboration will help cities in India and cities globally to learn from one another and drive action towards sustainable development and climate resilience.”

Hitesh Vaidya, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs said, *“India is rapidly urbanizing; it's scale and pace is unprecedented. It is imperative for institutions to prioritize and embed climate resilience in the urban development process. In this regard, cross-sector and inter-organizational partnerships are crucial to foster an exchange of knowledge and identify best practices which can be applied effectively in the Indian context. I see great value in NIUA's collaboration with WEF as it will not only build the capacities of urban practitioners in India through the City Sprint workshops, but also provide them access to a global Toolbox of Solutions and connect with other potential partners in our vision to make Indian cities future-ready.”*

Kristen Panerali, Head of Energy, Materials, Infrastructure Program - Net Zero Carbon Cities, World Economic Forum, on the occasion, commented, *“New models of public and private collaboration are needed to make progress towards net zero goals. The City Sprint workshops are designed to enable government and business leaders to work together to identify and implement solutions across energy, mobility and the built environment. We don't need to wait for the next breakthrough idea – the technologies and business models already exist. Through this collaboration, the Toolbox of Solutions will continue to evolve and expand to provide ideas to urban centers in India, and around the world.”*

As per the World Economic Forum's [Global Risks Report 2022](#), densely populated countries that are highly dependent on agriculture, such as India, are especially vulnerable to climate insecurity. Decarbonization in cities is a real opportunity to keep global warming well below 2°C and cities in India can make an enormous contribution in reaching this goal.

About Net Zero Carbon Cities

The World Economic Forum's [Net Zero Carbon Cities'](#) mission is to create an enabling environment for clean electrification and circularity, resulting in urban decarbonization and resilience. The program aims to do this by fostering public-private collaboration to bridge the gap across the energy, built environment and transport sectors.

About NIUA

Established in 1976, the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) is India's leading national think tank on urban planning and development. As a hub for the generation and dissemination of cutting-edge research in the urban sector, NIUA seeks to provide innovative solutions to address the challenges of a fast urbanizing India, and pave the way for more inclusive and sustainable cities of the future.

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