

Date: Tuesday 21 July 2015
Time: 10.00am
Meeting Room: Level 26
Venue: 135 Albert Street
Auckland

Environment, Climate Change and Natural Heritage Committee

OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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Report on Councillor Wayne Walker's attendance at ICLEI World Congress 2015

Between the 8th and 12th of April 2015 Councillor Wayne Walker attended the 2015 ICLEI World Conference in Seoul, Korea. Auckland Council is a member of ICLEI.

Councillor W Walker represented His Worship the Mayor at the conference, including at the associated Congress of Mayors, where mayors from around the world meet and discuss environmental issues

Councillor W Walker also presented at the conference in the Leadership for Green Growth session. Councillor W Walker's presentation was titled: 'Low-carbon Auckland: Collaborative transformation driven by collective action'.

With over 2,500 delegates, the ICLEI World Congress 2015 is the biggest forum discussing the development of urban sustainability in 2015 worldwide. It has offered ICLEI members and delegates the chance to highlight their achievements, to connect with partners, and to learn from each other. It also served as a landmark occasion for local sustainability efforts in the run-up to the crucial United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015.

The ICLEI World Congress was particularly notable for the high participation from Asian cities, including China, and the significant participation from Korean cities

Auckland Council's participation enabled the following key outcomes to be achieved:

- Demonstration to a global audience of Auckland Council's commitments, aspirations and achievements in sustainable development, and how the Auckland Plan will deliver Auckland's vision to become the world's most liveable city by 2040.
- Confidence and recognition that Auckland Plan reflects best practice.
- Demonstration of Auckland as a city of rapid transformation as shown through:
- Auckland Council as a new model of local government in New Zealand, which has provided an unprecedented opportunity to plan an integrated sustainable future.
- Examples of ongoing transformation including the Low Carbon Action Plan for Auckland, and council's corporate leadership.
- Information gathering and sharing of key learnings on leading sustainability practices.
- Establishing targeted opportunities to participate in relevant global initiatives, city-to-city partnerships and fostering greater links with a network of leading cities, governments and practitioners.
- To actively participate in relevant ICLEI activities ensuring they are developed to respond to the specific needs and priorities of Auckland and New Zealand.

Summary of highlights

Vanuatu presentation

Sumptoh Ulrich – the Mayor of Port Vila City Council, Vanuatu made a call for action in response to the devastation caused by Cyclone Pam.

Cyclone Pam is regarded as one of the worst natural disasters in the history of Vanuatu. 166,000 people were directly or indirectly affected by the storm, and 96% of land crops were destroyed. Around 90% of the buildings in Vanuatu were impacted.

Mayor Ulrich outlined this situation at the World Congress 2015 Opening Plenary, describing how Vanuatu is currently in the process of restoring basic service functions.

As Mayor Ulrich said:

The storm was a wake-up call – a timely reminder not only of nature’s power over us but also of our influence on nature through our development pathways. Small states will continue to bear the burden of an increasingly changing climate. With projections for more intense storms, cyclones will continue to set back years of development processes.

Mayor Ulrich concluded with a call to developed countries to continue to support Vanuatu, but also to act on climate change in order to mitigate the catastrophic consequences. He added: Climate deals must translate into action at all levels.

He also pointed out that developing states have limited resources to draw on. He therefore asked for solid and constructive partnerships between those with resources and those without.

ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability elected Seoul City Mayor Park Won Soon as its new President

"We have a responsibility to hand this green planet onto our children. A city’s problem is no longer the problem of one country or one city. These are global challenges that all cities must address, with Mayors taking the lead," said new ICLEI President and Seoul Mayor Park Won Soon.

Park is a champion of urban sustainability and has helped Seoul to become one of the world’s leaders on sustainable development. Most recently, Seoul successfully achieved to save energy equivalent to the production by one nuclear power plant and embarks now on saving energy equivalent to a second ‘One Less Nuclear Power Plant.’

Park explained:

"We implemented this initiative in 2012 in order to respond to the continually rising demand for electricity. Our aim was to reduce energy demand by an amount equivalent to the production of one nuclear power plant. To do this, we partnered with the private sector to help us produce more energy from renewable sources, and we encouraged all our citizens to save energy in their daily lives. In June 2014, we were able to announce that we had met our target six months ahead of schedule."

Seoul Declaration

Over 100 Mayors and elected leaders adopted the "Seoul Declaration" on the stage of ICLEI’s World Congress 2015, which sets out how to make cities sustainable. The Seoul Declaration is one of the major outcomes of the ICLEI World Congress 2015, and links to ICLEI’s Strategic Plan 2015-2021.

The Seoul Declaration sets a clear path to an innovative and transformative urban development by creating cities that are sustainable, biodiverse, low-carbon, resilient, productive and resource-efficient, smart, ecomobile and healthy and happy.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commended ICLEI President Mayor Park Won Soon, for his leadership on urban sustainability. He also expressed his belief that cities would drive a global transformation and encouraged them to strengthen their networks.

Seoul Action Plan

The Seoul Action Plan outlines Seoul's commitment to support the Compact of Mayors and mobilise other local leaders around the globe to commit and engage, working closely with the global city networks leading the Compact of Mayors initiative. It is supported by the Special Envoy Michael R. Bloomberg, UN-Habitat and three global city networks: ICLEI, C40 and United Cities and Local Governments.

The Seoul Action Plan encompasses a series of practical plans that will effectively address climate change through sustainable development, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, planning low emission development, responding to the impacts of climate change, and intensifying city-city cooperation.

Transformative Actions Program towards COP21

A critical obstacle to the realisation of the much needed numerous local and subnational actions across the globe is the range of difficulties in accessing funding, as well as the lack of bankable projects. To address these issues, the Transformative Actions Program (TAP) was launched, to improve access to existing capital flows to cities and regions, as well as catalysing and accelerating additional capital flows from public and private investors.

Collaboration

The ICLEI World Congress 2015 closed on 11 April 2015 with a focus on extending partnerships and collaboration. ICLEI was delighted to sign 11 Memoranda of Understanding with a range of forward-thinking and innovative organizations.

The MOUs were signed with: Association of Vertical Farming (AVF); International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); World Resources Institute (WRI); World Council on City Data (WCCD); Eco-Forum Global (ECG); Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS); Chinese Centre for Urban Development (CCUD); Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation (GIUI); Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES); and URBIO – International Network Urban Biodiversity and Design (URBIO).

"One of the most effective ways cities are fighting climate change is through the Compact of Mayors," said Michael R. Bloomberg, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Cities and Climate Change. "The Compact reflects the commitment that cities are making to reduce carbon emissions and the crucial role they play in creating a healthier future. As nations come together to negotiate a global climate treaty later this year, the Compact of Mayors offers proof that international cooperation on climate change can produce big results."

Launched at the 2014 United Nations Climate Summit, the Compact establishes a common platform to capture the impact of cities' collective actions through consistent, public reporting of their efforts.

New ICLEI initiatives

In addition, the congress saw the launch of three major new ICLEI initiatives: CityFood, the 100% Renewable Energy ICLEI Community, and the Global Sustainable Public Procurement Network.

- CityFood is the community of ICLEI Members with the ambition and commitment to establish policies, programs, plans and projects on resilient urban food systems, including appropriate approaches to urban agriculture.

- The 100% Renewable Energy ICLEI Community is committed to low-carbon development and policy or action planning for a high rate of renewable energy, with the goal of reducing dependence on fossil fuels and nuclear power. Andrea Reimer, a Councillor at the City of Vancouver, spoke at the launch, explaining why Vancouver had set itself a target of generating 100% of its energy from renewable sources.
- The Global Sustainable Public Procurement Network is an initiative launched by Seoul Metropolitan Government in partnership with ICLEI. The aim is to create a worldwide network of leading cities that meet, share and develop their capabilities to implement sustainable and innovative procurement to drive a transition to sustainable production and consumption.

Promise of Seoul

Demonstrating ambition at the local level, the ICLEI President and Mayor of Seoul, Park Won Soon, launched the Promise of Seoul, which commits Seoul to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 from 2005 levels.

Conference Sessions

Overall, the ICLEI World Congress 2015 featured 7 plenaries, 8 sub-plenaries, 29 sessions and 20 side events, including a two-day Urban Nature conference, Researchers' Symposium and the URBIO conference. A huge range of topics was covered, from how cities and small island states can better work together to how the presence of women leaders in sustainability can be increased.

Particular sessions of interest at the conference included:

- Challenges and opportunities of Urban China
- Low emission development strategies: Pathways to a low emission, green and inclusive economy
- Advancing the Resilient City: New developments and directions in urban adaptation and resilience
- What is a 'Smart' city?
- Effective vertical integration between different levels of government on climate action
- EcoMobility Alliance: effective partnerships for cities on the move
- Sustainable waste management
- Urban Health: cities cooperate on air pollution in Northeast Asia
- Urban agriculture: cities feeding people
- Sharing cities: from ownership to access
- City-business cooperation for sustainable urban infrastructure
- Financing our urban future
- Cities at risk: reducing and responding to disasters and climate threats
- Planning for density: opportunities and challenges for liveable cities
- Metropolitan areas: how governance models can support sustainable city-region-city relations
- The future of water in cities- priorities and strategies for local water security
- Driving sustainable public procurement on the global stage
- Towards 100% renewables: towards a new paradigm
- Financing for low-carbon development and sustainable mobility
- Low carbon cities in Asia through city-to-city cooperation
- Smart City solutions

- Urban productivity: finding common ground with the property and infrastructure industries to advance sustainability
- Small island states and climate change

Final comments

Councillor W Walker regards his overall participation, learnings and contacts as comprising the most productive and useful conference he has ever attended. In particular the resources gained are directly relevant to achieving Auckland's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2040. There was no attendance cost for the conference itself.

Participation in the conference will assist, should Auckland Council decide to accept the invitation to join the C40 group of cities.

Auckland Council is able to obtain valuable information and learnings through interchange and collaboration with other ICLEI cities, participate in programmes and benefit financially from joint procurements.

After the ICLEI World conference in Seoul, Councillor W Walker travelled to the South Korean City of Suwon. In 2014 Councillor W Walker hosted an 'eco-mobility' delegation from Suwon City. Suwon City is a leading Korean city in initiatives around ecomobility, smart city initiatives, energy, and water conservation. The Suwon visit and those in Japan were at Councillor W Walker's personal expense.

In Japan, Councillor W Walker visited Auckland Council's sister cities Shinagawa and Fukuoka.

In each city, Councillor W Walker met with the local officials from respective environmental departments, discussing low-carbon and climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives. Site visits included incineration plants, recycling and re-use initiatives, eco-house facilities, electric bike installations, cycling initiatives and the Auckland City friendship garden in Fukuoka. Discussions included joint initiatives in procurement and sharing climate change strategies and implementation.

Further information on the ICLEI conference and initiatives can be found at www.iclei.org
<http://www.iclei.org/iclei-global/who-is-iclei.html>

Councillor Wayne Walker

Chair of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Heritage Committee

Auckland Council

20 July 2015