

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL



RIO DE JANEIRO



BOGOTÁ, D.C.



MÉXICO CITY



Alliance
Water and Cities:
A scenario
for adaptation
and resilience

Side Event Title: Water and Cities: Integrating Sustainable Development in GEF Projects

Date, Time: Sunday, March 25, 2014 - 17:45-19:15pm

Summary of Session:

Cities cover only 2% of the Earth's surface but use up to 75% of its resources. By 2030, land covered by cities will have expanded by 200%, while the global urban population will have grown 70%. By 2050, the urban population will double. This rapid urbanization is exerting pressure on fresh water supplies, natural capital, infrastructure and energy. Further, cities are the main drivers of climate change accounting for 75% of global CO₂ emissions (from energy use and production, industry, transportation and construction). The recently launched assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that climate change affects hydrological regimes, which can ultimately decrease freshwater supply. The pace of urbanization and subsequent land use change and climate change combined requires immediate measures to ensure fresh water supply for our future.

According to the CBD, more than 80 percent of the population in Latin America currently lives in cities, and by 2050 it is expected to reach 90 percent, making this the most urbanized region in the world. In Bogota (Colombia), Mexico City (Mexico) and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), three of Latin America's largest cities, degradation of ecosystems and natural capital, combined with expansion of the urban area are threatening the quantity and quality of the water supply for up to 40 million inhabitants living in these metropolitan areas.

Conservation International (CI) recognizes that water is essential for life and that natural ecosystems are critical for human well-being. CI is working with different countries and partners to develop and foster local and regional initiatives that promote solutions for climate change and water related issues. **The "Water and Cities" Initiative**, will catalyze efforts in different cities across the globe to develop and share challenges and solutions, helping societies adapt and become resilient to the effects of water scarcity and decreased regular access to water. The initiative was launched in 2013 in Bogotá, Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro. Each city is implementing efforts to conserve and restore critical ecosystems and are developing policies to address biodiversity and ecosystem services loss.

CI is supporting these efforts through specific projects:

- In Bogota's "Chingaza-Sumapaz-Guerrero-Guacheneque Conservation Corridor" project, the Bogota water supply company and local, regional and environmental authorities work together on studies related to biodiversity, ecosystem services and environmental conflicts and formulate and implement conservation, restoration and sustainable use projects to recover ecosystem services.
- In Mexico, the "Water Forest" initiative seeks to sustainably manage the watersheds that supply water to Mexico City and the state of Morelos. In Rio de Janeiro, government agencies and local communities in the Guandu Basin work together to create and implement

public and private protected areas, forest restoration and identify priority areas for hydroproduction as part of the “Forests and Water Producers” project.

GEF’s Sustainable Cities - An Integrated Approach Program is a singular opportunity to scale up all those activities in each city as well as build up an active learning network between the cities focused on technical exchange and capacity building. Moreover, will allow the establishment of a cooperative platform open for adhesion of other cities. To this end, the initiative is working in close cooperation with the “C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group”, a network of the world’s megacities committed to addressing climate change.

This side event will:

- Provide an overview of the goals, activities and results of the Water and Cities Initiative
- Present to key representatives in the audience (GEF National Focal Points and other Partners) opportunities for cooperation
- Discuss and work on the synergies with the GEF’s Sustainable Cities - An Integrated Approach Program

Agenda:

TIME	TOPIC
5	Welcome and introductory remarks
10	The Water and Cities Initiative: challenges and goals
15	Local context of water issues in Rio, Bogotá and Mexico City
15	Action Plan and demonstrative projects in each city
20	GEF’s “Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach” as an opportunity to strength the Initiative
20	Questions and comments from the audience
5	Concluding remarks

Speakers/Moderators:

1. Rodrigo Medeiros – Senior Director of Science, Conservation International Americas
2. Tatiana Ramos – Executive Director Conservation International Mexico
3. Fabio Arjona – Vice President Conservation International Colombia
4. Representative of C40 (tbc)

Contact Details:

Rodrigo Medeiros

Conservation International – Americas Field Division

Email: rmedeiros@conservation.org

Phone: +55 21 99170-1858