

C12.37 Transformation Processes in Megacities Commission of the International Geographical Union

Report of Activities, 2012-2013

A. Membership

a. List of the commission's steering committee members

Prof. Dr. Frauke Kraas (Chair)
Institute of Geography, University of Cologne
Albertus-Magnus-Platz, D-50923 Köln, Germany
Tel.: +49 221 470 7050
Fax: +49 221 470 4917
Email: f.kraas@uni-koeln.de
Homepage: <http://www.geographie.uni-koeln.de>

Prof. Dr. Martin Coy (Co-Chair)
Institut für Geographie
Universität Innsbruck
Innrain 52
A-5020 Innsbruck, Austria
Phone: +43-512-507-4520
Fax: +43-512-507-2895
Email: martin.coy@uibk.ac.at
Homepage: <http://www.uibk.ac.at/geographie/personal/coy/>

Prof. Dr. Surinder Aggarwal
Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics
Delhi University, Delhi 110007, India
Phone: + 91-11-276 66491 Cell: 9810 335987
Fax: + 91-11-766 7336
Email: surinder_aggarwal@hotmail.com and/or surinder1@vsnl.com
Homepage of the Department: <http://www.du.ac.in/index.php?id=433>

Prof. Dr. Lee Boon Thong
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
Nilai University
No 1, Persiaran Universiti
71800 Putra Nilai
Malaysia
Email: boonthong.lee@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Marcelo Lopes de Souza
Rua. Gal. Severiano, 172, apto. 501 (Botafogo)
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 22290-040, Brazil
Phone: +55-21-2270-7773
Email: mlopesdesouza@terra.com.br

Homepage: <http://www.geografia.ufrj.br/nuped/apresentacao/marceloopessouza.pdf>

Prof. Dr. Sue Parnell
University of Cape Town
Private Bag X3, Rondebosch 7701
Tel: 021- 6502877
Fax: 021 - 6503456
email: susan.parnell@uct.ac.za

Prof. Dr. William D. Solecki
Department of Geography
Hunter College - City University of New York
695 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10021, U.S.A.
Phone: +1-212 772 4536
Fax: +1-212 772 5268
Email: wsolecki@hunter.cuny.edu
Homepage: http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/ci/cius/bio_solecki.cfm

Prof. Dr. David Simon
Department of Geography
Royal Holloway University of London
Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX
Phone: +44 1784 443651
Email: D.Simon@rhul.ac.uk
Homepage: http://pure.rhul.ac.uk/portal/en/persons/david-simon_69b08a6c-d133-4157-b1f2-eb0036b4d6e6.html

Prof. Dr. Xue Desheng
Center for Urban and Regional Studies
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
School of Geography and Planning
Sun Yat-sen (Zhongshan) University
Guangzhou City, Guangdong, PR China
Email: eesxds@mail.sysu.edu.cn
Homepage:
<http://eng.sysu.edu.cn/academics/schoolsdepartments/schoolofgeographyandplanning/index.htm>
<http://humgeo.unibas.ch/staff/profile/profile/person/desheng/>

Dr. Zin Nwe Myint
Department of Geography
University of Yangon
Yangon, Myanmar
Homepage: <http://www.forum-urban-futures.net/contacts/participants/dr-zin-nwe-myint>

b. Corresponding members

In total: 207

By country (December 2013):

Austria	4
Bangladesh	5
Brazil	4
Cambodia	2
Canada	5
China	14
Egypt	2
Finland	3
Germany	38
India	12
Indonesia	7
Laos	3
Malaysia	5
Mexico	2
Myanmar	4
Namibia	1
Netherlands	4
Norway	1
Pakistan	1
Philippines	6
Russia	3
South Africa	2
Singapore	2
Switzerland	14
Thailand	7
UK	16
USA	29
Vietnam	6

B. Meetings

Meetings of and with the commission have either been organized by the commission directly or in connection with one or more of the commission's members, within cooperative research program, individual research projects or research networks. The listed meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops are – apart from the ones during IGU congresses and regional conferences – therefore not necessarily organized by the commission and under its “roof” alone but often in the context of wider and joint activities from commission members.

a. Meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops

b. Summary of questions addressed and findings/conclusions, new ideas, insights, theoretical/practical implications

- **21.-23.11.2012, Dongguan/China**

Final regional conference in China of the Priority Program “Megacities –

Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change”

58 participants from Bangladesh, China and Germany

The conference focused on the following questions: sustainable development of megaurban economies under globalization and transformation regimes, megaurban health issues and environmental damages, new forms of megaurban governance, vulnerability and livelihood strategies of marginalized population groups, migration processes in China. One day excursion focused on the transformation processes in Dongguan/Pearl River Delta. The scientific workshop was co-organized by the Center for Urban and Regional Studies, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, School of Geography and Planning, Sun-Yat-sen University and the University of Cologne and was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).



- **26.-28.11.2012, Dhaka/Bangladesh**

Final regional conference in Bangladesh of the Priority Program “Megacities – Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change”

46 participants from Bangladesh, China and Germany

During the conference, the following research issues were discussed in paper sessions: sustainable development of megaurban economies under globalization and transformation regimes, environmental change and health problems, new forms of megaurban governance, vulnerability and livelihood strategies of marginalized population groups, migration processes in slums of Dhaka. In the closing panel on “Integrating the Informal – A Pathway Towards More Sustainable Urbanism?”, the participants underlined the necessity to integrate informal processes in urban planning. The workshop included participants from administration and NGOs and was co-organized by Bangladesh institutions and the University of Cologne and was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).



- 29.11.-8.12.2012, Nay Pyi Taw, Taunggyi and Yangon/Myanmar**
International workshop: “Housing for People” and “Urban Heritage for all”
 42 participants (with paper presentation) from Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam) and Germany plus 62 participants (without papers) from Myanmar

Focus of the two subsequent expert workshops was, first, the exchange about international housing policies, social housing developments and its finance models and managerial realization in different political settings. Housing rights, community mortgage programs and housing design approaches for the urban poor were discussed in comparative perspective. Second, the workshop addressed key topics of urban heritage, such as heritage conservation policies, design principles, conservation management and disaster risk reduction strategies for urban heritage. Apart from paper sessions, an excursion to major urban heritage sites in megacity Yangon was conducted. The workshop was held in cooperation with the expert network “ForUm for Urban Future in Southeast Asia”, co-organized by the DHSHD/Nay Pyi Taw and the University of Cologne and was financed by the DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service.



- 14.-16.04.2013, Bonn/Germany**
Closing conference of the Priority Program “Megacities – Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change”
 120 participants from Austria, Bangladesh, China, Germany, India, Malaysia, United Kingdom and USA and from 15 disciplines (from arts and science, from Geography to Anthropology, Architecture, Medicine, Meteorology, Planning and Sinology etc.).

The conference concluded the large joint research program on informal dynamics of megaurban development within the context of global change which was funded for eight years and was investigating informal phenomena, processes and negotiations in the two regions of Dhaka/Bangladesh and the Pearl River Delta/China.

Researchers from 16 disciplines, both from natural and social sciences, worked together in interdisciplinary teams in 11 projects. During the conference, synthesis papers were presented which analysed the complex configurations of informality in the megaurban context.

In looking back, a successful megacity research program was concluded which was developed since 2000 in close cooperation with the MegaCity TaskForce of the International Geographical Union and the German National Committee of Global Change Research (NKGCF). From 2002 onwards, the idea of establishing a so-called priority program was discussed in three large round table meetings (in 2002, 2003 and 2004). Based on interdisciplinary conceptualization, an application was submitted to the German Research Foundation in 2005. After its successful selection in a competitive international evaluation, the priority program was established as “Megacities – Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change” (SPP 1233).

Between 2006 and 2013, 13 interdisciplinary and international projects were conducted between 17 partner universities in Germany and 11 partner universities in China and Bangladesh. 11 international Memorandum of Understanding and partnership agreements as well as one university partnership (Sun Yat-sen University Guangzhou and the University of Cologne) resulted. About 120 researchers in the entire network, from principal investigators to postdocs and PhD candidates undertook intensive field work in the two project regions and convened in more than 50 workshops and seminars (incl. PhD candidates’ seminars). One Postdoc finished his so-called habilitation during the program period, one more habilitation is still in progress. 18 PhD candidates from Bangladesh, China and Germany finished their thesis, further 19 more are currently about to finish their PhD thesis.



More than 200 publications emerged, among them more than 60 articles in peer-reviewed journals. 7 books within the reviewed book series “Megacities and Global Change” were published (see below).

The programs aims were to

- * understand phenomena, processes and relationship of informal dynamics of global change in megacities and
- * develop theoretical approaches and models for explanation of informal processes and structures in megacities.

This included

- a (re)conceptualization of "informality" as representing a complex, multi-layered and dynamic reality
- to deepen the understanding of informal institutions and processes and their relevance for megaurban dynamics and actors
- further development of existing models and scenarios, multidisciplinary approaches, complex dynamics of systems

Four problem areas with highest dynamics and social relevance were selected: (1) new forms of governance, (2) urban economies, (3) material and resource flows and (4) settlement development. The 13 research projects focused on: (1) The struggle for urban livelihoods and the quest for a functional city, (2) reconciling informal and statutory planning institutions, (3) the metropolitan food system, (4) informal settlements, economic and environmental change, and public health, (5) natural hazards and climate change: Future trends, social adaptation and informal dynamics, (6) border-drawing and spatial differentiation of urban governance modes, (7) analysis of informal dynamics in mega urban areas – based on spatial structure and steering mechanisms focused on water, (8) informal migrant communities and health strategies in urban villages – linking global change and urban health, (9) satellite-based aerosol mapping over megacities: Development of methodology and application in health and climate related studies, (10) the dynamics of peri-urbanization in the Pearl River Delta: emerging land use patterns, urban villages, global linkages, (11) informal dynamics of agile firm organisation, (12) Governance in time: Spatial differentiation and temporal change of urban development and redevelopment and (13) the central coordination project.

On the conceptual level, the program focused on informality in megacities on an ontological level, exchanged about the „nature“ of informality, of what is (and what is not) informal, whether informality was there before formality and about normative notions. The debate moved on to theorising informality as agency, informal institutions and informal modes of negotiation. Furthermore, a political dimension was taken up, in analyzing the state's (or it's representatives') relation towards informality, including „elite informality“.

The program was connected with international networks and research programs such as the

- IHDP-UGEC (Urbanization and Global Environmental Change) and was endorsed in 2007
- Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN)
- Global Sustainable Urban Development Network (UN-Habitat)
- World Urban Forums in Vancouver and Nanning
- International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE), the program was among the selected key topics
- MegaCity TaskForce of the International Geographical Union
- German Initiatives on Megacity Research by links with a) the BMBF: program “Future Megacities” and b) the Helmholtz Association program “Risk Habitat Megacities”

Further details of the program can be obtained at the webpage www.megacities-megachallenge.org



The closing conference was organized by the University of Cologne and was funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).



- **2013: IGU Regional Conference in Kyoto/Japan**
Commission session on “Transformation Processes in Megacities”

A paper sessions and a business meeting of the commission were held on 5 August 2013. The papers addressed questions of the visualisation of spatial structures in the Greater Tokyo area and the question of the role of artists in Shanghai's culture-led urban regeneration.

- **15./16.11.2013: Khon Khaen/Thailand**
Workshop on urban and megaurban development in Southeast Asia
32 participants from Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam

The workshop addressed the linkages between large and regional urban agglomerations in Southeast Asia as well as corridor developments in comparative perspective. Within the urban networks in Southeast Asia, the linkages between the cities and towns, including those adjacent to megacities, have been neglected. Therefore, more research efforts to investigate issues like cooperation within urban networks and strategic alliances shall be enhanced.



- **2.11. and 7.12.2013: Yangon/Myanmar Workshop series on “Yangon City Development Processes”**
48 participants from Germany and Myanmar

In the workshop series, the recent transformation processes in megacity Yangon/Myanmar, have been addressed and critically evaluated. Several research papers addressed the recent infrastructural, economic and social transformation processes, its challenges and possible options for improvement and upgrading. Based on recent Master Plan propositions from international donors as well as on own research within Myanmar institutions over the past about five years, different concepts and visions of future development were discussed intensively, in paper sessions and workshop round table discussions. One further workshop in early 2014 will conclude the series and will lead to an international book publication.



c. Coming meetings/events 2014 and beyond

Currently, the following next meetings and events are planned for 2014:

- A third workshop on Yangon City development processes (in February 2014)
- A international workshop on megaurban heritage research questions in Southeast Asia (in March 2014)
- An international conference in urban migration (in July 2014)
- Sessions of the Megacity Commission during the IGU Regional Conference in Krakow (18-22 August 2014)
- An international conference of megaurban health issues (in September 2014)

C. Networking

a. Collaboration with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces

Contacts exist with the following commissions, but not yet has a collaboration extended to joint activities:

- C12.18 Hazard and Risk
- C12.32 Mountain Response to Global Change
- C12.39 Urban Commission: Urban Challenges in a Complex World

b. Collaboration with other international, intergovernmental, and inter- and multi-disciplinary groups

Research networks

- Collaborative research program and network: Priority program “Megacities – Megachallenge: Informal Dynamics of Global Change” in Pearl River Delta/China and Dhaka/Bangladesh, about 80 scientists in Bangladesh, China and Germany are working together, from 16 disciplines
<http://www.megacities-megachallenge.org/>
- Collaborative research program and network: “Future Megacities in Balance – New Alliances for Energy- and Climate-Efficient Solutions” (BMBF)
<http://www.emerging-megacities.org/>
- Expert network “ForUm for Urban Future in Southeast Asia”
<http://forum-urban-futures.net/>

c. Cooperative efforts with ISSC (International Social Science Council) and with ICSU (the International Council for Science) programs

Not yet with ISSC or ICSU, but cooperation with International Human Development Program (IHDP).

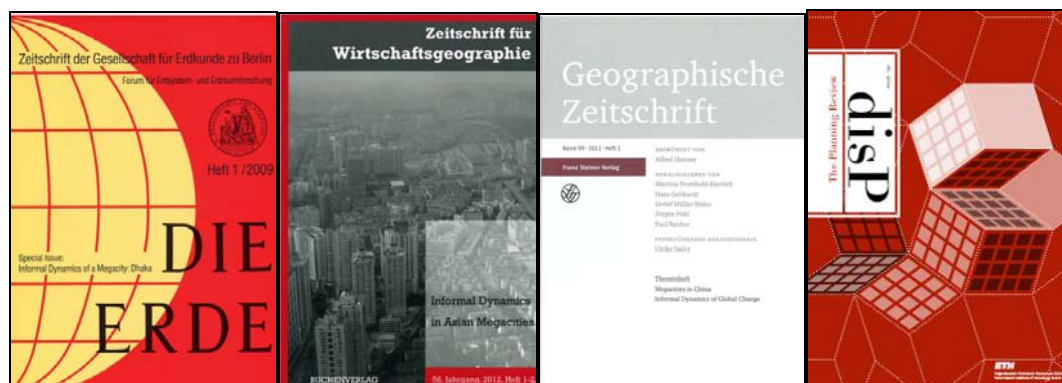
D. Publications

a. Newsletters, journal issues, books (with citation)

No *newsletter* has been established yet.

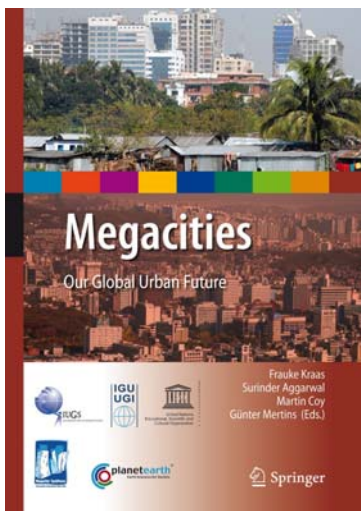
Special journal issues

In the following peer-reviewed journals, special issues in which members of the Megacity Commission published articles have recently been published: *disp*, *Die Erde*, *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie*, *Geographische Zeitschrift*.



Book publications

- Kraas, F., S. Aggarwal, M. Coy, G. Mertins (eds.) (2014): Megacities – Our global urban future. Heidelberg (Springer). 225 S., published in connection with the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE)



Contents:

Preface - Megacities and Global Change.- Megacities and Climate Change: Early Adapters, Mainstream Adapters, and Capacities.- Underground cities.- Water quality and socio-ecological vulnerability regarding urban development in selected case studies of megacity Guangzhou, China.- Rice for the Megacity. Dhaka's food supply between global risks and local vulnerabilities.- Land development strategies in megacities: Guiding land use and land rights in the context of urban sprawl and informality.- The influence of foreign direct investment on land use changes and regional planning in developing-World megacities: a Bangalore case study.- Inner-city development in megacities between degradation and

renewal. The case of Sao Paulo case study.- Agile Firm Organisation and Upgrading in the Greater Pearl River Delta.- Linking Global Change, National Development Goals, Urbanization and International Migration in China: The Example of African Migrants in Guangzhou and Foshan.- "Phobopolis": Violence, fear and socio-political fragmentation of the space in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.- Dar es Salaam, megacity of tomorrow - informal urban expansion and the provision of technical infrastructure.- Bus Rapid Transit: the answer to transport problems in megacities? The example of TransMilenio (Bogotá / Colombia).- Governance in Megacities: Experiences, Challenges, and Implications for International Cooperation.- Managing the Metropolis – Planning in New York City.- E-Governance Initiatives in India; Case Studies from Hyderabad and Bangalore

Book series

The commission has, in connection with the mentioned joint research programs and networks established a reviewed book series for quality reviewed PhD thesis, conference outcomes and monographs, with Franz Steiner Publishers, Stuttgart: International Book Series: "Megacities and Global Change", Editors: Frauke Kraas, Martin Coy, Peter Herrle und Volker Kreibich

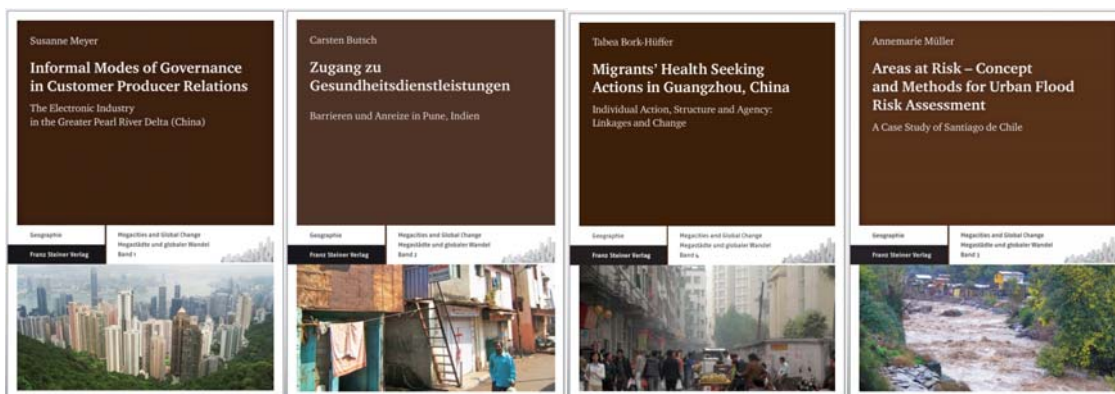
In total, 13 books have since 2011 been published. In 2012 and 2013, the following 11 books were published:

- Annemarie Müller: Areas at Risk - Concept and Methods for Urban Floos Risk Assessment. A Case Study of Santiago de Chile. Stuttgart 2012
- Tabea Bork-Hüffer: Migrants' Health Seeking Actions in Guangzhou, China. Individual Action, Structure and Agency: Linkages and Change. Stuttgart 2012
- Carolin Hoehnke: Verkehrsgovernance in Megastädten - die ÖPNV-Reformen in Santiago de Chile und Bagotá. Stuttgart 2012
- Mareike Kroll: Gesundheitliche Disparitäten im urbanen Indien Auswirkungen des sozioökonomischen Status auf die Gesundheit in Pune. Stuttgart 2013
- Kirsten Hackenbroch: The Spatiality of Livelihoods - Negotiations of Access to Public Space in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Stuttgart 2013.

- Anna-Lena Bercht: Stresserleben, Emotionen und Coping in Guangzhou, China. Mensch-Umwelt-Transaktionen aus geographischer und psychologischer Perspektive. Stuttgart 2013
- Shahadat Hossein: Contested Water Supply: Claim Making and the Politics of Regulation in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Stuttgart 2013
- Pamela Hartmann: Flexible Arbeitskräfte. Eine Situationsanalyse am Beispiel der Elektroindustrie im Perflussdelta, China. Stuttgart 2013
- Juliane Welz: Segregation und Integration in Santiago de Chile zwischen Tradition und Umbruch - Zur Bedeutung von sozioökonomisch heterogen strukturierten Stadtquartieren und Mechanismen der Sozialintegration für die (Re-)Produktion von Segregation. Stuttgart 2014
- Daniel Schiller: An Institutional Perspective on Production and Upgrading. The Electronics Industry in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta. Stuttgart 2013
- Benjamin Etzold: The Politics of Street Food. Contested Governance and Vulnerability in Dhaka. Stuttgart 2013

Homepages:

- http://www.steiner-verlag.de/reihe/view/listtitel.html?tx_crondavtitel_pi%5BfilterReihe%5D=444&tx_crondavtitel_pi%5BfilterKategorie%5D=&cHash=c42f016d2706a890939bed3b73f73e4f
- http://www.steiner-verlag.de/uploads/media/FSV_Megacities.pdf
- http://www.megacities-megachallenge.org/publications_steiner.php



The full publication list of a) individual commission members publications and b) the research network publications contains about 10 pages; a list with c) media reports contains 3 pages. Since the individual publications are not genuine contributions of the commission and its related research projects, they will not be listed here.

b. Current URL

Currently, the commission is still connected via the previous TaskForce URL: <http://www.megacities.uni-koeln.de/>, the webpage will be updated early next year.

E. Archival Contributions

a. Material sent to IGU archives (copies of publications)

Most of the above mentioned publications will be sent to the IGU archives in digital version (not the book publications).

b. Photographs from meetings, field excursions, other events

Several photos from meetings and field work can be provided to the IGU archives.

Frauke Kraas, Myitkyina/Myanmar, 22.12.2013