

# **C12.37 Transformation Processes in Megacities**

## **Commission of the International Geographical Union**

### **Report of Activities, 2012-2016<sup>1</sup>**

#### **A. Membership**

##### **a. List of the commission's steering committee members**

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## **b. Corresponding members**

***In total:*** 265

### ***By country (update: 25 August 2016):***

Austria	7	Mexico	2
Bangladesh	5	Myanmar	12
Brazil	4	Namibia	1
Cambodia	3	Nepal	1
Canada	5	Netherlands	4
Chile	2	Norway	1
China	16	Pakistan	1
Egypt	2	Philippines	9
Finland	3	Russia	3
France	1	South Africa	2
Germany	49	Singapore	5
India	12	Switzerland	13
Indonesia	11	Thailand	16
Japan	16	UK	16
Laos	3	USA	26
Latvia	1	Vietnam	7
Malaysia	6		

## **B. Meetings**

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



In total, more than 250 publications emerged, among them more than 60 articles in peer-reviewed journals. Furthermore, several 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
- 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: [www.megacities-megachallenge.org](http://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.



- 13.01.2014: Workshop: Urban Heritage in Megacity Yangon. University of Yangon/Myanmar. Aim: Conceptualisation of a comprehensive, integrative urban heritage-oriented megaurban development. Topics: People and place, urban heritage concepts, communicating heritage.
- 14.03.2014: Workshop: Recent Mega-urbanisation and Transformation Processes of Myanmar and Yangon. University of Yangon/Myanmar. Aim: Exchange on key challenges of mega-urbanisation. Topics: trends and lessons learnt from other megacities in Asia, urban drivers in transformation processes.
- 24./25.10.2014: Future Megacities: Priorities for Sustainable Development. Networked Challenges: Tectonics – Megacities – Urban Planning. 1st German-Turkish Science Dialogue. German-Turkish Year of Science. Istanbul Technical University. Funding: Leopoldina and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Istanbul 38 participants from the academy and different universities of Turkey  
Aim: Dialogue between scientists and practitioners on key challenges of megaurbanisation. Key questions: Urban risk management and communication, principles of integrated urban planning in risk- and disaster-prone areas, adaptation and mitigation, citizen's science and transformative governance.
- 27.10.2014: Urban Heritage: Key principles and considerations. Workshop "Delhi's Heritage in the 21st century". Funding/cooperation: DFG, INTACH, SPA, International Centre, Delhi/India.  
42 participants from different Indian universities, urban planning and heritage practitioners. Aim: Exchange between scientists, administration and civil society. Topics: Principles of urban heritage, heritage legislation, heritage-based economic development, heritage education and cultural perception of urban heritage.





- 17.1.2015: International Conference: Building the Future: The Role of Heritage in the Sustainable Development of Yangon: Integrating Heritage and Urban Planning. Yangon/Myanmar. Funding: World Monument Fund New York

About 60 international participants from several countries. Aim: Exchange about recent heritage concepts in planning and development. Topics: Principles of tangible and intangible heritage, governance of heritage, heritage tourism, financing heritage, communicating heritage, the role of the civil society, heritage networks, arts and heritage.

- 25.-27.03.2015, African Centre for Cities, University of Capetown/South Africa. China-Africa Urban Studies Workshop: Starting from the South

Aim: Comparative analysis of urbanization policies and patterns in South Africa and eastern China. Focus on three specific empirical themes which feature strongly in research in both contexts and which will bear comparative examination: 1) the role of the state in orchestrating development, and civil society responses to this. Contrasts may be drawn between adaptive and nuanced state interventions, with wider support and consent; and forms of conflict and contestation. 2) comparative examination of the impacts on contemporary urban development of migration to cities under the *hukou* system in Chinese cities and the legacy of influx controls during the apartheid regime in South Africa. 3) comparative examination of the growth of peri-urban settlements (e.g. informal and satellite cities); fostering cross-cultural global South comparative urban studies to develop in-depth, nuanced accounts of contemporary urbanization. see: <http://www.africancentreforcities.net/starting-from-the-south/>

- 17.-19.6.2015: Workshop: Transformation Processes in the Urban System of Southeast Asia. Global South Studies Centre (GSSC), University of Cologne/Germany. Aim: Exchange on concepts of societal and economic transformation processes.
- 7.-13.9.2015: International Conference „Urban Systems in Southeast Asia“, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay/Myanmar

Aim: Long exchange, field surveys and practical fieldwork among 25 international participants jointly together with 10 local experts. Participants from: Cambodia, Germany, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam. Topics: Urban systems – shape, regional policies, transport infrastructure, financial transfers, decentralisation and deconcentration, the role of regional towns.



- 28./29.9.2015: International Workshop „Housing Policy in Megacities and Towns in Southeast Asia“. University of Cologne
- 4.10.2015: Annual Conference. Session on „Urban fringe development in emerging economies and developing countries: Transformations in urban landscapes“. German Congress for Geography. Humboldt University Berlin/Germany. 68 participants. Aim of the session: Comparative analysis of different urban fringe structures, processes and developments.
- 4.10.2015: Annual Conference. Session on „Societal change and urban transformation in Southeast Asia“. German Congress for Geography. Humboldt University Berlin/Germany. About 70 participants. Aim of the session: State-of-the-art presentations on recent societal changes in the transformation process of urban Southeast Asia.
- 20.-22.10.2015: International Conference: 2nd International Urban Operations Conference. Session: Flood Risk Adaptation Strategies in Coastal Megacities: Lessons from Southeast and South Asia. TECHNET Europe 2015, 1st European Geoinformation Symposium and Exposition "Urbanisation, Migration, Disaster Relief: Key Challenges of the Future". AFCEA Europe. Berlin/Germany.
- 6.-8.1.2016: International Conference: The 13th International Asian Urbanisation Conference (AURA). Rapid Urbanisation and Sustainable Development in Asia. Universitas Gadjah Mada. Yogyakarta/Indonesia



- 30.5.2016: Humanity on the move – Unlocking the transformative power of cities. 2nd Intergovernmental meeting of the “Sino-German Working Group on Urbanisation”. Delegation of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of PR China (MoHURD). German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). Berlin.
- 31.5.2016: International Workshop: Climate Policy in urban areas without eviction. Anchoring human rights’ principles in the urban agenda. Misereor. Berlin/Germany
- 22.-25.8.2016: International Geographical Congress (IGC) in Beijing/China  
The commission organised 3 sessions with 13 announced and 10 present speakers. Sessions: Megacity Development and Governance, Informality and the Transformation of Governance, Transformation of Megaurban Economies  
Between 25 and 31 international colleagues participated in the session.

## **C. Networking**

### **a. Collaboration with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces**

The Megacity Commission stays in contact with the following commissions, though without 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***

The commission was/is connected to several international expert 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/>
- UN Habitat Nairobi. Participation in the writing teams of the ten policy papers for the UN Habitat III Conference. Policy Paper 1: The rights to the City.



- FutureEarth: Urbanisation Group
- ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability: Governance of Cities
- UGEC Urbanisation and Global Environmental Change
- Expert network “ForUm for Urban Future in Southeast Asia”. [www.forum-urban-futures.net/](http://www.forum-urban-futures.net/)
- German Advisory Council on Global Change: <http://www.wbgu.de/en/home/>
- OurSus – Global Sustainable Cities: <http://www.oursus.org/>

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

The commission does not have an explicit connection with ISSC or ICSU.

## D. Publications

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

The commission does not issue a **newsletter**.

### Special journal issues

The following special issues were published (with the participation of at least two, usually more members of the Megacity Commission) in the journals:

- Die Erde: Informal Dynamics of Megacity Dhaka
- Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie: Informal Dynamics in Asian Megacities
- Geographische Zeitschrift: Megacities in China – Informal Dynamics of Global Change
- disP – The Planning Review
- ASIEN – The German Journal of Contemporary Asia



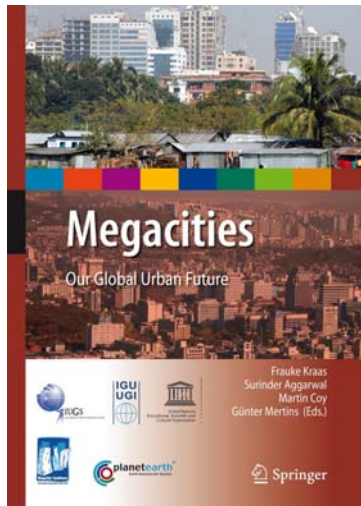
ASIEN – The German Journal of Contemporary Asia: “The Evolution of Geography-Based South Asia Studies”. Topics (among others): Urban cultural heritage, mobile communication and translocal social constellations, delta-morphodynamics, rapid urbanisation affecting human health, blight in the urban centre; energy, hydropower and geopolitics.

### Book publications



In the following book publications and book series editing, two or more members of the commission participated.

- 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 performance (until the end of 2015): 17,466 chapter downloads

#### **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, 20 books have been published since 2011. In 2012-16, 18 books were already published and two are currently in print:

- Markus Keck: *Navigating Real Markets. The Economic Resilience of Food Wholesale Traders in Dhaka, Bangladesh*. Stuttgart 2016
- Alexander Follmann: *Governing Riverscapes. Urban Environmental Change along the River Yamuna in Delhi, India*. Stuttgart 2016
- Malte Lech: *Institutions, Innovation and Regional Economic Change. The Electronic Industry in the Pearl River Delta, China*. Stuttgart 2015
- Tibor Aßheuer: *Klimawandel und Resilienz in Bangladesch – Die Bewältigung von Überschwemmungen in den Slums von Dhaka*. Stuttgart 2014

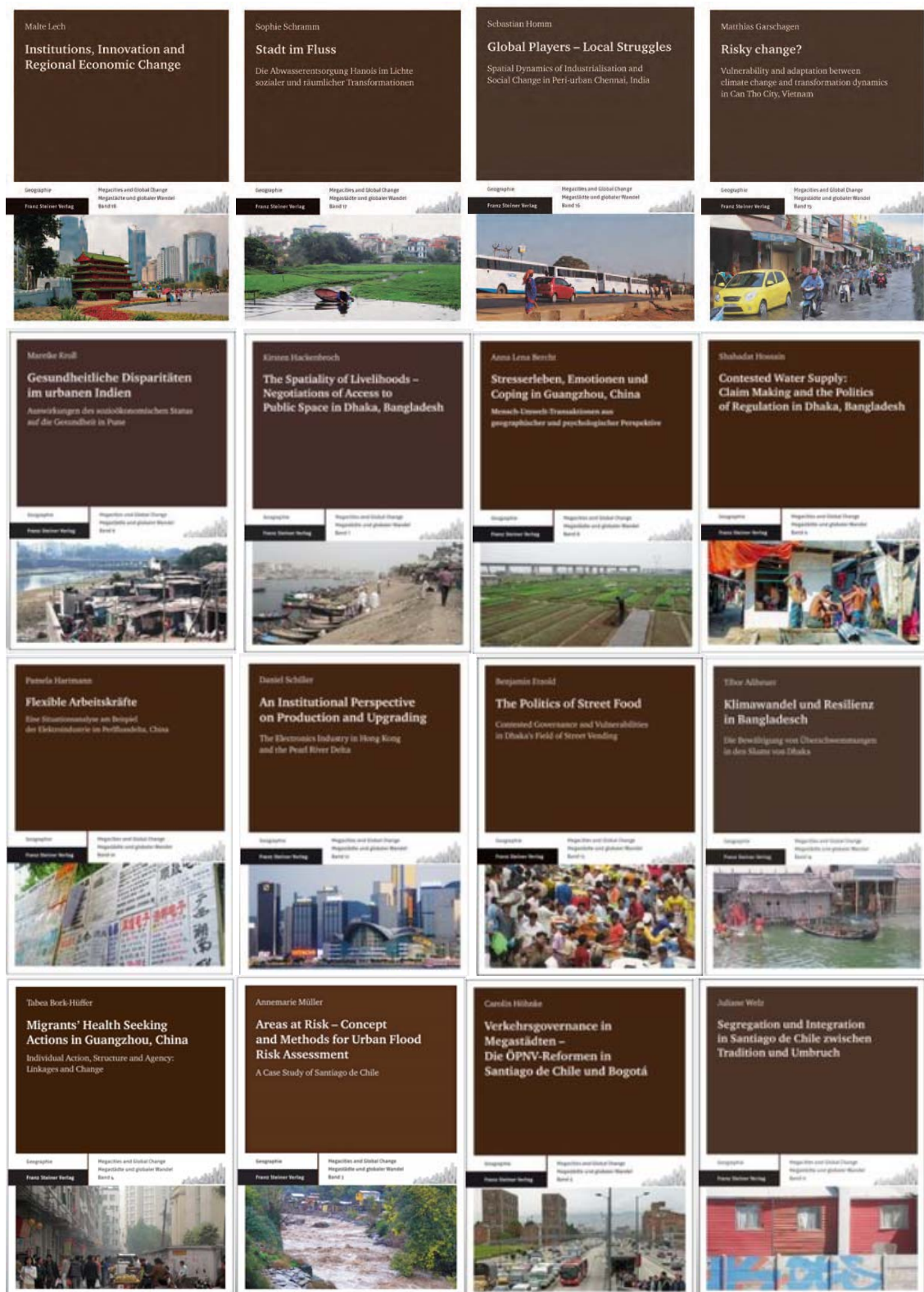
- Matthias Garschagen: Risky Change? Vulnerability and Adaption between climate change and transformation dynamics in Can Tho City, Vietnam. Stuttgart 2014
- Sebastian Homm: Global Players – Local Struggles: Spatial Dynamics of Industrialisation and Social Change in Peri-urban Chennai, India. Stuttgart 2014.
- Sophie Schramm: Stadt im Fluss: Die Abwasserentsorgung Hanois im Lichte sozialer und räumlicher Transformationen. Stuttgart 2014
- 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
- 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 Perflusdelta, China. Stuttgart 2013
- 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
- Annemarie Müller: Areas at Risk - Concept and Methods for Urban Floos Risk Assessment. A Case Study of Santiago de Chile. Stuttgart 2012
- Carolin Hoehnke: Verkehrsgovernance in Megastädten - die ÖPNV-Reformen in Santiago de Chile und Bogotá. Stuttgart 2012
- Tabea Bork-Hüffer: Migrants' Health Seeking Actions in Guangzhou, China. Individual Action, Structure and Agency: Linkages and Change. Stuttgart 2012

Two further books will be published in 2016:

- Mega Sud: Political Ecology of the Delhi Ridge, India. Stuttgart 2016
- Anke Schwarz: Demands of Water. A Sociospatial Approach to Domestic Water Use in Mexico City. Stuttgart 2016

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/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.steiner-verlag.de/uploads/media/FSV_Megacities.pdf)
- [http://www.megacities-megachallenge.org/publications\\_steiner.php](http://www.megacities-megachallenge.org/publications_steiner.php)





The full publication list of individual commission members' publications, research network publications and with media reports contains several pages. Since the individual publications are not genuine contributions of the commission, they will not be listed here.

### ***UN Habitat Policy Paper 1: Right to the city and cities for all***

The "policy paper provides the framework for the New Urban Agenda which will be discussed in the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). The right to the city should be considered as a new paradigm for urban development that seeks to address the major challenges in cities and human settlements of rapid urbanization, poverty reduction, social exclusion, and environmental risk that call for decisive actions and new policy priorities by national, regional, and local governments.

The policy paper unpacks the right to the city through examining three pillars: spatially just resource distribution, political agency, and social, economic and cultural diversity. It further identifies several core thematic cross-cutting challenges that the right to the city confronts when being implemented: urban spatial strategies, urban governance, urban economy, social aspects, and urban environment.

Each pillar is then addressed in detail by identifying its main issues:

- (a) Pillar 1: land for housing and livelihoods, and the de-commodification of urban space; urban commons, public space, and biodiversity; access to basic services and infrastructure, and controlling pollution; unplanned and informal settlements habitation; resilience, climate change, disaster and risk management;
- (b) Pillar 2: inclusive governance; inclusive urban planning; citizenship; enabling participation, transparency, and democratization;
- (c) Pillar 3: recognition of social actors — including gender — for migration and refugees; embracing identity, cultural practice, diversity, and heritage; safer cities, livelihoods, well-being, and welfare; poverty risk and employment vulnerabilities; inclusive economy and solidarity economy." (Quote: Right to the city and cities for all. Policy paper. Executive summary. 6.6.2016.

<https://www.habitat3.org/bitcache/4be79c0919c64bfcffb42bad7e69b0fe61c5ebcd?vid=586869&disposition=inline&op=view>



Preparatory Committee for the United Nations  
Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban  
Development (Habitat III)  
Third session  
Surabaya, Indonesia, 25-27 July 2016

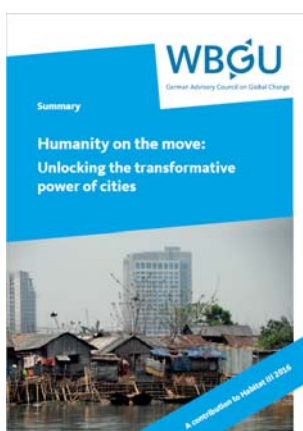
**Policy paper 1: Right to the city and cities for all**

**Note by the secretariat**

The secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) hereby transmits a policy paper entitled "Right to the city and cities for all", prepared by the members of Policy Unit 1.

Habitat III policy units are co-led by two international organizations and composed of a maximum of 20 experts each, bringing together individual experts from a variety of fields, including academia, government, civil society and other regional and international bodies.

The composition of Policy Unit 1 and its policy paper framework can be consulted at [www.habitat3.org](http://www.habitat3.org).



*German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU):  
Flagship report "Humanity on the move: Unlocking the  
transformative power of cities A Contribution to Habitat III".  
Berlin 2016. 545 pages.*

**b. Current URL**

The webpage of the commission can be found at:  
<http://www.megacities.uni-koeln.de/>.

**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 fieldwork can be provided to the IGU archives upon request.

Frauke Kraas, Cologne, 26.08.2016