

Regional Urban transformations: Land and the New Urban Agenda

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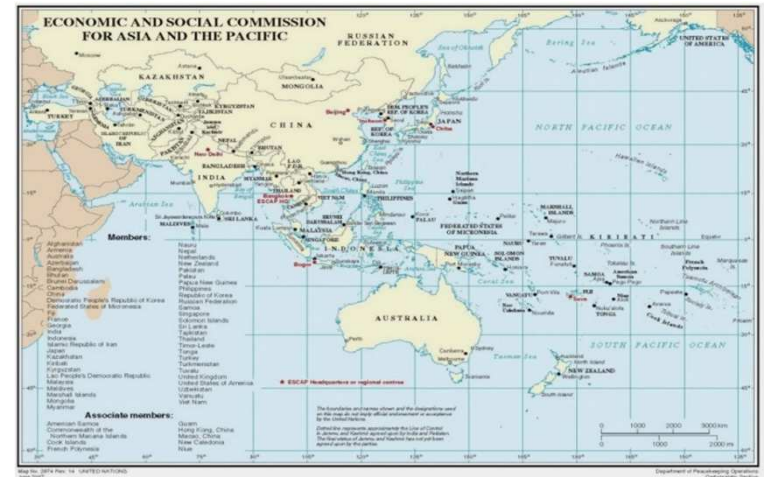
The 20th United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for
Asia and the Pacific (UNRCC-AP)

6-9 October 2015, Jeju, Republic of Korea



ESCAP : The regional arm of the UN for Asia-Pacific

- Part of UN Secretariat: 62 member states - 58 are regional members
- ESCAP covers the world's most populous region - two thirds of humanity
- Based in Bangkok, with 4 Sub-regional offices
- ESCAP fosters:
 - regional cooperation to promote social & economic development
 - normative, analytical & technical cooperation at the regional level
 - a platform for South-South dialogue / exchange of practices

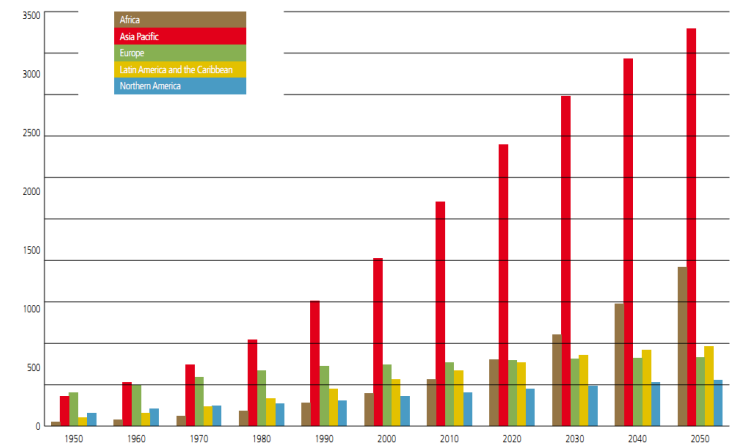


The Asia-Pacific: its urban present – and future

- In 2018 the region will pass a critical threshold: more people will live in cities than in rural areas
- The Asia-Pacific region has over 2.1 billion urban citizens – an increase of 630 million since 2000
- By 2050 two-thirds of region will live in cities: 3.2 billion
- Proportional shifts + numerical impact
- Demographic, economic & spatial dimensions



Graph 0.2 Urban Population at Mid-Year, 1950-2050 (thousands)



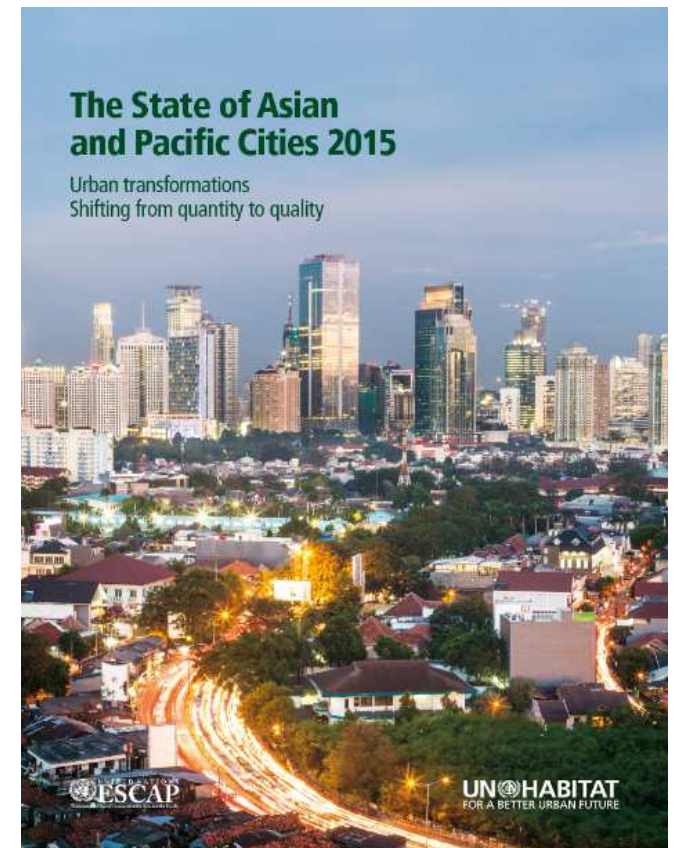
Source: World Urbanisation Prospects: The 2014 revision, File F03



State of Asian and Pacific Cities Report: key messages

Some overall messages are the need:

- To plan for an urban future in which up to 80% of the region will live in urban agglomerations by 2100
- Such transformation requires to shift focus from quantity to quality - from models of exploitation to ones on investment
- To understand that cities are now longer 'bounded'
- For data to support holistic national urban policy – including geospatial data

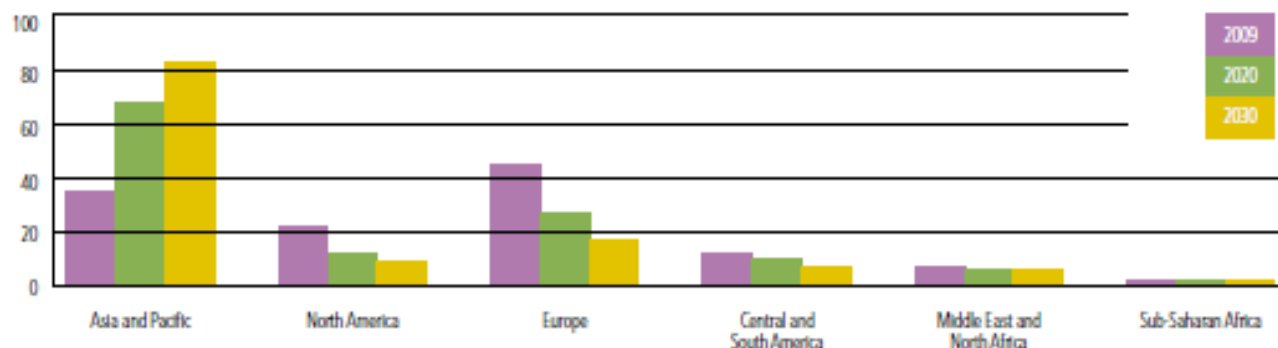


State of Asian and Pacific Cities Report: key messages

Profound economic and social transformations – and the need to recast economic and social policy

- Greater understanding of the role of cities in national, regional, global development
- Cities & economic transformation: a qualified success story
- Rise of the world's largest middle class – but an emerging equity crisis
- Creating cities for all requires harnessing diversity and expanding opportunity
- Investing in social policy and inclusion: the next driver of growth?
- Transforming urban economies: from quantity to quality of growth

Graph 3.2 Size of world's middle classes (global percentage share)



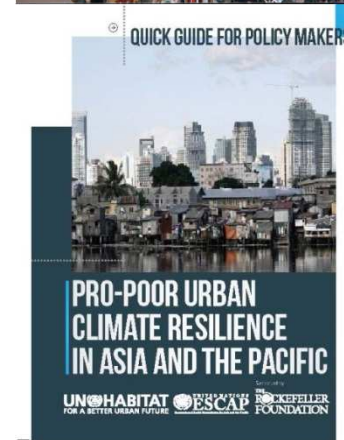
State of Asian and Pacific Cities Report: key messages

The region needs to urgently enhance its environmental quality

- Persistent & newly emerging challenges
- Shifting consumption/production patterns threaten to overwhelm resources (including land)
- Resource gaps are growing: energy, water – while waste to resource/circular economy must underpin future strategies
- It is no longer possible to address these crises in isolation: integrated/nexus solutions are essential for eco-efficiency

In this century the future existence of many cities will be in doubt

- Cities at risk through climate change: the fragile facades of Asia-Pacific urbanism
- Greater concentration of economic & other assets in cities: 'concentrated vulnerabilities'
- The future of coastal cities: home to half the region's urban population



State of Asian and Pacific Cities Report: governing change

From competitive to collaborative governance

- Renewing urban governance agendas: moving beyond centralised or decentralised models
- Opening up to new stakeholders & voices – while strengthening planning and policy frameworks
- Closing the urban finance gaps
- The need for integrated and holistic national urban policies/frameworks: managing cities as national development assets
- All must be underpinned by accessible & inclusive data



Implications for the land agenda: growth

- Proportion & growth rates not unique: but numbers are extraordinary
- Urbanisation of space + de-territorialism of cities: demographic, cultural, behavioral
- Drivers of growth: migration, natural growth, **reclassification**
- Greater need – but a relative shrinking of public policy/planning: institutional & spatial



Implications for the land agenda: density

- In East Asia shift to greater density
- Opportunities through density: but density in itself is not a solution
- Is density supporting inclusion, sustainability?
- ‘Good’ density is more than numbers



Implications for the land agenda: sprawl

- Most cities are not shifting towards compact forms
- Asia-Pacific cities tend to ‘radiate-out’ rather than stay/become compact: ‘dense sprawl’
- Global sample: urban land cover expanded at an annual rate of 3.7 percent during the 1990s, urban population 1.6 percent (Angel 2012)
- Blurring rural/urban interface: ecosystem, governance & land-use planning dimensions



The population of Kabul in Afghanistan has grown tenfold since 2001.

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Land, sustainable cities & their regions

- Existing institutions/policy frameworks require transformation & renewal
- Policy responses must consider impacts/relationships beyond urban boundaries & across sector silos
- Challenges: financial & technological, but also political, organizational & information-related
- Achieving effective stakeholder engagement: municipal government, the private sector, CSOs, research
- Supporting mutually beneficial actions & policies for interdependent urban & rural areas: urban nexus



Towards a 'New Urban Agenda'?

- Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
- Goal 11: “Making **Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable**”
- **A need to regionalise & localise global agendas: the role of this community in that**



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