



Naples Declaration 2012

Joining Voices ... Joining Forces ... Taking Action

4 September 2012

This Naples Declaration declares the aims of the Global Planners Network (GPN) at the UN Habitat's sixth World Urban Forum (WUF6) in Naples. It builds on its Vancouver Declaration that was declared at WUF3 in 2006 and it sets out GPN's continuing commitment to action: "Joining Voices ... Joining Forces ... Taking Action"

Joining Voices

The Global Planners Network was formed in 2005 and launched its Vancouver Declaration and its paper on "Re-inventing Planning" at WUF3 in Vancouver in 2006. It is a network of national planning associations that aims to promote and support planning around the world. Its membership has grown from the 5 founding planning association to 35 planning associations representing some 100,000 planners across the world in 2012.

The Vancouver Declaration recognised the switch from a rural to an urban majority in the world population and highlighted the rapid increase in urbanisation, slum development and urban poverty. Planning professionals raised a new voice to support the UN Habitat Action Programme for Human Settlements by reshaping planning skills, processes and policies locally, nationally and globally to tackle the challenges of urbanisation.

The core principles of the Vancouver Declaration assert that there can be no sustainable development without sustainable urbanization and there can be no sustainable urbanization without effective planning. They recognised that political will and targeted investment are required for effective planning and that both urban and rural development must be more sustainable to realise the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The Global Planners Network brought the national planning associations of the world together to provide solutions to global issues and to overcome misconceptions that planning is an obstacle to development. GPN saw the need for planners to work more effectively with other built and natural environment professionals and helped to re-launch and enlarge the Habitat Professionals Forum (HPF) to further common objectives.

Joining Forces

This Naples Declaration reflects the original principles of the Vancouver Declaration and recognises the significant changes in global issues that have happened since 2006. The world has moved on and GPN is moving on too. Planning is an essential part of tackling these issues and provides a uniquely comprehensive and long term perspective on the key challenges in international development.

The issue of global climate change has taken on a greater urgency and significance since 2006, natural disasters are more frequent and the need for disaster recovery and longer term planning for resilience against further disasters is more pressing. The issue of global economic recession that emerged in 2008 has depressed markets, prompted public spending cuts, increased unemployment and added to world urban poverty.

The key driver of increasing urbanisation is the basic needs of people and communities to survive the economic challenges of a global recession and economic change. Planners must recognise that increasing urbanisation, slum development and urban poverty are a result of the need for economic survival. The role of planning is to propose forms of sustainable development to accommodate increasing urban populations.

Economic and technological change is being accelerated by the recession and is a key driver in innovation and changing markets between different sectors across the world. People need the essentials of housing and sanitation for their security and they need education and skills to take part in modern economies. Governments and business communities need good planning to enable social and economic growth.

GPN held a Networking Event at the World Urban Forum in Naples to review the progress it has made in the 6 years since the Vancouver Declaration. Five national planning associations reported on examples of their work in supporting capacity building for planning within local communities particularly in developing nations. A lively discussion explored some of the key issues and offered other examples of local capacity building.

The Global Planners Network confirms its founding principles to promote strategic, inclusive and integrative planning at all scales and to fulfil its responsibilities to present and future generations. We will continue to work together, and with others, to tackle rapid urbanization and urban poverty, adopt a more integrated approach to planning urban and rural areas, protect ecosystems and combat natural hazards resulting from climate change.

Taking Action

The Global Planners Network committed itself to “Turning Ideas into Action” in its Vancouver Declaration. This Naples Declaration takes that commitment forward to “Taking Action” to tackle both the new and the existing global issues that have arisen since 2006. Planners and politicians must take hard decisions to balance the economic, social and environmental elements of sustainable development.

Planning must tackle four key conundrums to address the challenges of the modern world. It needs to tackle the economic conundrum to reduce urban poverty by enabling economic growth and regeneration. It needs to tackle the carbon conundrum to reduce pollution and use more renewable energy by bringing forward plans for changes in settlement and movement patterns to reduce carbon emissions.

Planning needs to tackle the water conundrum by promoting water management plans to reduce shortages, floods and pollution and improve health. Finally, it needs to tackle the governance conundrum by reconciling national, community and individual interests to take planning and investment decisions at the right levels from national to local through effective engagement with local people and local communities.

The Global Planners Network is committed to planning to address these conundrums that:

- guides urbanising mega-regions and the growth of small-and-medium-sized towns, addressing urban sprawl;
- manage the needs of the youth population, the ageing and shrinking cities in various parts of the world;
- facilitates economic growth by making land available and coordinating economic development;
- addresses climate change by reducing carbon emissions and dependence on non-renewable energy;
- adopts plans to secure water supplies, flood prevention and pollution control and improve health;
- reduces discrimination and recognises local traditions and culture to guide local planning;
- develops governance to coordinate decision making at the most appropriate level from local to national;
- improves planning education internationally to embrace innovation including community participation.

The Global Planners Network will promote this Declaration of Naples and its principles for planning and sustainable development to national and local governments, international development organisations, civil society, local communities and the other planning and development professions. We will work with our partners in a spirit of open mindedness to fulfil our collective and individual responsibility.

The Global Planners Network dedicates itself to support this Declaration now, and in the future, by :

- building the capacity for effective planning both globally and locally by increasing education and research;
- narrowing the gap between the rate of urbanisation and our capacity to plan and manage development;
- linking with other professionals, politicians and institutions involved in the future of human settlements.

We encourage leaders and allied groups to reach out to us and our members to create places of lasting value.