

AN INVESTIGATION IN TO THE GLOBAL URBANISATION PROCESS OF MEGA-CITIES AND MANAGING LAND ECONOMIC CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

While the growth of mega cities brings with it many fold economic, social and cultural opportunities, it can also bring ecological crisis and breakdown in traditional social and cultural patterns of behaviour. The initial broad question is that have Mega-Cities outlived their usefulness?

FIG Commission 8 has targeted in its Business Plan (Comm 8.3) to better understand mega-cities. This review addresses these targets, as well as linkages with other FIG initiatives such as FIG task force on sustainable development and UNCHS activities. The review contributes to the understanding of global practices that identify and manage change with a particular focus on mega- cities, located alongside coasts because of the specific and impending coastal hazards that arises with the onset of changing sea levels.

This paper highlights world-wide accomplishments and seeks to set a simple and useful framework for a tentative assessment of new actions. In particular the review wishes to explain the procedures in working together, understanding spatial planning and where applicable implement more sustainable development in cities. This will require understanding urban and rural land use planning, planning policies, urban development, public- private partnership, and informal settlements.

The context of this study is summarised by a pertinent statement made in 1996 that remains true today,

“Nearly half the world's population live in cities. Between 1960 and 1992 the number of urban inhabitants rose by 1.4 billion. Projections indicate that over the next 15 years the population of cities will rise by approximately 1 billion, with growth occurring in both industrialised and industrialising economies. By the year 2000, 17 cities will have more than 10 million people.” (Club of Mega-City Mayors 5/2/1996, Davos, Switzerland)

During the last half-century, cities across the world have been suffering from economic decline, and poorly managed infrastructure services and growing environmental problems. The basis of change management could stem from the ‘tool – box’ of expertise in the surveying profession.

If coastal cities are able to confer a competitive advantage on the businesses operating within them, then urban land and planning administrations must implement creative and innovative sustainable growth policies. This is in order to deal with such challenges as, housing needs, environmental hazards, improving economic and social benefits and rationalising marine transportation corridors. The ultimate challenge is to find solutions

to these problems, which are at least economically feasible, and at best financially rewarding, while at the same time promoting a sense of community and identity.

It is anticipated that a number of different subjects of interest in the management of coastal mega- cities will be identified, initially concentrating on three broad categories:

1. Managing Coastal Environment: such as Coastal Erosion and Coastal Change,
2. Social-Economic Development and Management: such as Waterfront revitalisation
3. Solving Use Conflicts in Coastal Areas, and Integrated Approaches to Coastal Planning and Management in Mega cities.

The research project has three phases, spread over the period 2000-2003. This paper illustrates and where possible explains the results from the first 9 months.

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