



Building heat-resilient cities: sustainable cooling & urban solutions

14 April 2026, 10 – 11:30 CEST, [Online MS Teams webinar](#)

Agenda

1. Background and objectives

Urban areas are central to both the climate challenge and the solution. In Europe and Central Asia, cities face growing pressures from climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. In response, the IBC on Environment and Climate Change will organize a three-part webinar series to support UN Country Teams (UNCT) and Resident Coordinator Offices in strengthening support to governments on sustainable urban development.

Building on the UN Secretary General's [Call to Action on Extreme Heat](#), the session will outline that extreme heat is becoming more frequent, intense, and dangerous, driven largely by a fossil fuel charged, human induced climate crisis. The Call to Action urges urgent cooperation to care for vulnerable groups, protect workers, strengthen societal and economic resilience through science and data, and limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C by phasing out fossil fuels and scaling up renewable energy.

The Europe and Central Asia regions' increasing exposure to urban heat demands a radical rethink of how cities are planned and cooled. Poor design of public spaces fosters urban heat island effects. The session will build on this call by focusing on sustainable, low-emission cooling strategies, including district cooling, passive architecture, urban planning and neighborhood design, as well as urban greening and nature-based solutions. It will also highlight the role of agrifood systems and urban and peri-urban green spaces in mitigating heat risks, while delivering co-benefits for food and nutrition security, biodiversity, and livelihoods. The webinar will discuss how UNCTs can integrate urban heat risks and cooling solutions into national development planning, resilience strategies, and interagency programming. Addressing urban heat will also require stronger integration of urban–rural linkages, including the role of surrounding landscapes, agrifood systems, and ecosystem services in supporting sustainable, resilient and livable cities.



2. Programme

Moderator: Marika Palosaari, UNEP

Time	Agenda item	Speaker
10:00-10:05	Welcome and opening remarks	Gulnara Roll, Head of the Sectoral Transition Section at UNEP's Climate Mitigation Branch
10:05-10:15	Setting the scene: why heat resilience matters	Dr. Eleni Myrivili, Global Chief Heat Officer for UNEP, UN-Habitat and the Atlantic Council
10:15-10:50	Solutions for heat resilient cities: policies, tools, and approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable cooling and extreme heat, UNEP Assessing urban heat vulnerability utilising the Multilayered Vulnerability Assessment Tool Upcoming Global Guidance on Heat Health Action Plans and reducing heat at local and sub-regional levels 	<p>Elsa Lefevre, Programme Management Officer, UNEP</p> <p>Raghav Anand, Cities and Climate Change Expert, UN-Habitat</p> <p>Vladimir Kendrovski, Technical Officer for Climate Change and Health, WHO</p>
10:50 - 11:25	Implementation: Regional Case Studies and Good Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme heat risk governance and management in Central Asia Principles for addressing urban heat through inclusive urban planning Upscaling Sustainable Cooling (Cool Up Program in Türkiye) Delivering Heat Resilient Cities through FAO's Green Cities Initiative 	<p>Samal Bekmaganbetova, Programme Manager for DRR and Urban Resilience in Central Asia, UNDRR</p> <p>Salvatore Fundaro, Programme Management Officer, UN-Habitat</p> <p>Meral Mungan Arda, Portfolio Manager, Climate Change and Environment, UNDP Türkiye</p> <p>Jeet Mistry, Forestry Officer, FAO</p>
	Q&A and discussion (10min)	



11:25- 11:30	Closing remarks and next steps	Dario Liguti, Director, Energy, Housing & Land Management Division, UNECE, IBC co-chair
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Key resources:

- [New Urban Agenda](#)
- [WMO Report: State of the Climate in Europe 2024 \(latest release\)](#)
- [Beat The Heat: Initiative against extreme heat and health risks in workplaces and major events](#)
- [Extreme Heat Risk Governance Framework and Toolkit 2025 | UNDRR, WMO and the Global Heat Health Information Network \(GHHIN\)](#)
- [Forum of Mayors | UNECE](#)
- [Energy Efficiency in Buildings | UNECE](#)
- [Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing | UNECE](#)
- [Cool Coalition](#)
- [Cooling and extreme heat - Key messages](#)
- [UNDRR Making Cities Resilient 2030](#)
- [Highlights from the extreme heat and agriculture report \(FAO, WMO\)](#)
- [FAO Green Cities Initiative | FAO](#)
- [UNDP - CoolUp programme](#)
- [UN System-wide Strategy on Sustainable Urbanization](#)
- [UN-Habitat and UNEP Greener Cities Partnership](#)
- [UN-Habitat's International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning](#)
- [UNECE's studies on compact, low-carbon and resilient cities](#)
- [UNEP International Resource Panel – Weight of Cities](#)
- [UNEP integrated guidelines for sustainable neighbourhood design](#)
- [My neighbourhood for mountainous cities](#)
- [Multilayered Vulnerability Assessment Handbook](#)
- [UN-Habitat and FAO support Bahrain's afforestation plans | United Nations in Bahrain](#)