

Abstract

Cities and City Residents in the Face of the Challenges to Adapt to Climate Change. Modern cities are battlegrounds where conflicting interests, both social and economic, clash. At the heart of the debate on urban development policies since the 1990s, sustainable development does not rule out economic rationality, but rather, stresses the importance of not ignoring social and environmental objectives. When utilized, this systemic and integrated approach contributes to the improvement of quality of life. Never have anthropopressure and its effects been as strong as over the last decade. At the same time, climate projections show that without taking bold and unprecedented steps to transform our socio-economic systems, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the combined effect of climate change should be seen as a serious threat to our planet, the impact of which may materialise even before the end of this century. In urban areas, the combination of the adverse effects of climate change, including more intense weather patterns and climate extremes, is being felt to an alarming extent. Cities are already home to more than half the world's population. Urban areas with their economic, energy, and transport systems are extremely sensitive, and unfavourable weather phenomena are more than likely to produce a knock-on effect that will menace their future functioning.

Given the foregoing premise, the authors seek to answer the following research questions:

- What is climate change in urban areas and how does it manifest itself?
- What are the effects of climate change and how can they be lessened through actions aimed at the natural environment?
- What environmental policy objectives have there been, especially regarding climate, and what are their outcomes?
- What are the contemporary urban development processes like and what is the role of users and stakeholders in them?
- What collaboration tools for city stakeholders are available and employed?
- What roles in the process of adapting to climate change have been assumed by individual city user groups and stakeholders?
- What are the existing challenges and barriers that hinder cities' adaptation to climate change?

The research questions so framed have determined the thematic scope of the publication and the research tools and methods employed.

Part one of the monograph (chapters one and two) lends a theoretical view of climate change processes and adaptation. It also takes a closer look at urban development against the backdrop of environmental (including climate) and participatory challenges (the concept of the citizen's city being managed by stakeholders). This part of the work offers a critical analysis of the literature on the subject. Part two (chapters three and four) discusses the practical aspects of adaptation to climate change and surveys the literature on the subject. This latter section is augmented with case studies covering climate initiatives taken by local governments, NGOs, scientific (educational) and research institutions, as well as entrepreneurial organisations, service designers, and urban planners.

Keywords: Cities, city users, climate change adaptation, climate crisis, environmental challenges, stakeholders.