

SlimCity initiative to support resource efficiency in cities

29 January 2008

Mayors, regional governors and the private sector have come together in Davos to launch the World Economic Forum's SlimCity Initiative. SlimCity is an exchange between cities and the private sector to support action on resource efficiency in cities – actions in areas that include energy, water, waste, mobility, planning, health and climate change.

SlimCity provides a risk-free and dynamic environment within which cities and the private sector can explore practical solutions, exchange knowledge and showcase best practices. There are a number of organizations of mayors throughout the world; however, the World Economic Forum's SlimCity Initiative is the first to bring together city leaders in a dialogue with the world's foremost business leaders.

Representing the regional governors and mayors taking part in the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Mayor Ken Livingstone of London said: "I believe that, as leaders of major cities, our involvement in the World Economic Forum can help to push the global agenda strongly in favour of cities so that we can act decisively on climate change and other crucial issues. Through the SlimCity Initiative, myself and other city leaders can inform business leaders of how they can assist in helping cities achieve their full potential."

SlimCity is a partnership between the World Economic Forum, the World Bank, the International Energy Agency and ICLEI, the global city network.

It includes key policy makers, politicians and others in a genuine multistakeholder initiative. Members of the SlimCity Steering Board and Advisers to the SlimCity Initiative include Fatih Birol, Chief Economist and Head, Economic Analysis Division, International Energy Agency, Paris; Alan L. Boeckmann, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Fluor Corporation, USA; Mark P. Frissora, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Hertz Global Holding, USA; Shintaro Ishihara, Governor of Tokyo, Japan; Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, United Kingdom; Peter Löscher, President and Chief Executive Officer, Siemens, Germany; Gerard Mestrallet, Executive Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Suez, France; Letizia Moratti, Mayor of Milan, Italy; André Navarri, President, Bombardier Transportation, and Executive Vice-President, Bombardier, Canada; Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco, USA; Konrad Otto-Zimmermann, Secretary-General, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, Canada; Enrico Peña Nieto, Governor of State of Mexico, Mexico; Ralph Peterson, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, CH2M HILL Companies, USA; and James Rogers, Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Duke Energy Corporation, USA.

This year, the World Economic Forum has focused attention on cities in recognition of their vital role in meeting the challenges of the world, and also in recognition of the opportunities that they present. It is estimated that, for the first time in history, more than half the world's population – some 3.3 billion people – are now living in urban areas. By 2030, this figure is expected to increase to almost 5 billion and, by 2050, it is estimated that 80% of the world's population will be living in cities.

With progressive urbanization, cities have become the centres of social interaction, consumption and emissions. This concentration of activity, combined with the increasing leadership of city mayors and governors, presents an opportunity for cities to become a powerful force for global change, particularly in the crucial areas of energy efficiency and climate change. However, increasing urbanization also intensifies the challenges faced by city leaders, and by the companies working for and within them.

Both city leaders and business leaders recognize their joint responsibility to improve the quality of life of citizens

and advance their impact on the world. Thus, we are witnessing a shifting power equation as cities across the world emerge as world leaders to routinely demonstrate that independent localization of policies has the potential to be far more effective than national initiatives.

The World Economic Forum is an international institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation in the spirit of global citizenship. It engages with business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

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