

## PRESENTATION

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From the beginning, the UNESCO Chair on Sustainability works on the analysis and applied projects dealing with development North and South patterns, providing a space through which experiences can be communicated and shared and a better understanding would be acquired.

To facilitate these dynamics the establishment of networks is promoted. The vast majority of projects where the UNESCO Chair on Sustainability works is involved were developed in a framework that includes the implementation of agreements and working arrangements and the creation of specific networks formed by universities, governments, NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders, both locally and regionally, nationally or internationally. The use of complementary networks with each other in a multi-network scheme, strengthen the capacities of individual groups and, especially, extends the capabilities of the different groups involved in the proposed activities.

In this working line, Recycling City (RE\_C) is a collaborative project started by the UNESCO Chair on Sustainability at the UPC, but since the beginning was born associated to a number of entities and organizations. Firstly, Recycling City was established in mid 2010 as an ongoing talks cycle, for the exchange and dissemination of ideas and transformation experiences from different areas of the everyday life, in collaboration with the organization "Barrinar cap a la Sostenibilitat" (Drilling towards Sustainability).

Recycling City is therefore a space to debate on cities, its metabolic cycles and everyday life good practices. In short, this is a proposal to create spaces for citizen participation in urban transformation processes. We want to reflect how to create more sustainable operating cycles and processes in our cities. The challenges we have through the transformation of our cities into more efficient communities, equitable and respectful to their ecosystem, are too large to go through this road alone.

The volume that comes to your hands is an example of those close partnerships that UNESCO Chair on Sustainability has always sought, with acknowledged experts from around the world. Four analysis papers on the current situation at different environments. First, urban planners Echeverri and Orsini tell us some of the keys on how to address and understand the transformation of Medellín city, one of the most powerful examples in the world, through social planning and integrated urban projects.

Andrea Lampis, one of the social scientists specialized on population vulnerability to climate change, makes an analysis of the central debates on sustainability and adaptation to climate change.

Professor and Chair member Andri Stahel, describes the rapid urbanization process and how cities subordinate and transform the territory according to the needs of a growing flow of energy, matter and information. It analyzes the challenges that twenty-first century cities face, with the end of the so-called “economic oil” due to the Peak Oil.

Mauricio Bedoya in his article considers the different approaches on sustainable building, its context and the actions addressed to achieve appropriate urban and rural habitats, both to the environmental conditions and the socio-cultural dynamics of its inhabitants.

In this context of transformation for sustainable human development, it is very important to publicize the different experiences and joint proposals for social and urban transformation towards sustainability. Therefore, the UNESCO Chair works among others, with NEMO organization (<http://www.noemissionmonday.com>), and other UNESCO Chairs, in the creation of a “good practices” database for sustainable human development. This project will start thanks to the multi-networks built by universities and associated groups from Europe, Latin America and Africa. Still, to further extend the participatory process on the database building, a wiki format will be used. This database will form the basis for a future Recycling City Award. Recently, the organization NEMO has decided to chose Recycling City as the center work line for all the NEMO teams from different cities.

As an epilogue, this volume of the magazine has the good fortune to present the collaboration of Jorge Melguizo, former Secretary of Social Development of the Municipality of Medellín. In a time of discredit, we should highlight the example of a politician who has worked for transformation from the public administration, as he says, managing dreams and commitments.

Much remains to be done. Like the same Jorge Melguizo explains, a lot has to be done and in fact, most of the planet is going even worse. Therefore, the positive transformation examples should be collected and disseminated. As members of the academic community and as citizens, our obligation and our commitment have to be honestly directed through this direction.

Higher education cannot withdraw into herself, but has an important role in order to help in the eradication of poverty, intolerance, violence, illiteracy, hunger and disease. It also has to help the promotion of the development and knowledge sharing, solidarity, universal human rights respect, democracy, gender equality and peace culture.

In short, we have a key role on the generating of new ideas for change, to stimulate innovation for sustainable human development. We need to encourage the old, yet beautiful, concept of inhabiting the territory and collectively build our community.

And hope that neighborhoods where warmth and joy can be feel and touched may spread around.