



# Program Agenda

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## *GPSC Mayors Round Table and Urban Nature Forum*

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
November 5 to 6, 2025

*In partnership with*





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### **Background**

In conjunction with **the COP30 Local Leaders Forum**, the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC), led by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC), will jointly organize a **Mayors Round Table and Urban Nature Forum** in **Rio de Janeiro from November 5–6, 2025**. The events, which are organized in collaboration with UNEP, C40, ICLEI, will provide a platform for high-level dialogue, peer learning, and technical exchange. It will position cities and local governments as key actors in achieving nature-positive, resilient, and inclusive development ahead of COP30, and mark the **official launch of the GEF-8 Sustainable Cities Integrated Program (SCIP)**, a global initiative financed by the to help cities implement integrated solutions across climate, biodiversity, and the circular economy.

The events will include:

- **Mayors Round Table (Afternoon of November 5)** - a high-level dialogue among city leaders on urban sustainability and financing, including the official launch of the GEF-8 SCIP.
- **Urban Nature Forum (November 6)** – focusing on urban nature policy, planning, and financing to scale solutions for climate resilience and biodiversity.

*A separate logistics note will be shared with the final venue and other related details.*



## Wednesday, November 5 - GPSC MAYORS ROUND TABLE

Venue: Plenary Room 3, Modern Art Museum

Address: Av. Infante Dom Henrique, 85 - Parque do Flamengo, Rio de Janeiro - RJ, 20021-140, Brazil.

### TIME OPENING SESSION

<b>14:00-14:20 (20 MIN)</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Introduced and chaired by <b>Ming Zhang</b>, Global Director, Urban, Resilience and Land, World Bank Group's interventions.</li> <li>▫ <b>Alfonso Garcia Mora</b>, Vice President for Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, International Finance Corporation</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch the GEF Sustainable Cities Integrated Program</b> <i>Screening of the Sustainable Cities Integrated Program video, jointly by the GPSC and GEF</i></p> <p><b>Video message: Carlos Manuel Rodriguez</b>, CEO and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility</p> <p><b>Group Photo</b></p>
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### SESSION 1 Financing Needs and Opportunities

<b>14:20-15:20 (60 MIN)</b>	<p>This session will feature mayors presenting one priority urban sustainability strategy, plan, or investment project that showcases innovation and transformation, outlining key financing needs, challenges, and partnership opportunities. It will highlight diverse urban solutions advancing nature-positive, low-carbon, and circular development, offering insights for MDBs and financiers on emerging investment opportunities to drive sustainable urban transformation.</p> <p><i>Each mayor briefly (3 min max) presents one innovative strategy <b>OR</b> one successful urban sustainability project that the city would like to share. Alternatively, the city can provide one urban sustainability priority project for which it intends to seek financing.</i></p> <p><i>The GPSC team will contact each city that will speak at this session for specific instruction on preparing the mayor's interventions.</i></p> <p><b>Opening Remarks by Moderator</b></p> <p><b>Interventions by Mayors (3 mins per mayor)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Belize City, Belize: Bernard Wagner, Mayor Placencia, Belize: Warren Garbutt, Mayor San Pedro Town, Belize: Gualberto "Wally" Nunez, Mayor</li> <li>2. Bogotá, Colombia: Carlos Fernando Galán, Mayor</li> <li>3. Brazzaville, Congo: Dieudonné Bantsimba, Mayor</li> <li>4. Cali, Colombia: Alejandro Eder, Mayor</li> <li>5. Castries, St Lucia: Geraldine Lendor-Gabriel, Mayor</li> </ol>
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6. Douala IV, Cameroon: Edouard Hervé Mony Mpah, Mayor
7. Harare, Zimbabwe: Jacob Mafume, Mayor  
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe: David Coltart, Mayor
8. Lo Espejo, Chile: Javiera Paz Reyes Jara, Mayor
9. Lima, Perú: Renzo Reggiardo, Mayor
10. Johannesburg, South Africa: Sello Enoch Dada Morero, Mayor  
Joe Gqabi, South Africa: N.P Mposelwa, Executive Mayor  
Thulamela, South Africa: A.S Rambuda, Executive Mayor  
Vhembe, South Africa: F.T Nkondo, Executive Mayor
11. Sofia, Bulgaria: Nadezhda Bobcheva, Deputy Mayor
12. Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: Amartuvshin Amgalanbayar, Deputy Mayor
13. Zrenjanin, Serbia: Stojanka Cica Vuckovic, Assistant Mayor  
Novi Sad, Serbia: Vanja Petkovic, Deputy Head of the City Administration  
for Environmental Protection
14. Ningbo, China: GE Guobin, Deputy Director General
15. Sao Paulo, Brazil: Luis Felipe Vidal Arellano, Secretary of Finance

### Concluding remarks by the moderator

## SESSION 2: Options for Subnational Financing

15:20-  
15:55  
(35 MIN)

This session will explore practical financial instruments and funding sources available to cities, drawing on mayors' experiences and perspectives on what works, what doesn't, and what is needed to unlock investment for sustainable urban transformation. The discussion will highlight innovative financing mechanisms such as green and climate bonds, blended finance, PPPs, and multilateral funding and identify opportunities to strengthen access to finance for nature-positive, low-carbon, and circular urban development.

### Lightening Talk financial instruments for sub-national financing.

World Bank Group

### Reflections from Financial Institutions and UN Organization (EBRD, IDB, UNEP, DBSA, GEF Secretariat and WBG) (2 min each speaker)

### Interactive discussion

Moderated exchange between mayors and representatives from organizations. Guiding questions include:

- Which financial instruments have you used or considered for urban sustainability?
- What are the main barriers to accessing these instruments?
- What support or innovation would help cities unlock more financing?
- What support is needed from partners like the MDBs and FIs?

### Summary by Moderator

15:55-  
16:00  
(5 MIN)

### Conclusion of Mayor Roundtable

18:30-20:30 | Reception at Gran Mercure Copacabana Vizta

**Thursday, November 6 – URBAN NATURE FORUM**

Venue: Windsor Hotel

Address: Av. Atlântica, 656 - Leme, Rio de Janeiro - RJ, 22010-000, Brazil

**TIME OPENING SESSION**

**9:00-9:15 (15 MIN)** Opening Remarks  
**Ming Zhang**, Global Director, Urban, Resilience and Land, World Bank Group  
 Presentation on Urban Nature Program  
Remarks by the GEF Secretariat  
**Aloke Barnwal**, Thematic Lead, Urban and Infrastructure, GEF

**SESSION 1: Rethinking the Built Environment**

**9:15-10:45 (90 MIN)** The session will discuss innovative strategies adopted by cities that integrate nature into land use planning, public spaces, and urban fabric. It will demonstrate how cities are shifting from the conventional “grey” built environment to “green” infrastructure, embracing pathways to achieve low-carbon futures, greater resilience, and shared prosperity.

**Presentation of city practice:** Curitiba, Montreal, Nairobi and Ningbo  
*(TBC - 5 mins per speaker)*

- Presenters will be invited to share an innovative strategy or policy example that integrates nature into urban land use planning

**Roundtable discussion among cities and participants**

This session will start with reflections by the discussants. The floor is then open to all the participants to exchange their views, organized in two rounds on two related topics:

Round 1:

- What are the biggest challenges – list the top 3 challenges, for cities to incorporate “green” and “blue” infrastructure into grey infrastructure?

Round 2:

- What are the key “ingredients” for making this shift successful, including what support is needed for cities

For each round, city representatives will be first invited to share their views and then open the floor for other participants. This is a moderated interactive exchange. No PPT will be used. A briefing package will be sent out to each city and organization to facilitate the discussion. An initial list of the roundtable discussion is included in this agenda.

Conclusions and summary by the moderator

**10:45-11:15** Coffee Break

## SESSION 2: Scaling Up Green and Resilient Infrastructure through Multistakeholder Collaboration

**11:15-12:30  
(75 MINS)**

This session brings perspectives of urban planners, architects, scientists, engineers, financiers, and other key stakeholders on urban nature. It will demonstrate the importance of establishing a shared vision across stakeholders promoted through the GPSC's Urban Nature Network.

### **Interventions by organizations (35 mins)**

UNEP, ICLEI, C40, WRI, IFLA, Urban-Hub, AIPH, EBRD, IADB, DBSA

*Each speaker will be invited to share their perspectives on the role in building a common strategy to scale up green infrastructure.*

*(3 mins each speaker)*

### **Discussion with cities (30 mins)**

Cities participants are invited to reflect and comment on:

- With many initiatives around the world, from the perspectives of cities, what would be an efficient way to channel the support to cities?

### **Conclusion and summary by the moderator (5 mins)**

**12:30-14:00** Lunch Break

## SESSION 3: Unlocking Financing for Resilient and Green Urban Infrastructure

**14:00-16:00  
(120 MINS)**

This interactive session will highlight how cities and financial institutions (FI) collaborate to design and finance green and resilient urban infrastructure. Through short, dynamic City-FI presentations, the session will showcase real-world projects, innovative financing approaches, and scalable models.

### **Opening Remarks by Moderator (5 mins)**

**Opening Presentations by FIs and the WBCSD (25 mins)**

- IFC and EBRD: Market trends and project examples of sustainability-linked debt instruments.
- World Business Council for Sustainable Development: Perspectives from the private sector on nature financing

**City-FI Joint presentations (60 mins)**

Each participating FI — IFC, IBRD, EBRD, IADB, and DBSA will invite one partner city to jointly present a green and resilient infrastructure project. The session will be designed as an interactive dialogue between the city and the FI team, showcasing collaboration and lessons learned.

Cities are invited to prepare a short presentation highlighting a past or planned project, while FI representatives will complement the presentation with remarks on how the institution has supported (for past projects) or plans to support (for upcoming projects) the city through project preparation, implementation, or financing. The FI can also draw on and share experiences from elsewhere. A one-slide PowerPoint template will be provided to facilitate preparation and ensure consistency across presentations.

Projects may focus on climate adaptation, resilience, and nature-based solutions, as well as innovative financing structures.

- 5 FI–City pairs each delivering a 10-minute joint presentation:
  - City Representative: Overview of a green/resilient project - past or planned. (6 min)
  - FI Representative: Description of FI’s support (e.g., advisory, preparation, financing) and reflections on lessons or scalability. (4 min)

**Interactive Discussion (25 mins)**

*Open dialogue with all participants*

**Closing Reflections (5 mins)**

**16:00-16:05** **Closing remarks**

### List of Cities \*

1. Barranquilla
2. Belize City
3. Bogota
4. Brazzaville
5. Bulawayo
6. Cali
7. Castries
8. Cebu
9. Copenhagen
10. Curitiba
11. Douala IV
12. Glasgow
13. Guatemala City
14. Harare
15. Joe Gqabi
16. Johannesburg
17. Konya
18. Lima
19. Lo Espejo
20. Manaus
21. Mendoza
22. Mexico City
23. Montreal
24. Nairobi
25. Ningbo
26. Toronto
27. Novi Sad
28. Panama City
29. Placencia
30. Pointe Noire
31. Quezon City
32. Samborondon
33. San Pedro Town
34. Santiago
35. Sao Paolo
36. Seattle
37. Sofia
38. Thulamela
39. Toamasina
40. Ulaanbaatar
41. Vhembe
42. Zrenjanin

### List of Organizations

- ALPH (International Association of Horticultural Producers)
- C40 (C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group)
- Canadian Nursery and Landscape Association
- DBSA (Development Bank of Southern Africa)
- EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)
- GEF Secretariat (Global Environment Facility Secretariat)
- ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability)
- IDB (Inter-American Development Bank)
- IFC (International Finance Corporation)
- IFLA (International Federation of Landscape Architects)
- UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
- Urban-Hub (Urban Hub Network / Platform)
- WBCSD (World Business Council for Sustainable Development)
- World Bank (The World Bank Group)
- WRI (World Resources Institute)



\* (as of October 22)