

Coastal Cities Summit



Sharing Risks, Vulnerabilities, and Smart Growth Challenges of Global Cities in the Context of Global Change

Hilton Bayfront
St. Petersburg, Florida USA

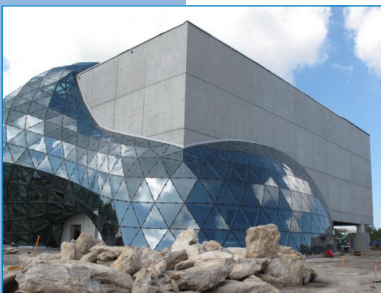
30 April - 3 May, 2012



Shanghai, China



Venice, Italy



St. Petersburg, Florida



Mumbai, India

Coastal ecosystems are among the most productive on earth. Today approximately 2.8 billion people – over 40% of the total global population – live in coastal cities.

We face significant present and future challenges in managing the natural assets of coastal regions as the planet’s population is projected to reach over eight billion people by 2050. This has significant implications for the coastal environment, for ecosystem stability, human health, and sustaining economic vitality. Invaluable ecosystem, societal, and economic assets need to be considered carefully in balance with coastal development, urban sprawl, and coastal pollution.

Coastal regions are particularly vulnerable to stresses caused by climate change and human pressures. How do our coastal communities best prepare for sea level rise, ocean acidification and increased variability in the strength of meteorological phenomena like storms or droughts which will affect different communities around the world differently?

Coastal cities also face additional needs in marine transportation, and require additional security to guard against piracy threats and global terrorism, as well as assistance with drug interdiction and immigration. All of these require strong public education and engagement.

What are best practices and experiences to address these issues? How does the international community work together to formulate goals and workable solutions for coastal cities? These and other challenges will be approached by internationally prominent plenary speakers, workshops, and individual discussions.

The International Ocean Institute – USA will organize the Coastal Cities Summit II in St. Petersburg, Florida, USA, from 30 April 30 - 3 May, 2012. This follows the first Coastal Cities Summit held 17-20 November, 2008, which successfully hosted approximately 250 participants from 19 U.S. states and 22 countries.

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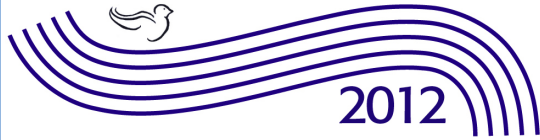
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DR. KIRAN C. PATEL CENTER FOR

Global Solutions



Coastal Cities Summit



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WHO SHOULD ATTEND: local city leaders and policy makers, scientists, practitioners, NGOs, graduate and undergraduate students, and the public concerned about coastal cities and regions.

The result: improved decision-making!

SUMMIT THEMES: While the causes of global climate change may still be disputed, there is no longer any question that our climate will continue to change for some time regardless of whether or not we control carbon emissions. Coastal cities will feel the impacts in terms of greater frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, changes in water availability and quality, ocean acidification and sea level rise. With the ultimate goal of improving coastal governance through practicable solutions, the following themes will be explored in the context of global climate change.

• **Budgeting for Smart Development under a Changing Climate:**

City leaders and planners must be realistic about preparing for climate change, given their limited financial resources. How do coastal cities make use of their local human capacity and research infrastructure to inform managers on adaptation strategies, responses and best practices planning for smart growth? What strategies are available to coastal cities to plan budgets and implement cost-effective solutions?

• **Urbanization, Population Growth and Vulnerable Communities:**

Cities face challenges in terms of stresses on water and sanitation systems, transportation systems, energy, and infrastructure. Water and sanitation systems can get particularly stressed in coastal areas due to the very nature of proximity to oceans: potable water may be threatened by salt-water intrusion and outdated sanitation systems can lead to untreated wastes

entering the oceans. Pollution, loss of natural habitat, and inadequate social safety nets add to worries of urban planners. Vulnerable populations – those living in poverty, without adequate access to education and information as well as other public services – often bear the brunt of the challenges faced by coastal cities.

• **Maritime and Port Security:**

In most countries a large fraction of maritime cargo enters the host country at a few major ports. Port and maritime activities contribute greatly to the economies of their host cities, as well as to the surrounding regions. However, they also expose those cities to a range of security issues and concerns in part because most of the vessels are foreign-owned and foreign-crewed. The challenge is to rigorously address these issues without restricting international commerce.

• **Coastal Energy Alternatives:**

Regardless of progress made in conservation, increasing standards of living and increasing population size imply increased energy needs. We need to take full advantage of a range of energy alternatives. Coastlines offer an array of power alternatives including wind, solar, wave, and currents in addition to off-shore drilling for oil and gas. The recent Deepwater Horizon spill has highlighted some of the dangers involved but there is little question that, for the foreseeable future, offshore drilling will be part of the new energy equation in many countries. One advantage coastal cities may possess is proximity to the energy sources, minimizing transmission costs and consequent energy loss.