

# FUTURE CITIES SUMMIT

THEME: TOWARDS A DECARBONIZED & CLIMATE-RESILIENT NIGERIA

July 19-20, 2023 | Abuja Continental Hotel, Abuja Nigeria

Green Building Council Nigeria (GBCN), in partnership with the International Finance Corporation through its EDGE Green Building Market Transformation Program, proudly hosted Future Cities Summit 2023 on the 19th and 20th of July 2023. As a member of the World GBC, GBCN is part of a global network of over seventy-five national green building councils, fifteen of these based in Africa. GBCN's mission is to lead the transformation of Nigeria's built environment to create buildings and communities that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable through engagement and partnerships with all green building stakeholders.

In furtherance of this mission, Future Cities Summit 2023 was convened to provide a platform for in-depth discussions centered around the World GBC's Africa Manifesto for Sustainable Cities and the Built Environment. This groundbreaking Manifesto, developed by a coalition of national GBCs across Africa, envisions **'The Africa We Want': a net zero carbon, healthy, equitable, resilient, environmentally sustainable and economically inclusive built environment for every African, everywhere.** These discussions were intended to lead to the development of Nigeria-specific policies and programs, focusing on five priority areas of the Manifesto: Energy, Water, Materials, Finance, and Infrastructure. Accordingly, the Summit brought together more than 250 experts and stakeholders from government, business, academia, civil society, and the built environment professions.

Based on the valuable insights and discussions during the event, the following recommendations are put forth on how to situate the Manifesto's policy priorities with Nigeria's local context:

- 1. Strengthen Policy Frameworks:** Governments at all levels should prioritize the development and implementation of strong policy frameworks that promote sustainable urban development. This includes the adoption of green building codes, energy efficiency regulations, and incentives for renewable energy adoption. Policymakers should also integrate climate change considerations into urban planning and development policies.
- 2. Promote Public-Private Partnerships:** Encourage increased collaboration between government agencies and private sector entities through public-private partnerships (PPPs). These partnerships can leverage the expertise and resources of both sectors to deliver sustainable infrastructure projects that align with net-zero emissions targets.
- 3. Invest in Green Infrastructure:** Prioritize investments in green infrastructure, such as green roofs, urban forests, and permeable pavements. Green infrastructure can help mitigate the urban heat island effect, improve air quality, and enhance the overall resilience of cities to climate change impact.
- 4. Support Research and Innovation:** Government, businesses, civil society and academia should work together to support research and innovation in sustainable urban development. This includes funding research projects, providing incentives for innovation, and creating platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- 5. Enhance Data Collection and Monitoring:** Improve data collection and monitoring systems to track progress towards net-zero emissions targets. Accurate and up-to-date data will enable policymakers to make informed decisions and assess the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives.
- 6. Foster Community Engagement:** Ensure that local communities are actively involved in the planning and decision-making processes of urban development projects. Empower communities to participate in shaping their neighborhoods, ensuring that their needs and aspirations are considered.
- 7. Prioritize Low-Carbon Transportation:** Encourage the adoption of low-carbon transportation options, such as electric vehicles, cycling infrastructure, and efficient public transportation systems. Investing in sustainable mobility will reduce emissions and improve air quality in cities.
- 8. Implement Circular Economy Practices:** Encourage the adoption of circular economy principles in urban development projects. Promote waste reduction, recycling, and the reuse of materials to minimize the environmental impact of

construction and demolition activities.

9. **Capacity Building and Training:** Provide capacity building and training programs for professionals in the construction and urban planning sectors. This will ensure that stakeholders have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement sustainable practices effectively.
10. **Raise Awareness and Education:** Raise public awareness about the importance of sustainable urban development and the role of individuals in contributing to net-zero emissions. Educational campaigns can encourage behavior change and foster a culture of sustainability.

These recommendations are the result of two days of discourse, during which Summit participants explored the nexus of sustainability, innovation, and social impact in a series of engaging sessions. In the first keynote of the Summit, "Future Cities of Nigeria," H.E Nasir El-Rufai, the immediate past Governor of Kaduna State, delved into Nigeria's progress in achieving SDG 11 and the country's standing in meeting the Paris Agreement's climate goals. The second keynote, "The Africa Manifesto: Significance & Objectives," delivered by Cristina Gamboa, CEO World Green Building Council, celebrated Nigeria's commitment to decarbonization and highlighted the strategic importance of the Summit in shaping policies and actionable solutions for a climate-resilient built environment. During the final keynote, "Financing Future Cities Towards Sustainability," delivered on the second day by Kalim Shah, Senior Country Manager for Nigeria, Sierra Leone & Liberia at the International Finance Corporation, the Summit examined the crucial role of green building financing and infrastructure development finance in promoting sustainable projects in Nigeria.

The Summit recommendations were also shaped by a series of thematic sessions, during which groups of participants examined a range of topical issues.

The sessions, which featured distinguished local and international speakers, allowed participants to collaboratively explore topics such as urban resilience, zero-waste cities, energy transition, and net-zero water road maps. Additionally, thematic sessions explored innovative strategies for financing sustainable construction projects, the significance of public-private partnerships in sustainable infrastructure development, frameworks for sustainable building practices, and explored case studies of sustainable urbanization from abroad. Each session delved into innovative strategies and technologies to foster a more sustainable built environment in Nigeria, emphasizing collaboration between policymakers, industry leaders, and various stakeholders to drive tangible results. The Summit also featured an EDGE Awareness Workshop organized by IFC, providing valuable insights into enhancing resource-efficient designs and practices.

The outcome of the Summit was the affirmation, by participants, of a shared vision of a sustainable future, and a commitment to work together to catalyze real-world solutions that would steer Nigeria towards a greener, more resilient, and inclusive future for all. Though the journey towards achieving a net zero carbon and climate-resilient built environment in Nigeria poses challenges, it remains not only necessary but achievable. The Future Cities Summit 2023 has laid a solid foundation for this, outlining strategies and actions for Nigeria's leaders and policymakers to implement. The Summit recognizes that success will require a coordinated and multi-layered approach, involving not just all levels of government, but also collaborations across business, academia, civil society, media, and built environment professions. Green Building Council Nigeria is already at the forefront of this transition, and we invite all stakeholders to work with us as we strive to actualize the vision of a decarbonized and climate-resilient Nigeria. Visit [www.gbcn.org.ng](http://www.gbcn.org.ng) to learn how you be part of this important work.



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