# Developing cities face perfect storm of environmental risks

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A major report, "Future Proofing Cities," published today by Atkins in a unique partnership with the Department for International Development (DFID) and UCL, warns that cities in the developing world must act now against a perfect storm of environmental risks.

The report assesses the risks to cities from climate hazards, resource scarcities and damage to ecosystems – and advises how they can act now to future proof themselves. Covering 129 cities totalling 350 million people in 20 countries, this report identifies practical measures that cities can take to manage these future risks.

Around 75% of the world's population will live in cities within 40 years.

Almost all of this population growth will happen in the developing world, with 4.6 billion people projected to live in already rapidly growing cities.

How will these cities in the developing world cope socially, environmentally and economically with such accelerated urbanisation?

"Future Proofing Cities" assesses the risks from megacities like Bangkok to smaller cities such as Zaria in Africa. It looks at their risk profile from climate hazards, resource scarcities and damage to ecosystems and urges action now to future proof against these risks.

This report provides a fresh approach to the urgent issues arising from rapid urbanisation. It assesses the environmental risks facing cities in an integrated way and identifies more than 100 practical policy options that are most relevant and will be of most benefit to people living in different types of cities.

It builds on the collective work on urbanisation by DFID, Atkins and UCL, with forewords by the World Bank and Rockefeller Foundation. The report's editorial and research team included the UCL Development Planning Unit's Dr Caren Levy, Dr Adriana Allen, Dr Vanessa Castan Broto and Linda Westman.

The report is set against a growing awareness of the need for increased funding for infrastructure development in developing countries at the city level. It provides an early warning for people living and working in these cities, while providing market intelligence for investors.

Atkins' UK Chief Executive Officer David Tonkin commented: "The earlier cities take steps to future proof themselves the better. As this report demonstrates, these are complex challenges which require deep technical skills brought together to understand the scale and urgency of

the risks that cities face. Through our broad experience of working in cities around the world, and our ability to integrate a range of disciplines, we understand both the complexity and the opportunities that can be created. It is not easy, but it is important that all those who live, work and invest in cities come together and shape solutions for their future."

Professor David Price, UCL Vice-Provost (Research), said: "The report reveals significant gaps in our data, knowledge and evidence, highlighting the need for high quality research on the governance of urban environmental risks and the enrolment of multiple actors in planning and decision-making. Yet the report also speaks to the amount of positive change that it is within our grasp to bring about more sustainable, fairer and safer cities in less developed countries. This kind of change will be better achieved through the effective engagement of international development agencies with academics, policymakers, practitioners and citizens."

Provided by University College London