**The New Urban Agenda**

Habitat III is being held in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016, and this will see the launch of the New Urban Agenda. This will build on the release of the global Sustainability Goals that have been endorsed by nations through UN Habitat, replacing the previous Millenium Development Goals.

The New Urban Agenda is being prepared through a collaborative process that links across a wide range of stakeholders. There are three streams of contributions. The Eastern Regional Organisation of Planning and Human Settlements (EAROPH) and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) have status as contributors to the non-government stream, and EAROPH Australia has been allocated a lead role in coordinating recommendations on Municipal Finance and Local Economic Development. There is a civil society stream that has been engaged through a series of 12 global campus events, with the one in our region having been recently convened by the Global Cities Compact office at RMIT in Melbourne.

The third stream is national governments, and all nations are expected to prepare recommendations and then commit to the New Urban Agenda. Australia appears to have a problem here, first due to unclear points of responsibility within the federal government - with the short political life of our first Minister for Cities leading to particular confusion. Currently the possibility for national engagement with global issues around urbanisation is problematic as a result of the impending national election. EAROPH and the Global Cities Compact office at RMIT will work together to seek some level of engagement, including liaising with some of our State Governments and local governments who may fill the apparent policy gap.

The previous Habitat events in Rio de Janeiro and Istanbul, each held 20 years apart, saw participation by Australian governments as well as other Australian representatives. It is hoped that those Australian attending Habitat III can make a useful contribution and enhance Australia’s global profile. If you are thinking of going to Habitat III please link up with others through EAROPH or RMIT, and consider participating in some of the lead in activities. If you work for government (national, State/Territory or local) please consider whether your employer can be kept informed about this important international agenda, and whether formal representation at Quito is possible.

For further information, please contact Jane Stanley, President of EAROPH Australia (jstanley49@bigpond.com).