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Urbanization and Inadequate Housing: Will the Deforestation ever stop?

Today, the countries of UN Habitat convened to discuss Urbanization and how it results in housing inadequacy and deforestation. Countries focused on vertical expansion, sustainable infrastructure, restoration of old housing, and eco friendly construction. Delegates were looking to find a set of habitat protection guidelines that could work for all countries in their various stages of development.

Most countries decided that vertical living and reforestation were the way to go, but some had some more interesting proposals. One of these countries was India, who proposed that they create green cities. This means that buildings would be covered in plant growth and rooftop gardens, while the ground would have forest parks and wildlife sanctuaries. Other countries, like Brazil and Chad, proposed slum upgrading programs in order to utilize the area that currently is filled with trash and pollution. Perhaps some of the most interesting solutions were those of Mexico and Italy. These solutions involved the revamping of old buildings as well as the construction of new residential areas in empty plots.

“My delegation proposes vertical green expansion and architecture in order to account for deforestation while still creating housing.”

—India

UN Habitat also heard from some of the less developed countries of the world, such as Malawi. Malawi's plans relied heavily on the support of UN funds and donations from larger countries. Malawi proposed a plan for training the engineers and architects of Malawi in order to have the knowledge needed to create sustainable housing on their own. Egypt, another sub-saharan country, was also looking for help from UN funds. Egypt planned for the construction of large skyscrapers in their country, but needed the help of other countries in order to pay for this project. Another interesting solution to the issue of deforestation and urbanization was the implementation of stricter laws in order to better protect natural areas. Overall, all of the members of UN Habitat agreed that this issue needed immediate attention and collaboration in order for us all to continue to live in the green world we know.



CRISIS UPDATE

Horrible news came from mid-Eastern China today as we learned that the Three Gorges Dam has failed, releasing millions of gallons of water into the Yangtze River. This is devastating as the Yangtze River is one of the most populated river basins in the world, home to around 400 million Chinese citizens. The flooding caused by the dam collapse has a reported death toll of 300 million people, and it is believed that this number will continue to grow. China has made no official statement as of this time. This has left it up to the delegates of UN Habitat to decide what actions to take in order to mitigate the effects of the flood, and prevent events like this in the future.

“Roughly a quarter of Columbia's population lives in inadequate housing”

—Columbia