



MENACW2022 - Track 3 - Seizing Transformation Opportunities Beating the Rising Heat: Cool Solutions for Resilient Communities

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- To beat the rising heat in the MENA region and beyond, **we need to forge strategies that combine mitigation and adaptation action**. If emissions continue to rise and urgent action is not taken, vulnerable communities will live in areas that will be uninhabitable. Temperatures expected to reach 60 degrees Celsius in MENA urban centers.
- As temperature rise, access to cooling is not a luxury anymore. In this region especially, we are already seeing the dire effects of extreme heat in hospitals, with an increasing number of deaths occurring in the young and over 65-year-olds. We have solutions that are shovel-ready, and we must act now, or we will suffer extreme consequences. **Extreme heat is the fundamental health threat of the century**.
- However, **the more we cool, the more we heat the planet**. To avoid being locked in vicious circles, we need to identify, roll out, and **scale up sustainable cooling solutions**.



- **We need integrated solutions in all cities and holistic urban approaches to stay cool**: an urban form that promotes natural ventilation towards renewable and urban cooling approaches, passive and nature-based solutions, efficient buildings and cooling systems, and heat-resistant materials.
- Solutions exist, such as the **Green Riyadh initiative**, which has created green spaces to decrease urban temperatures and increase shading, including an urban park four times the size of Central Park in New York, or **Dubai's commitment to double investments to increase the district cooling to 40% of the total cooling capacity of the city by 2030**. In Jordan, some public schools were equipped with **highly efficient air-conditioners and passive cooling solutions** which increased the thermal comfort in the classrooms for students;

Wednesday, 30 March 2022
16:00 - 17:30 pm GMT+4
Atlantis the Palm Resort in Dubai,
United Arab Emirates



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- **Business as usual is no longer viable** in the MENA region. Inefficient cooling appliances will increase the demand for energy. **Building standards and energy efficiency standards must become the norm.** We should no longer put inefficiency equipment on the market and instead deploy holistic and cross sectoral approaches to thermal comfort, to make cities more resilient, just and sustainable.
- To adopt a holistic approach, **we need to deploy solutions to adapt to the rising heat that help reduce or avoid emissions at the same time.** This can be done by delivering thermal comfort both with active, extremely efficient, renewable and district energy solutions, and with passive and nature-based approaches. **Developing sustainable systematic approaches is a huge challenge, but new technological, integrated solutions are emerging.**
- **Increasing importance needs to be given to nature-based solutions:** bringing nature back into MENA cities is an essential solution to passively cool cities and deliver a host of additional ecosystem benefits. This, while reducing the unknown risks of biodiversity loss.
- We need all hands-on deck: public and private stakeholders need to join hands to define a pathway for action at local, national, regional and global levels. Platforms like the **UNEP-led Cool Coalition, the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, ICLEI and C40** offer opportunities to exchange lessons learned, identify shared objectives and catalyze action based on agreed principles and methodologies.
- Interests between industry and government are often aligned: this can be leveraged to catalyse action. For example, the objective of the **private sector** working in the field of district cooling is to optimise consumption and save on electricity bills, while keeping customers satisfied. This is in line with cities' needs to reduce emissions while making cooling services accessible to those that need it the most.
- **COP27 will be a unique opportunity** for civil society and young leaders to have a say in the discussion - an opportunity to network, to plan events with different stakeholders, to beat extreme heat. There is an opportunity to continue the discussion towards COP28 in the UAE, and to put efficient, climate friendly cooling solutions at the center of the climate discussion to achieve global mitigation and adaptation goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO ACCESS THE RECORDING, PLEASE VISIT [THE COOL COALITION WEBSITE.](https://www.coolcoalition.org/)

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