

## The Sustainable Jordan Declaration 2009

This declaration was ratified on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

The global challenge of climate change grows bigger every day. In the meantime, there is scientific evidence that generating and using energy in the cleanest, most efficient way is a matter of survival. Renewable energy sources will need to play a major part in Jordan's future energy mix. Investing in clean energy also includes upgrading the old inefficient and greenhouse gas emitting power plants and increasing energy efficiency on all levels. In addition, the role that cities have – some of the largest energy consumers – will need to change and transform into sustainable models of urbanization. In future, the urban design of cities must enable people to thrive in harmony with nature and achieve sustainable development. Cities, towns and villages should be designed to enhance the health and quality of life of their inhabitants and maintain the ecosystems on which they depend.

Jordan occupies a particular situation in the Middle-East, through its central location and history, through its geographical location between Europe and Asia, which is an advantage. The 2009 Signatories of this Declaration recognize that the development of a sustainable Jordan requires a focus and increased initiatives in the following 9 areas, which need to be embedded in short-term and long-term strategies

**1. Renewable energy:** Energy generation will need to transform towards a significant increase in the use of renewable energy sources, particular solar PV, solar thermal, and solar hot water systems. We need to design cities for energy conservation, renewable energy uses and the reduction, re-use and recycling of materials. Based on the plentiful sunshine, Jordan has the potential to show real leadership in renewable energy technology, securing energy independence with locally generated, decentralized, and distributed energy generation.

**2. Water and waste:** Sustainable treatment and recycling of water, and all forms of waste. Storm and rainwater harvesting and better urban water management are necessary. Waste-to-energy strategies and more facilities for the sustainable handling of industrial and medical waste are necessary, including recycling and composting of organic waste.

**3. Materials and short supply chains:** There is a need to emphasize materials re-use, life-cycle, and embodied energy. Technological innovation for prefabricated modular construction systems need to be explored by the architects and the entire building sector (this will help to ensure housing affordability). Food supply using community gardens, and short supply chains, need to be fully considered.

**4. Sustainable urban form for growth:** Establishing growth boundaries for cities will stop sprawl and keep the cities compact. Integration of open green spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, such as parks, gardens, and a high quality of public space networks, to maximize biodiversity and maximize accessibility of the city for all citizens while conserving energy and resources and alleviating such problems as heat island effects and global warming. A better relationship between Jordanian Cities, their urban centres and the countryside/regions needs to be achieved. Stop building in agricultural land; intensification of the use of inner-city roof tops.

**5. Ecological awareness and education:** Providing adequate, accessible education and training programs, for capacity building and local skills development, to increase community participation and awareness of best practice in urban design and management. Supporting innovation, research, and programs at schools. Incubators need to be established for the application of ideas and roll-out of concepts for sustainable development. Encourage and initiate international and community-to-community cooperation to share experiences, lessons and resources (learning from others-principle). The role of the Jordanian universities as leaders and developers of new knowledge is crucial.

**6. Public transport and the pedestrian-friendly city:** We need a strong focus on public transport, to reduce the dependency on the automobile, to build cities for people, not cars. Furthermore, minimizing the loss of rural land by all effective measures, including regional urban and peri-urban ecological planning. To build cities for safe pedestrian and non-motorized transport use includes investment in efficient, convenient and low-cost public transportation (green, emission-free buses), and cycle paths.

**7. Legal framework, legislation and governance:** Provide strong economic incentives and offer subsidies to businesses and the entire private sector for investment in sustainability (which will also create green jobs). Tax all activities that work against ecologically healthy development, including those that produce greenhouse gases and other emissions (polluter pays-principle). Introducing policies that enable solar power adoption; updating the building code and set targets for energy and water reduction. A strong position for a Jordanian Green Building Council will help to raise the quality of architectural and planning outcomes (with a focus on passive building principles).

**8. Better coordination:** Creation of a government agency that will coordinate and monitor functions such as transportation, energy, water and land use in holistic planning and management, and facilitate sustainable projects and master planning. Build demonstration projects: In policy at all levels of government and in the decision making bodies of all institutions – universities, businesses, non-governmental organization, professional associations and so on – address in the plans and actions of those institutions specifically what can be done through the institutions' physical design and layout relative to its local community to address climate change effectively.

**9. City character and social sustainability:** The protection of heritage and the unique character of the Jordanian cities and countryside are important. The adaptive reuse of existing older structures and a focus on urban revitalization projects are to be enforced. The vibrant city is a city of mixed-use, where people live close to work, therefore do not need to commute, allowing more time for family activities. Mixed income neighbourhoods are beneficial for healthy communities. Protecting views and landmarks to maintain the unique character. We need to ensure that Jordanian cities remain citizen-centred, celebrating their ethnic, multi-cultural and religious diversity.

**Signatories:**

This Declaration was signed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 by 40 organizations, which participated in the Sustainable Jordan Workshop and support the outlined strategies.

Supporters of the "Sustainable Jordan Declaration 2009" included:

- The Jordanian Ministry of Environment
- Leading universities, such as the University of Jordan and Hashemite University
- Amman-institute for Urban development
- Jordanian Society for Renewable Energy
- The UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Urban Development for Asia-Pacific
- Suntech and Conergy Solar companies
- and many other organizations.

