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Rain City Initiative to mitigate local climate crisis effects (Theme 2: Water for Sustainable Development)

Submitted by

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The recent IPCC report highlights the effects the world is facing due to the climate crisis. Torrential rainfall in city areas causes floods and infrastructure damage, heatwaves in built-up areas make life unbearable, extended droughts lead to water shortages and uncontrolled fires disrupt society. These challenges are expected to be intensified. Both global thinking and local action are urgently required to overcome these catastrophes.

These phenomena are all related to rainwater. There are many proven cases throughout time and space that these challenges can be mitigated by proper and wise rainwater management. Site-specific solutions for site-specific water problems have been found most effective and they are well reflected in their own nature-based traditions and cultures. Some may have been forgotten in favor of technology and energy-intensive solutions. It is necessary to share knowledge and experiences to benefit mankind.

In today's world, with reducing economic volumes of water per person, we cannot afford to waste rainwater. There should be a revolutionary change of thinking about rainwater management. Instead of draining rainwater away as has been the practice in our cities, rainwater should be buffered, collected, and stored for effective use later, as a drinking water source, for agriculture, for ecosystems, and for society at large.

The Rain City is defined as a city where all the citizens understand the importance of rainwater for the functioning of society (now and in the future), and where the government makes city-wide plans and regulations for the collection of rainwater. Municipalities may offer financial incentives for promoting the initiative. It is heartening to see that more and more cities are gradually taking up the rain city concept. The Rain City concept should be applied in all cities and villages. Experiences



that have shown cities or areas to become rain-resilient can be shared. The technology, policy, and culture of rainwater management to make it work, we will debate in an inclusive process that aims to benefit and protect all. We strongly recommend the following to the relevant stakeholders.

1. A paradigm shift should be adopted for rainwater to be collected, buffered, and utilized rather than drained away.
2. Citizens should understand the importance and role of rainwater in their living environment and its link to water resources. They should be encouraged to find wise ways to utilize rainwater. Rain cools the city, it makes trees and shrubs grow, augments the aquifer, and enhances local biodiversity, thus contributing to managing the effects of the climate crisis.
3. Water experts and businesses can further develop rainwater management technology for easy access and application in a variety of ways.
4. Each central and local government should integrate rainwater management (at the domestic, city, or district level) in its policies, strategies, and operations and provide financial incentives for taking such measures.
5. International organizations, programs and initiatives related to climate crisis should support this Rain City Initiative, taking a long-term view and supporting the initiative through traditional and innovative rainwater resilience enhancing measures.
6. International Rain School Network should be launched to raise youth awareness of rainwater and to share the traditions and cultures of rainwater management from all over the world as was proposed at UN Water Action Agenda.
7. A UN Resolution on Rainwater Harvesting and Management is recommended as a local action to cope with climate crisis and to achieve SDG6.

<This initiative is accepted at the SIWI 2021 Aug 23 seminar on the title of Rain City Initiative to overcome the climate crisis as a result of discussion among world rainwater experts including Hong Li (IWA), Michal Kravick (Slovakia), Han Heijnen (IRHA), Prof VietAnh Nguyen (Vietnam), Yeom Taeyoung (Mayor of Suwon City), Rosey Jencks(USA). Zeinab Hazbavi (Iran), Petra Hesslerova (Czech Republic) and many water experts, engineers and students. The seminar recording is available at <https://youtu.be/Fwoj2hK9GEE>. The Rain City Initiative was declared at Suwon City, Korea on Sep 3, 2021.>