

Solving Urban Challenges Together

International conference on 'Water-Energy-Food nexus in cities' in Almere, the Netherlands on May 12, 2022

About the conference

On 12 May 2022, more than 150 participants gather in Almere, the Netherlands for the 'Water-Energy-Food nexus in cities' conference. They work in the public or private sector, or represent knowledge institutes, NGOs, or civil society organizations. The conference makes room for fruitful discussions with fellow participants about the Water-Energy-Food nexus in cities, with a focus on optimising knowledge sharing. The conference is an expert meeting by invitation only. The format consists of three rounds of round table discussions, networking opportunities during the breaks and time to visit the Floriade (world horticulture exposition).

Complicated Water-Energy-Food interdependencies ask for smart, comprehensive approaches. Cities around the world deal with this WEF-nexus in various ways. According to the United Nations: "The water-food-energy nexus is central to sustainable development. Demand for all three is increasing, driven by a rising global population, rapid urbanization, changing diets and economic growth. Agriculture is the largest consumer of the world's freshwater resources, and more than one-quarter of the energy used globally is expended on food production and supply. The inextricable linkages between these critical domains require a suitably integrated approach to ensuring water and food security, and sustainable agriculture and energy production worldwide."

During the one-day international conference on **Water-Energy-Food nexus in cities, the focus lies on how improved urban knowledge sharing regarding the WEF-nexus can contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals**. Experts and participants will focus on the exchange of effective local approaches and discuss questions like: how can we scale up good practices? What role do context variables – like climate, city size, geography, governance – play in the exchangeability of effective approaches? What can stimulate the co-creation of effective approaches? The experts of the conference present and discuss various WEF-related topics, such as water, food and/or energy related challenges, intersectoral (nexus) issues as well as specific solutions.

Day program of 12 May 2022

The conference kicks-off straight away with the first round of discussions. Each round is introduced plenary by different experts and proposes a different question or challenge that is central for discussions during that round. In each round, over 20 different tables are hosted by experts from various organisations. We organise coffee breaks and a lunch in between the roundtable sessions to relax and network with fellow experts and participants. After the three table rounds and a plenary wrap up, we close the day with a festive toast. This is also a perfect time to enjoy your included Floriade day ticket and explore the exposition terrain.

9.00-9.30	Travel from entrance Floriade to conference location, Paviljoen
9.30-10.15	Walk-in with coffee & tea
10.30-10.45	Welcome by host Fiona Yauw, short speeches and interviews with national and international guests
10.45-11.05	Introduction Round 1: towards sustainable solutions
11.05-11.45	Round 1 table discussion
11.45-12.00	Wrap up round 1
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00-13.15	Introduction round 2: boosts & barriers
13.15-13.55	Round 2 table discussion
13.55-14.10	Wrap-up round 2
14.10-14.30	Short break
14.30-14.40	Introduction round 3: implementation
14.40-15.20	Round 3 table discussion
15.20-15.35	Wrap-up round 3
15.35-15.55	Next steps, connection with upcoming events, legacy
16.00	Final drinks and chats and opportunity to visit Floriade

Venue

The conference is organised on the terrain of the World Horticulture Exposition 'Floriade' in Almere, the Netherlands. Floriade is an international exposition and garden festival that is organised only once every 10 years. The first Floriade was in 1960. This edition focuses on "solutions from national and international innovators that make our cities more fun, more beautiful and more sustainable". The 'Water-Energy-Food nexus in cities' conference can be considered a side-event and takes place on the Floriade terrain.

A one-day entrance ticket is included in your conference ticket. Please make sure to enter the Floriade terrain on time, as you will need about 15 minutes travel from the entrance of the terrain to the conference venue. The Floriade terrain is open until 7pm. The conference purposefully ends early (4pm) so that participants have plenty of time to visit the festival terrain afterwards. More information about the Floriade can be found at www.Floriade.com

Discussion rounds

There are three rounds of decentralized table discussions. More information about the table topics and rounds can be found in the tab 'table topics'. Each round has a different focus. The central questions during each round are:

Round 1: towards sustainable solutions

- **Topic:** potential role of knowledge sharing in achieving the SDGs, potential of knowledge sharing among the audience
- **Key question:** What knowledge in/from your projects is there to share that helps to achieve the SDGs?

Round 2: boosts & barriers

- **Topic:** differences between cities, types of knowledge sharing and boosts & barriers encountered
- **Key questions:**
 - What are the key boosts and barriers to scaling up and out?

Round 3: implementation

- **Topic:** Strategies for knowledge sharing
- **Key questions:**
 - What makes a city comparable enough to share with and what needs to be done to make sure that other cities can benefit from those experiences?

Speakers featuring the plenary introductions to each round are:

Round 1:

- Gillian Martin Mehers (Bright Green Learning)
- Prof. Dr. Jurian Edelenbos (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
Jurian Edelenbos is professor of interactive urban governance and academic director of the Erasmus Initiative Vital Cities and Citizens at Erasmus University Rotterdam in The Netherlands.

Round 2:

- Peter Scholten (Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies)
- Dr. Ellen Minkman (TU Delft)
Ellen Minkman is a researcher and lecturer on Water Governance at Delft University of Technology.

Round 3:

- The Closer Cities team (including Robbert Nesselaaar, initiator/co-founder of Closer Cities and initiator of the conference)

Three rounds

The main activities are the three discussion rounds. Below you will find the 20+ topics that will be discussed. Each round consists of a plenary introduction 45 minutes of decentralized discussion at a table and a plenary wrap-up. The 3 rounds focus on different issues but all tables use the same format in order to compare the outcomes of the 25 tables during the plenary discussion. Of course, for some topics there are specific challenges, but all tables relate to urban knowledge sharing and the barriers and boosts for WEF-nexus related projects.

Let's mix!

In each round, you will be seated at a different table. This is done to ensure cross-over between participants from different sectors. After all, it's all about knowledge sharing! You can indicate up to 5 preferred topics in the registration form. We try to seat you at the indicated tables as much as possible. Each table has room for a host, a scribe and around 6 participants.

Content of the rounds

Each round starts with a plenary introduction that will present a question or proposition central to the round (this is done by the day host or another expert. In every round, there will be a different central question.

After the plenary introduction of the round, the table discussions will kick-off with each table having their own topic of discussion based on the central question of the round. The project described in the table topic should be considered a conversation starter. After the introduction by the host, other participants are invited and encouraged to share their own experiences and contribute equally to the discussion. At the end of every round, there will be a plenary wrap up by the day host to integrate all the table discussions in a response to the central question.

In close collaboration with the partners of our conference organisation:



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