

KARACHI CITY CLIMATE CHANGE – ADAPTATION STRATEGY A ROADMAP

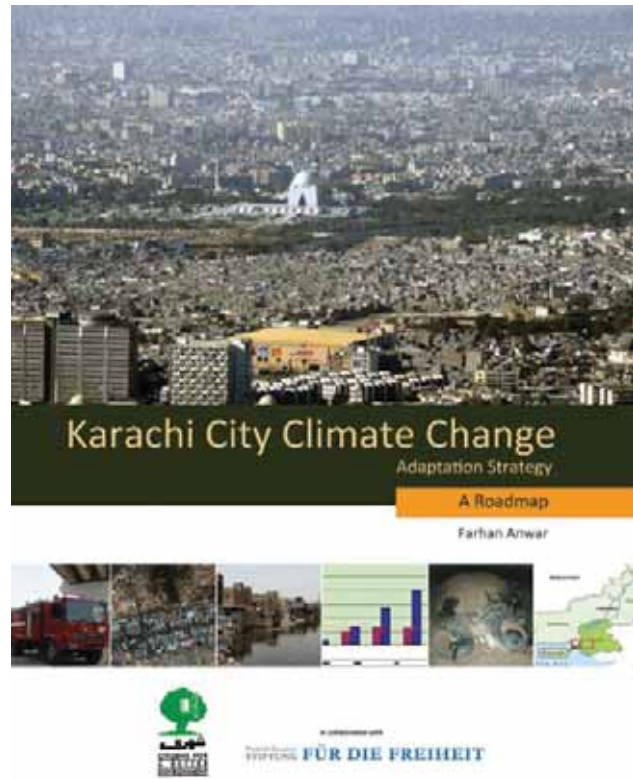
*Farhan Anwar**

A Review by

Sami Chohan, Lecturer Department of Architecture and Planning, NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi.

The global climate is changing. The world is becoming warmer and warmer. Extreme weather conditions are now becoming a norm as we move further into the 21st century. Increase in tropical cyclones, heavy rains, rising sea levels, flooding and extended periods of drought stand testimony to this. It is now widely accepted that the phenomenon of urbanization - cradled by the age of industrialization - has significantly contributed to rapid changes in weather patterns across the world. It is also widely accepted that certain detrimental impacts and consequences of such rapid changes may eventually become irreparable.

Today, as the world is witnessing unprecedented levels of urbanization, efforts to meet the challenges of climate change are gaining momentum throughout the developed world. However, as pointed out in the *report* authored by Farhan Anwar, a leading figure in the discipline of urban and regional planning in Pakistan, more than 90% of the global urban population growth is cropping up within developing countries. As it stands, these countries now account for nearly three-quarters of the global urban population. Ominously, the *report* further reveals that it is precisely the developing countries which are least equipped to adapt to the possible impacts and consequences of climate change. Pakistan is one of these countries. With almost half the population expected to reside in urban areas by the year 2030, Pakistan is gearing up to display the highest level of urbanization in South East Asia. When placed in context of climate change, such staggering figures are bound to surface new and multifaceted urban development challenges across the country. Astoundingly or not, the *report* informs us that the official *Climate Change Policy* for Pakistan does not take into account the intricacies of the urban framework in meeting the challenges of climate change.



Consequently, the *report* provides a much-needed roadmap for developing a more “comprehensive” climate change adaptation strategy. From the very outset, the *report* calls for the urgent need to integrate the various intricacies of the urban framework in order to effectively respond to the challenges of climate change. This meticulously crafted roadmap begins with identifying the various possible climate change scenarios confronting the city of Karachi - the largest and by far the most complex urban center of Pakistan. Within the context of urbanization along with political, social and financial shortcomings, it identifies the consequences of various possible climate change scenarios the city may

* Engineer / Urban Planner Farhan Anwar, Member SHEHRI.

encounter. In turn, critical people and assets at probable risk are also documented. Governmental, institutional and technological barriers standing in the way of enhancing the adaptive capacity of the city are discussed. At the end, a list of actions for strengthening the resilience of Karachi in context of urbanization and climate change are presented.

Supported by Shehri-CBE, a local Non-Governmental Organization, and Friedrich Naumann Stiftung, a foundation for liberal politics based in Germany, the publication is bound to stimulate further discourse on the subject. It also lays the foundation for initializing a process of developing comprehensive and effective climate change adaptation strategies for various other urban settings in the country.