

Wednesday 5 September 2018, 10:00-12:30

International Environment House, Geneva

Infrastructure Innovations as Solutions to Environmental Challenges

A lecture talk by Professor Spiro Pollalis

Director of the Zofnass Program for Sustainable Infrastructure, Harvard University

The challenge of developing and delivering *sustainable infrastructure* at scale is central to the global sustainability quest. Both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement identify infrastructure as a key means to achieving inclusive and sustainable growth while reducing climate risks.

By one estimate, the world needs to invest US\$3.3 trillion each year through 2030 in economic infrastructure just to keep pace with current projected economic growth. A further US\$1.1 trillion a year is required to fulfill the SDGs, according to UNCTAD. Besides the enormous challenge on infrastructure financing, often infrastructure projects are planned, designed and implemented through a heavily siloed approach with minimal communication among different stakeholder groups. The lack of an integrated approach to infrastructure development thus hinders collaboration and the implementation of best practices, and puts sustainability at risk.

At UN Environment, we believe that innovative solutions to sustainable infrastructure - from natural-based infrastructure solutions to smart & green technology deployment and integrated lifecycle assessment, would be crucial to unlock investment, foster partnership as well as catalyzing actions in response to these sustainability/environmental challenges, while proper decision making will lead to longer-lasting investments.

In the run-up to the next UN Environment Assembly, themed “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”, we are pleased to host **Harvard Professor Spiro Pollalis** at the International Environment House to start a stimulating dialogue on this important topic.

AGENDA

Welcome 10:00-10:10

Fulai SHENG, Head, Economic and Fiscal Policy Unit, Resources and Markets Branch, UN Environment

Keynote 10:10-11:00

Prof. Spiro Pollalis, Harvard University

Discussion and Q&A 11:00-12:00

Speaker Biograph

Prof. Spiro Pollalis is an internationally acclaimed specialist on sustainable infrastructure planning and management. Since 1986, Prof. Pollalis is Professor of Design, Technology and Management at the Harvard Design School. He currently directs the Zofnass Program for Sustainable Infrastructure at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, a program that engages with decision-makers to identify and understand the economic benefits of sustainability in infrastructure projects. Among other professional association, Prof. Pollalis is the Principal Investigator of the project “Gulf Sustainable Urbanism” for 10 cities in the Arab Gulf. He also serves as the co-chair of the Advisory Committee on Future Cities for the Singapore-ETH Center. His recent project includes the chief planner for the new DHA City Karachi for 600,000 people, currently under construction, and the concept designer of the information infrastructure in the new administrative city in Korea and the concept master plan of the redevelopment of the former Athens airport.

Prof. Pollalis has taught as a visiting professor at the ETH-Zurich, Switzerland; TU-Delft, Holland; Uni-Stuttgart, Germany; U-Patras, Greece. He received his first degree from the University in Athens (EMP) and his Master’s and PhD from MIT. His MBA in high technology is from Northeastern University. He has an honorary Master’s degree in Architecture from Harvard.