THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SPACE IN COMPACT CITIES: POLICY IMPLICATION TO FAST-GROWING CITIES

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

OECD's contribution to Habitat III

- Discussion
  - 1st PrepCom (September 2014)
  - OECD Territorial Development Policy Committee (November 2014) – in presence of UN-Habitat and UNECE
  - 2nd PrepCom (September 2014)
- Policy paper on urbanisation
- Policy Units (national urban policies, urban governance)

Key messages

- Compact cities – not only environmentally sustainable, but also economically viable
- While “density” could be an obstacle to get buy-in for compact cities, public space has an important role to play.
- In a fast-growing cities, with urban sprawl commonly observed, proactive provision of key public space is crucial.
- Not only financing, but political will matters.

Compact City?

- Not at a city scale, but the metropolitan scale
- Focusing on “urban spatial form” – how can we use urban space in a more sustainable way?

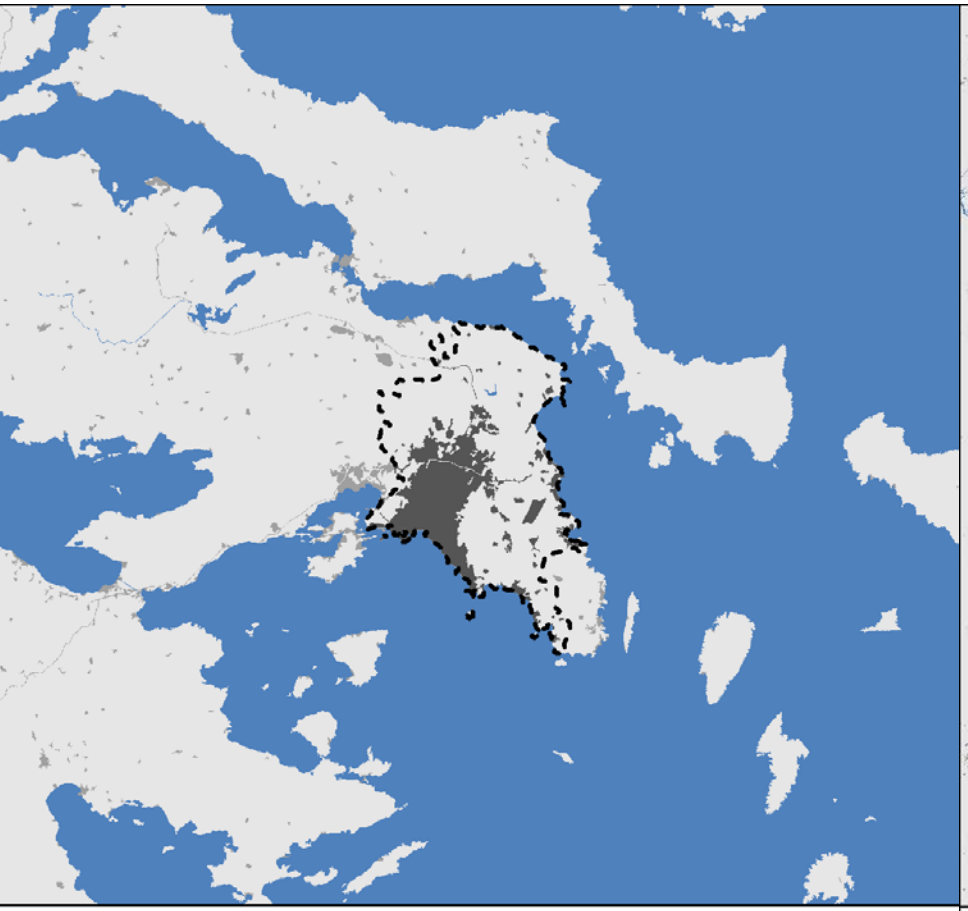
Dense and proximate development patterns	Urban areas linked by public transport systems	Accessibility to local services and jobs
•Urban land is intensively utilised •Urban agglomerations are contiguous or close together •Distinct border between urban and rural land use •Public spaces are secured	•Effective use of urban land •Public transport systems facilitate mobility in urban areas	•Land use is mixed •Most residents have access to local services either on foot or using public transport

The five key policy strategies

1. Set explicit compact city goals
2. Encourage dense and contiguous development at urban fringes
3. Retrofit existing built-up areas
4. Enhance diversity and quality of life in urban centres
5. Minimise adverse negative effects

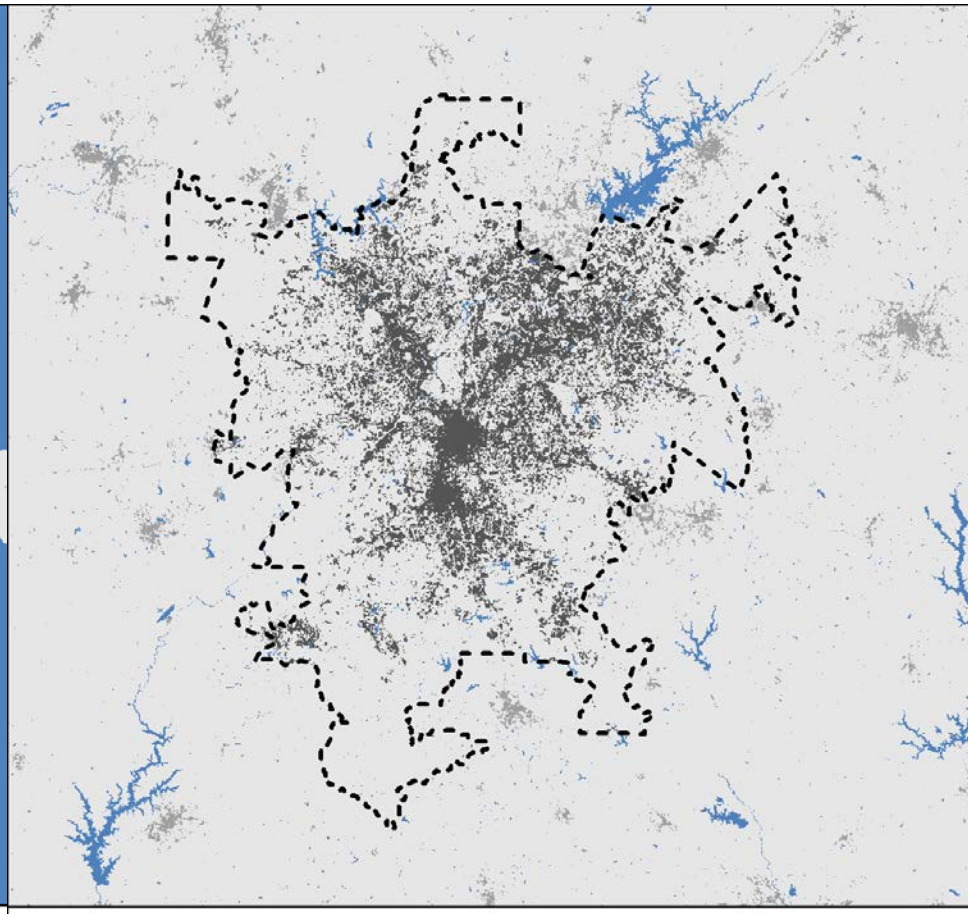
Visualise urban land cover

Athens (3.4 million)



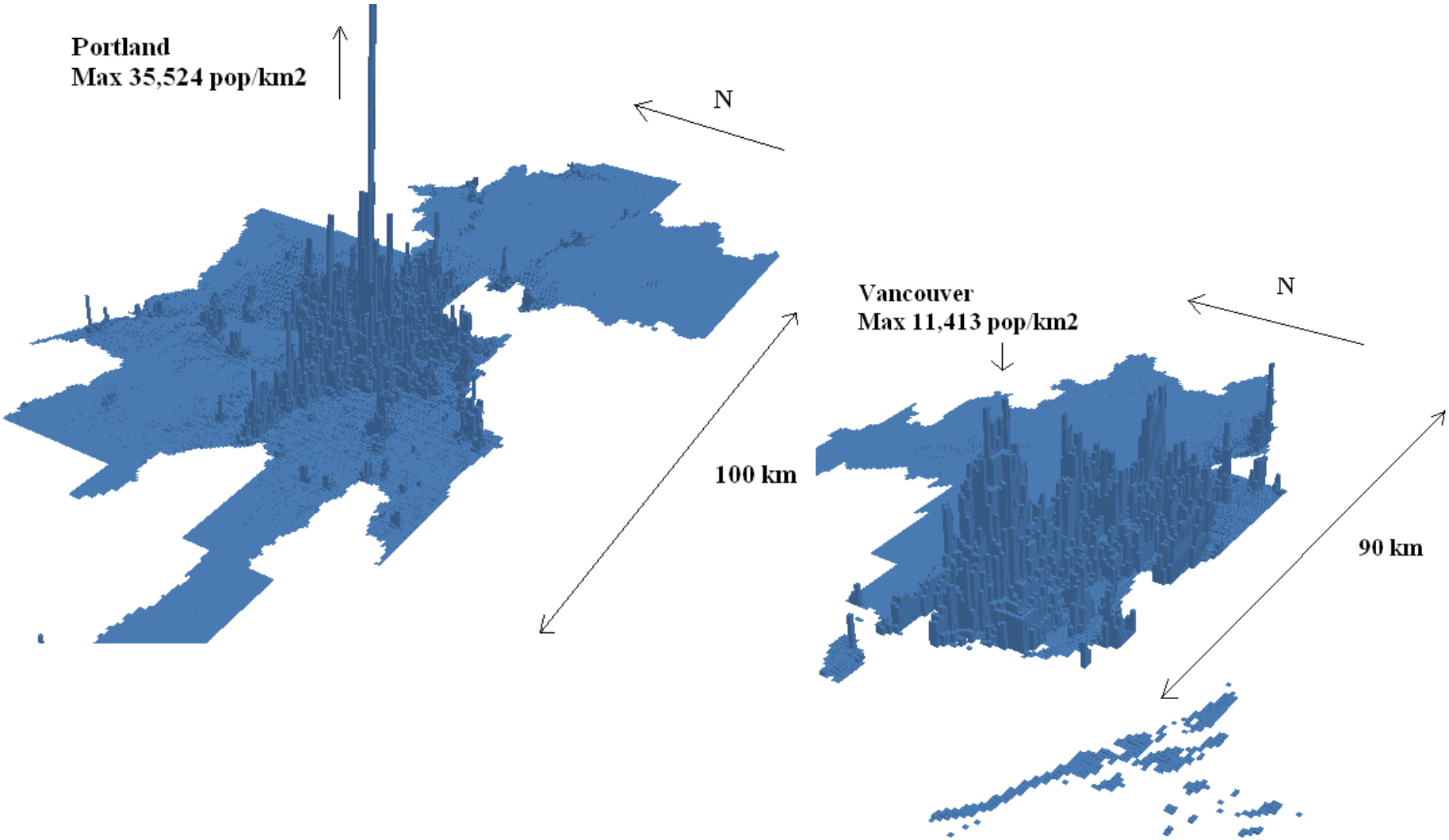
Athens metropolitan area
Urban land cover in the metropolitan area
Other urban land cover
0 15 30 km

Atlanta (4.6 million)



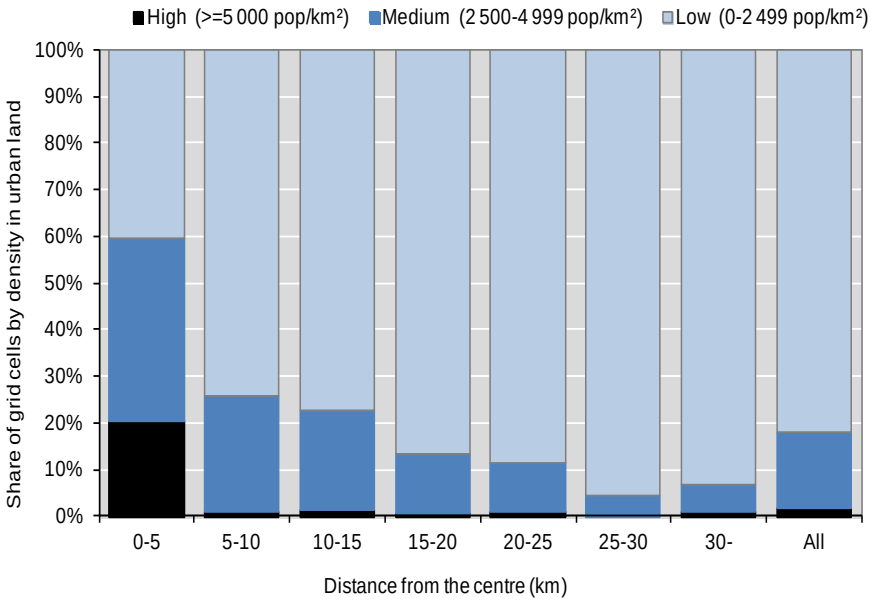
Atlanta metropolitan area
Urban land cover in the metropolitan area
Other urban land cover
0 15 30 km

3-D density map

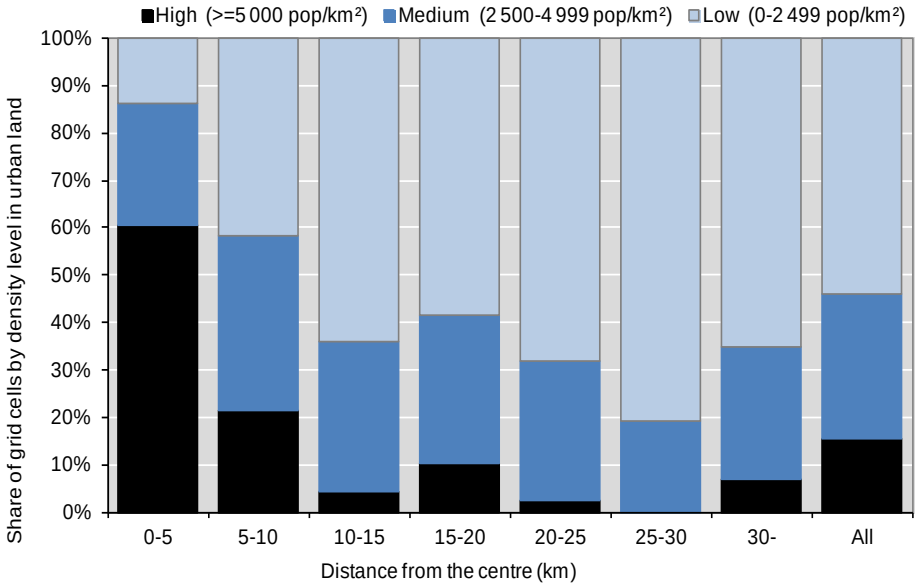


Density gradient

Portland



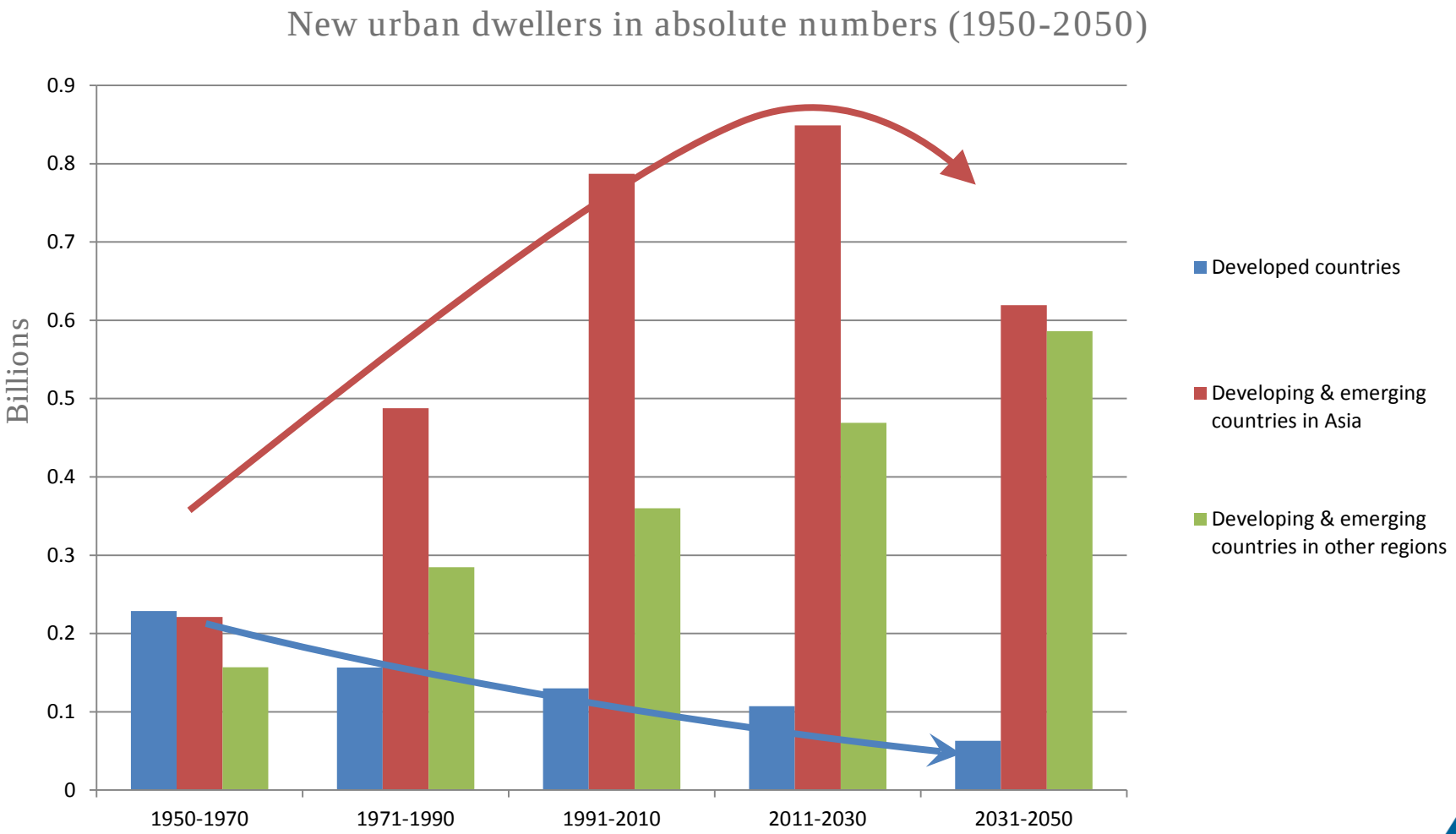
Vancouver



Urban design in contexts (Southeast False Creek, Vancouver)

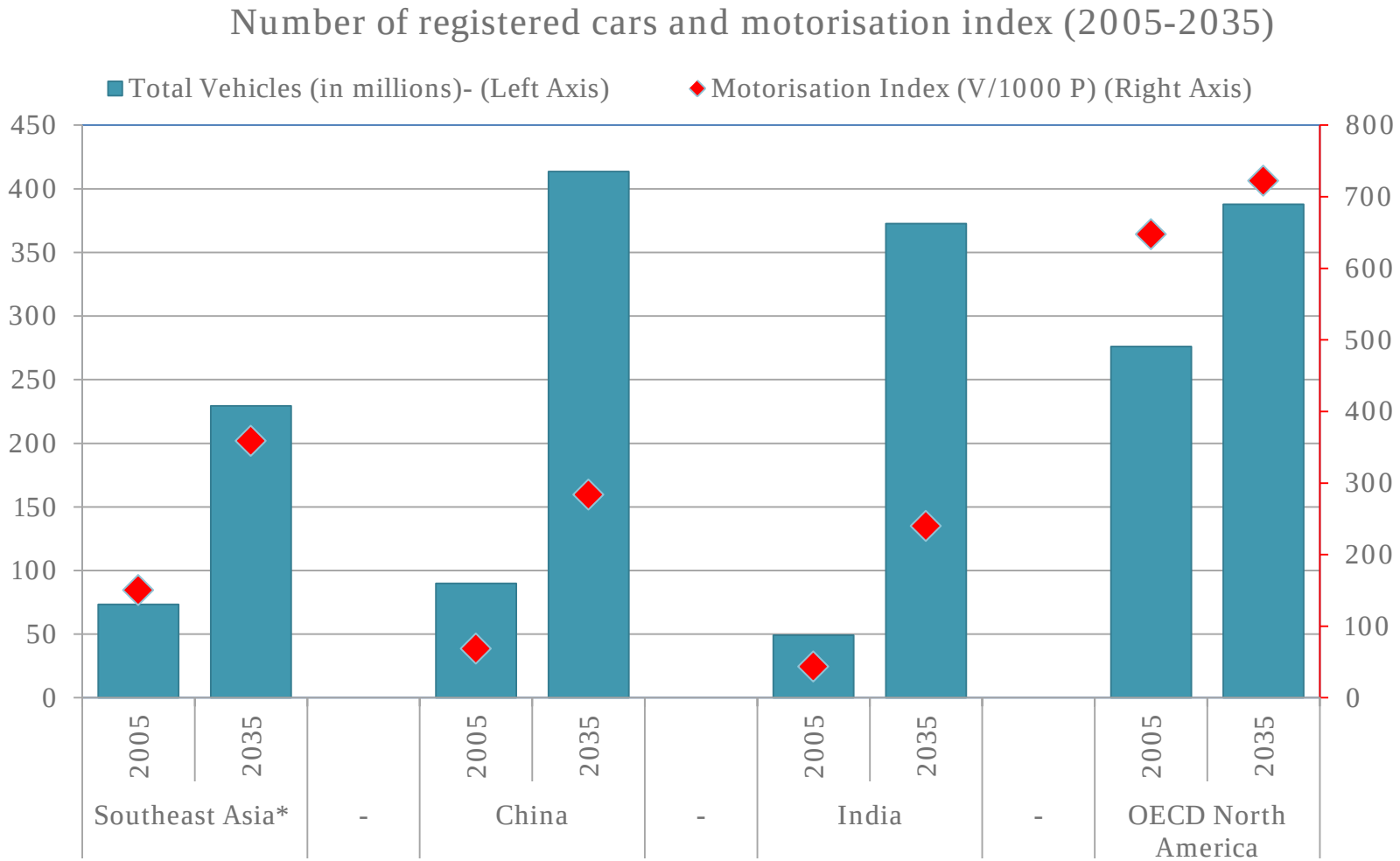
Storm water + heat island + perceived density (retrofitting)

Urgency in Asia: the world's urban population is growing at the fastest speed



Source: UNDESA Population Division (2012), *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision*

Urbanisation is accompanied by motorisation at an unprecedented speed and scale

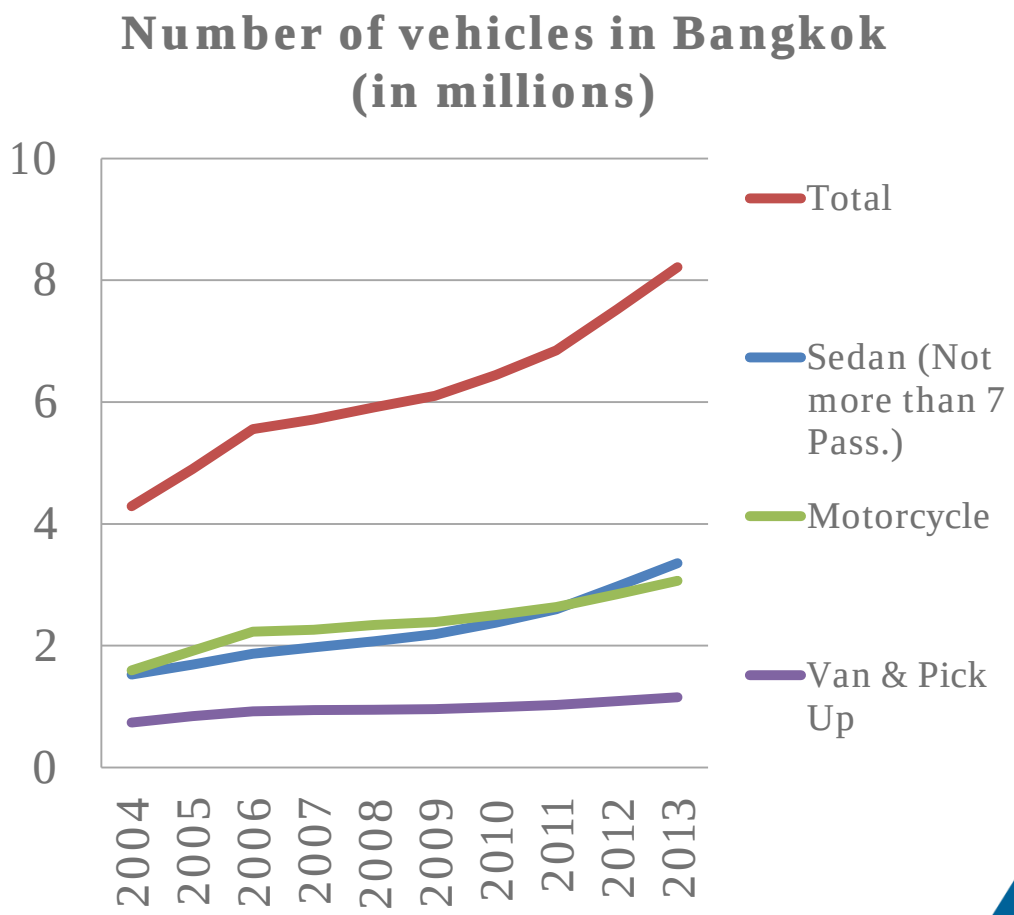


Note: Southeast Asia here refers to Indonesia, Viet Nam, Philippines and Thailand.
Source: UN ESCAP, KOICA (2012), Low Carbon Green Growth Roadmap for Asia and the Pacific. "Urban Transport: policy recommendations for the development of eco-efficient infrastructures", Bangkok, Thailand

Improving public transport through metropolitan land-use policies

Key recommendations:

- Encourage **development along mass transit lines**
- Introduce **area development plans** for mass transit stations
- Promote greater reliance on **canal transport** and **bicycles**



Source: Thailand's Department of Land Transport

Street layout facilitates congestion

Manhattan, NYC

Bangkok

For more information:

OECD (2012), Compact City Policies: A Comparative Assessment

OECD (2013), Green Growth in Cities

OECD (2016), Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia

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