U.S. Green Building Council, United Nations Environment Programme and World Business Council for Sustainable Development Release Report on the Role of Cities in the Green Economy

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Report Highlights Key Messages to Leaders at Rio+20 Conference

Washington, D.C. (June 5, 2012) – Today, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), the United Nations Environment Programme's Regional Office for North America (UNEP RONA) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) released a new report titled "Advancing the Transformation to a Green Economy through Green Buildings and Resource Efficient Cities: Key Messages from North America." The release of the report was followed by a panel discussion addressing the critical role that cities play in driving the transition to a green economy and the potential opportunities that the Rio+20 Conference offers to propel this work forward.

"Stakeholders across the country have spoken and have confirmed the unique role that green buildings are playing and should continue to play to advance the green economy," said Roger Platt, senior vice president of global policy and law at USGBC. "Our call in Rio is to amplify this message to ramp up investments and address barriers to realizing the hundreds of billions of dollars of global savings."

The report is a synthesis of stakeholder perspectives from five major North American cities visited on USGBC's The Road to Rio+20 engagement event series. It highlights five key messages heard from the events, and outlines clear action items for Rio+20 including improving awareness, education and training on sustainability issues and empowering local action and innovation in development policies. Other key takeaways were a need for increasing financial resources and removing barriers to long-term investments, encouraging common metrics, methodologies and tools, and promoting stakeholder collaboration and public-private initiatives.

"With more than half of the world's population now living in urban areas, cities are the changing force of the 21st century. Decisions made today will have consequences at the local, national and global levels for decades to come. Leaders gathered at Rio+20 have a chance to provide cities with the support they need to be able to move us along a path to a more sustainable future," said Amy Fraenkel, director of UNEP's Regional Office for North America.

The report was introduced by the three Road to Rio+20 partners to key stakeholders, including Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones, assistant secretary of state for oceans and international environmental and scientific affairs at U.S. Department of State. Other speakers included Christophe Tulou, director, District of Columbia Department of the Environment; Dr. Lilia Abron, president and CEO, PEER Consultants, P.C.; Jordan Doria, manager of stakeholder engagement, Ingersoll Rand; Richenda Van Leeuwen, senior director of the energy and climate, United Nations Foundation/Sustainable Energy for All; and Jessica McGlyn, director of WBCSD US.

"This report highlights some excellent innovations and collaboration across the U.S. in creating more sustainable cities, something WBCSD's corporate members are working toward through the Urban Infrastructure Initiative," said Jessica McGlyn, director of WBCSD US. "We're also pleased to see that many of the policy ideas coming out of the Road to Rio discussions track with our policy recommendations in the newly released 'Changing Pace' report."

About the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)
The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities. For more information, visit usgbc.org and connect on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

About UNEP's Regional Office for North America
The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading authority on the environment within the United Nations system. RONA's mission is to build

support in the region for UNEP's work, to promote effective responses to international environmental challenges and to foster cooperation on environmental issues between North America and the broader international community. To achieve this mission, RONA's strategy is promote collaboration between UNEP and all sectors of North American society, including U.S. and Canadian governmental institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society groups.

About WBCSD
The World Business Council for Sustainable Development is a CEO-led organization of forward-thinking companies that galvanizes the global business community to create a sustainable future for business, society and the environment. Together with its members, the council applies its respected thought leadership and effective advocacy to generate constructive solutions and take shared action. Leveraging its strong relationships with stakeholders as the leading advocate for business, the council helps drive debate and policy change in favor of sustainable development solutions.

The WBCSD provides a forum for its 200 member companies - who represent all business sectors, all continents and acombined revenue of more than $7 trillion - to share best practices on sustainable development issues and to develop innovative tools that change the status quo. The Council also benefits from a network of 60 national and regional business councils and partner organizations, a majority of which are based in developing countries.

About Road to Rio Series
In June of 2012, nations and civil society from around the world will gather in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). In an effort to raise awareness about Rio+20 and engage North American stakeholders in the process, USGBC, UNEP RONA and WBCSD organized consultations in five major metropolitan areas in the U.S. and Canada. Discussions at the events centered on the challenges these regions face in promoting green buildings and advancing sustainable urban policies, and ways of overcoming them through policy reforms and voluntary partnerships.

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