

One of most polluted sites in US to become UN-backed 'green' complex



10 August 2009 – A 140-year-old shipyard that became one of the United States' most polluted sites, a wasteland contaminated by heavy metals and radiation, is to be reborn as a green technology complex housing a climate change think tank, under a United Nations-backed project scheduled for completion in 2012.

Since the early 1990s, the Hunters Point Shipyard on San Francisco Bay, once the US military's largest facility for applied nuclear research, has been given a \$500-million clean-up in a projected headed by the UN Global Compact group and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

"California, in general, and San Francisco, in particular, have been at the forefront of environmental sustainability for many years and all the right ingredients are here," said Gavin Power, Deputy Director of the UN Global Compact, which seeks to encourage businesses to be better stewards of the environment.

"This would also have poignant significance given that San Francisco is the birthplace of the United Nations (in 1946)."

When it is completed in 2012, the complex will house a climate change think tank called the UN Global Compact Sustainability Center, which will work to find green solutions to the environmental challenges facing the world, a conference centre and UN offices, the UN Environment Programme (**UNEP**) said in a **news release** today.

The Global Compact, launched in 2000, is supported by six UN agencies, including the UNEP.

"We are excited to partner with the City of San Francisco to work towards securing a sustainability centre for the UN Global Compact," Gavin Power, Deputy Director of the UN Global Compact, said.

Established as a commercial shipyard in 1870, Hunters Point was appropriated by the US Navy at the beginning of World War II and became one of the Navy's major shipyards. After the war, it was home to the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory.

UNEP noted that in addition to doing major clean-ups and cracking down on its own greenhouse gas emissions, California has just announced the country's first nationwide plan to adapt to climate change and its impact.

Californian Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has also announced a second global conference for local government leaders to discuss climate change and local solutions from 30 September to 2 October.

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