DAY 1: Heat and Cooling Strategies

The discussion focused on heat and cooling strategies in urban environments, emphasizing the importance of trees and green infrastructure. Heather McMillan highlighted the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife's program, aiming for 30% tree canopy cover by 2035, currently at 16%. Daniel Tennell stressed the need for community involvement and nature-based solutions, citing a 76,000-tree loss in three years. Neu-wa O'Neill discussed architectural solutions, advocating for net-zero buildings and sustainable materials. The panel emphasized the integration of indigenous knowledge, policy support, and cross-sectoral collaboration to enhance urban resilience and mitigate heat island effects.

Action Items

- [ ] Collaborate with the University of Hawaii system to promote tree planting and care on campuses.
- [ ] Provide updated data on the percent change in Honolulu's urban tree canopy from 2013 to present.
- [ ] Engage the community in Kaimuki to continue the tree planting and care efforts started in the collaborative project.
- [ ] Promote and participate in the 2025 Year of the Community Forest initiative led by the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Outline

Heat and Cooling Strategies Introduction

- Francis Wiese introduces the topic of heat and cooling strategies, emphasizing the global drivers and their local expressions.
- The session will feature three panelists: Heather McMillan, Daniel Tennell, and Neu-wa O'Neill.
- Each panelist will present, followed by a Q&A session, and a final discussion with all panelists.
- Francis Wiese provides brief introductions to the panelists, highlighting their backgrounds and expertise.

Heather McMillan's Presentation on Urban Forestry

- Heather McMillan discusses the importance of trees as nature-based solutions for climate change and cooling.
- She introduces the Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife's program which focuses on equity and justice in tree planting.
- Heather emphasizes the need for community involvement in tree care and the benefits of having trees in urban areas.

- She presents data on tree canopy coverage in Hawaii, highlighting the disparities and the goal of achieving 30% canopy cover by 2035.

Daniel Tennell's Presentation on Community Engagement

- Daniel Tennell discusses the benefits of trees in reducing urban heat island effects and improving public health.
- He shares data on the urban forest decline and the importance of community involvement in tree planting and care.
- Daniel highlights a project in Kaimuki, focusing on geographic targeting, data collection, and community engagement.
- He emphasizes the need for a collective response, following science, and addressing the needs of underserved communities.

Neu-wa O'Neill's Presentation on Built Environment Solutions

- Neu-wa O'Neill discusses the role of the architecture industry in achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 through the AIA 2030 program.
- He highlights the importance of reducing operational and embodied carbon in buildings.
- Neu-wa O'Neill presents case studies of projects designed for energy efficiency, natural ventilation, and water conservation.
- He emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to design, considering all aspects of sustainability, including materials, water usage, and community well-being.

Panel Discussion on Integrating Community and Indigenous Knowledge

- Francis Wiese moderates a discussion on the integration of community and indigenous knowledge in urban planning and design.
- Heather and Daniel discuss the importance of incorporating traditional practices and community-driven solutions in their work.
- Neu-wa O'Neill highlights the need for a shift in the Western esthetic to include more integrated and sustainable design practices.
- The panelists emphasize the role of policies and regulations in supporting these efforts and the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration.

Challenges and Opportunities in Policy and Regulation

- Heather calls for more policies to protect existing trees and incentivize tree planting and care.
- Daniel discusses the challenges of parking lot design and the need for more supportive policies.
- Neu-wa O'Neill highlights the positive impact of energy codes and the need for more detailed green space requirements in development policies.
- The panelists discuss the importance of advocacy and community activism in driving policy changes and supporting sustainable practices.

Cross-Sectoral Collaboration and Future Directions

- The panelists discuss the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration in achieving integrated solutions for urban heat and cooling.
- Heather mentions the role of the Department of Transportation in planting trees along roadways and the impact of youth climate activism.
- Daniel emphasizes the need for supportive policies and the role of individual actions in driving change.
- Neu-wa O'Neill highlights the potential for innovative design solutions and the importance of long-term thinking in development projects.

Audience Questions and Closing Remarks

- An audience member asks about the challenges of implementing sustainable building practices in residential construction.
- The panelists discuss the need for incentives and credits to support sustainable building practices in affordable housing.
- Francis Wiese thanks the panelists and audience for their participation and emphasizes the importance of place-based solutions and community involvement in achieving sustainable urban environments.