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Cecil Corbin-Mark on Climate Resiliency in Northern Manhattan

[Cecil D. Corbin-Mark](#) has learned, first-hand, the importance of utilizing resident expertise when dealing with climate resiliency. The current Deputy Director of [WE ACT for Environmental Justice](#) discussed this importance during the [Resilient Cities, Livable Futures: New York](#)

City conference on March 20th at The New School.

Hundreds joined researchers from the Urban Resilience to Extremes Sustainability Research Network (UREx SRN) alongside practitioners, government representatives, and environmental justice leaders from 10 United States and Latin American cities who shared progress, challenges, and needs for building resilience to climate change in cities.

Cecil's speech was fascinating, as he created a vivid image of the history of the 125th Street Harlem Pier that once use to be a hot-spot for drugs and prostitution before a community crackdown started in the 90's. Today, the 125th Street Harlem Pier is a beautiful place where families go to escape from the difficult lifestyle of living in a city like New York. This, as Cecil explains, "Is a testimony to the fact that sometimes the expertise that resides in residents can actually produce real plans and that they are able to transform a space from a place of prostitution, drug use, and dereliction, a place of danger into a place of respite."

Cecil continued by giving examples of the work his organization, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, does for the neighborhoods of Northern Manhattan. WE ACT is able to give these neighborhoods of Northern Manhattan a voice. which can be

heard and used during the policy-making process. By creating a vocal community, policy changes will then reflect the voice of the people in the neighborhoods where policies have constantly lacked the vision the community has had for itself.

[Watch Cecil's speech and other keynotes from the conference](#)



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