Global Covenant of Mayors and Climate Action Planning

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Andy Deacon
The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy is an international alliance of cities and local governments working to achieve a low-emission and climate resilient future.

- The GCoM serves cities and local governments of all sizes in all parts of the world.
- The movement supports ambitious, measurable, planned climate and energy action in communities.
- It achieves this by working closely with city and regional networks, national governments, and other local and international partners.
At a glance: GCoM in 2021

11,719 signatories committed to GCoM

>1 billion people represented

>75% of growth in South Asia, Latin America, Sub Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East & North Africa
Action in Three Key Pillars

The progress of each signatory city is displayed on the GCoM website using badges. Each badge covers a key area, or “pillar”, of the GCoM:

- MITIGATION
- ADAPTATION
- ACCESS TO ENERGY
Each badge is accompanied by a progress bar.

The badges recognize the steps taken by the city throughout the GCoM process, from commitment, to planning, to implementation and monitoring.
The badge system shows each city’s progress at a glance.

Once a city has reported on a specific step and compliance with GCoM requirements have been confirmed, badges are automatically awarded and the progress bar grows.
The Global Covenant Offers:

- Harmonized requirements, Guidance and Tools
- Technical Assistance & Capacity Building
- Global Partnerships
- Global Advocacy & Communications Campaigns
- Mobilizing New Investments
- Coordinated Strategy & Governance
The 2021 Global Covenant of Mayors Impact Report

Tackling emissions with action
The 2021 Global Covenant of Mayors Impact Report

Cities are accelerating adaptation action

GCoM signatories report more than 1,400 high risk hazards, affecting 315 million people – roughly equivalent to the populations of Bangladesh and Russia combined.
The City Climate Action Journey

All experiences are different! This is a path of reference that you can adapt to your own situation.
The Multilevel Climate Action Playbook

Pinpointing the challenges

1. Current NDCs are insufficient
   - Cumulative CO₂ emissions between 2020-2030 are likely to use up 89% of the global carbon budget*

2. Ambition & implementation gaps
   - Parties need to aim higher & act faster if they are to reach the 1.5°C pathway dictated by science and the Paris Agreement

3. Governance is complex
   - Capturing, measuring, and monitoring action and progress across all levels of government requires strategic resourcing and capacity

4. Data access can be challenging
   - Data on mitigation, adaptation, and energy can be difficult to come by – especially in low- and middle-income countries

*UNFCCC Synthesis Report, September 2021
A first-edition all-in-one resource for local and regional governments – with guidance for national governments GCoM alliance partners, and practitioners

Recommends key elements of an enabling environment that:

- Identifies and weaves Regional and Local Contributions (RLCs) into Party policy developments
- Facilitates credible climate commitments and actions, recognized by the UNFCCC and Parties
- Accelerates vertical integration
Local and regional governments as entry points for progress
The Multilevel Climate Action Playbook

Local & regional action via pathways and catalysts

Targeted recommendations to unlock integrated action and implementation – led by national governments and accelerated by local and regional governments

**PATHWAY #1**
Learn and link up on science and policy

**PATHWAY #2**
Partner with national government to integrate RLCs

**PATHWAY #3**
Commit to strong and robust targets

**PATHWAY #4**
Act, measure, and report

**CATALYSTS:** Capacity-building and access to finance facilitated by GCoM alliance partners, Parties, and others
To operationalize its constitutionally-mandated cooperative governance model, South Africa established the IGCCC to enable vertical collaboration on climate change through information exchange, consultation, and collaboration among local, regional, and national governments.

Alongside the IGCCC, four municipalities in South Africa – Cape Town, Johannesburg, Tshwane, and eThekwini – are following a standardized, evidence-based process to develop local Climate Action Plans through vertical integration:

a) **Climate action planning** – Includes appraisal of powers and national policy and action, reviewing and aligning local with national datasets, strategically aligning local plan actions and targets with national policy.

b) **Response strategy development** – Intended to accelerate implementation by mainstreaming local climate plans and integrating them into national plans, thereby impacting budgets and financing, policy frameworks and mechanisms, and the distribution of powers.

c) **Ongoing monitoring and evaluation** – Enhancing data and data sharing between local/national, and developing processes for local metrics and action tracking to be included within national reporting.

Ministerial political and technical structures – alongside several multi-stakeholder technical working groups – were established to guide climate change work, enhance government coordination and policy alignment, and strengthen provincial-to-local government assistance in line with the Intergovernmental Relations Act. The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) represents local governments in this intergovernmental system, supporting local Integrated Development Plans.

South Africa’s 2021 NDC update makes note of a Climate Change Bill to be adopted by 2021, aiming to strengthen its political infrastructure to plan, implement, and monitor action.

Among other resources, these municipalities are using C40’s *Vertically Integrated Assessment suite of tools* to help facilitate data transformations and craft powerful narratives that can further integrate their contributions to South African NDC development.

As a UNDP Climate Promise participating country, NDC Partnership country, and IWI V-LED Project participant (see Global Initiatives for more information), South Africa is leading by example on comprehensive vertical integration as a means for achieving ambitious NDCs that can meet Paris Agreement goals.

To see more examples, visit the Annex.
Like mitigation and adaptation, the transition to clean, secure, and affordable energy cannot succeed without the comprehensive engagement of cross-sector stakeholders – particularly national and local governments. Recognizing this in the unique Tunisian context, the National Agency for Energy Management (ANME) has spearheaded deployment of the Alliance of Municipalities for Energy Transition (ACTE) program, which aims to strengthen Tunisian municipal capacity to contribute their fair share to the national energy transition by exploiting energy efficiency deposits and renewable energy use.

Facilitated in partnership with the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, the Local Authorities’ Loans and Support Fund, and the Training and Assistance Center for Decentralization, ACTE also seeks to align municipal energy management practices with European Energy Award principles across planning, project set-up, feasibility studies, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Funding from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs helps ensure experienced and targeted support, and a newly-opened credit line for local governments in 2018 has since helped finance studies and other investments on energy management.

As local climate action plans are prerequisites for program eligibility, efficient and innovative use of MyCovenant – one of the official GCfM reporting platforms – to visualize critical data among local and national governments can help inform and strengthen Tunisia’s climate and NDC policy developments. With an unconditional NDC emissions reduction target of 45%, Tunisia’s local and national governments are coordinating hand-in-hand to meet their shared ambition through proven practice on energy management and the implementation of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

To see more examples, visit the Annex.
Chile: generating critical datasets through coordinated subnational climate action

Recognizing the need for provision of GHG emissions inventory datasets across its local and regional governments, Chile has introduced a two-fold approach to meet the moment – especially for small and midsize municipalities with limited capacity. These include:

a) Establishing Comités Regionales de Cambio Climático (CORECC) or Regional Committees on Climate Change, which aim to identify climate planning, action, and policy synergies based on the capacities of local and regional governments; and

b) Regionalizing the creation of GHG emissions inventories using relevant sectoral proxies to disaggregate national inventory figures and make datasets more accessible to local and regional governments. This provides each Chilean region with access to GHG emissions estimates, split into sectors that remain aligned with IPCC methodologies.

Leading the process of strengthening regional and local coordination now allows the Chilean national government to provide regionally disaggregated data for each biennial national GHG emissions inventory update, clearly signalling the value of identifying synergies between local, regional, and national level datasets.

To see more examples, visit the Annex.
Canada: gathering leading cities and accounting experts around a framework to disclose climate-related financial risk

In 2019, Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA) Canada convened the cities of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver – together with the Public Sector Accounting Board, C40, ICLEI Canada, and other partners – to contextualize the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) for Cities.

As a result of this effort, the four cities mentioned above are actively incorporating TCFD disclosures and recommendations into their annual reports – providing valuable insight into the financial impact of climate risk.

The full set of resources and successive annual disclosures by Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, and others are available here.

This cross-sector pilot also provides two additional resources from the uniquely Canadian context:

— A guide to adopting TCFD recommendations for cities, highlighting the actions that leading Canadian cities have taken to demonstrate the climate adaptation leadership necessary in the context of the Paris Agreement – and ensuring inclusion of financial reporting and capital planning; and

— Technical guidance for adopting TCFD from the Public Sector Accounting Board, which helps accounting and auditing professionals understand the impact of climate-related issues on financial statements and associated disclosures.

To see more examples, visit the Annex.
Key insights from cities, practitioners, and experts

The challenge for cities

1. Mayors continue to raise their climate ambition – despite COVID-19
2. Only 22% of cities are implementing their climate action plans at scale
3. Financing, data access, technical capacity, and stakeholder buy-in are the top barriers
4. Tool use correlates with climate action progress – but tools struggle to enable implementation
5. Available tools lack sustained support and are hard for many cities to use

Unlocking city climate action progress through tools

To facilitate access for cities – regardless of capacity, progress, or power – tools and their data need to be:

- Standardized to support data flow across climate action journey phases and strengthen tool connectivity
- Sourced from large, complementary, & diverse datasets – especially at the inventory stage – to fill gaps
- Simplified to lower barriers to use
- Capable of transforming data into outcomes and action recommendations
- Geared towards enabling project implementation (feasibility, impact studies, financing)

Easy access to data and processing
Robust tool connectivity
Outcome- and action-oriented outputs
# Research findings – COVID-19 response

## A taxonomy of city emergency responses: R+I insights from COVID-19

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<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Research and knowledge</th>
<th>Infrastructure and technology</th>
<th>Economic development</th>
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| • **Strategy**  
  e.g. collaborative agenda setting through the C40 Global Mayors COVID-19 Recovery Task Force | • **Knowledge sharing**  
  e.g. through a range of virtual and topical forums convened by city networks | • **Mobility infrastructure**  
  e.g. development of new and updated pedestrian, cycling, and public transport infrastructure | • **Job creation**  
  e.g. through built / green infrastructure projects |
| • **Services**  
  e.g. provision of food aid | • **Data gathering**  
  e.g. where cities accessed local COVID-19 monitors and participated in city network surveys | • **Green infrastructure**  
  e.g. expanded revegetation programmes and home gardening support | • **Funding**  
  e.g. provision of arts grants, green funding schemes (including for EVs, waste management), and other subsidies |
| • **Stakeholder engagement**  
  e.g. engagement of youth through a participatory democracy project | | • **Buildings**  
  e.g. adaptation of existing buildings to provide shelter for vulnerable populations | • **Business development**  
  e.g. through training and development of online markets for local businesses |
| • **Multilevel coordination**  
  e.g. through a declaration between the European Union and city leaders for city involvement in Europe’s COVID-19 recovery | | • **Digital / IT**  
  e.g. digitisation of library services and upgrading of public transport apps | |

More information:

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