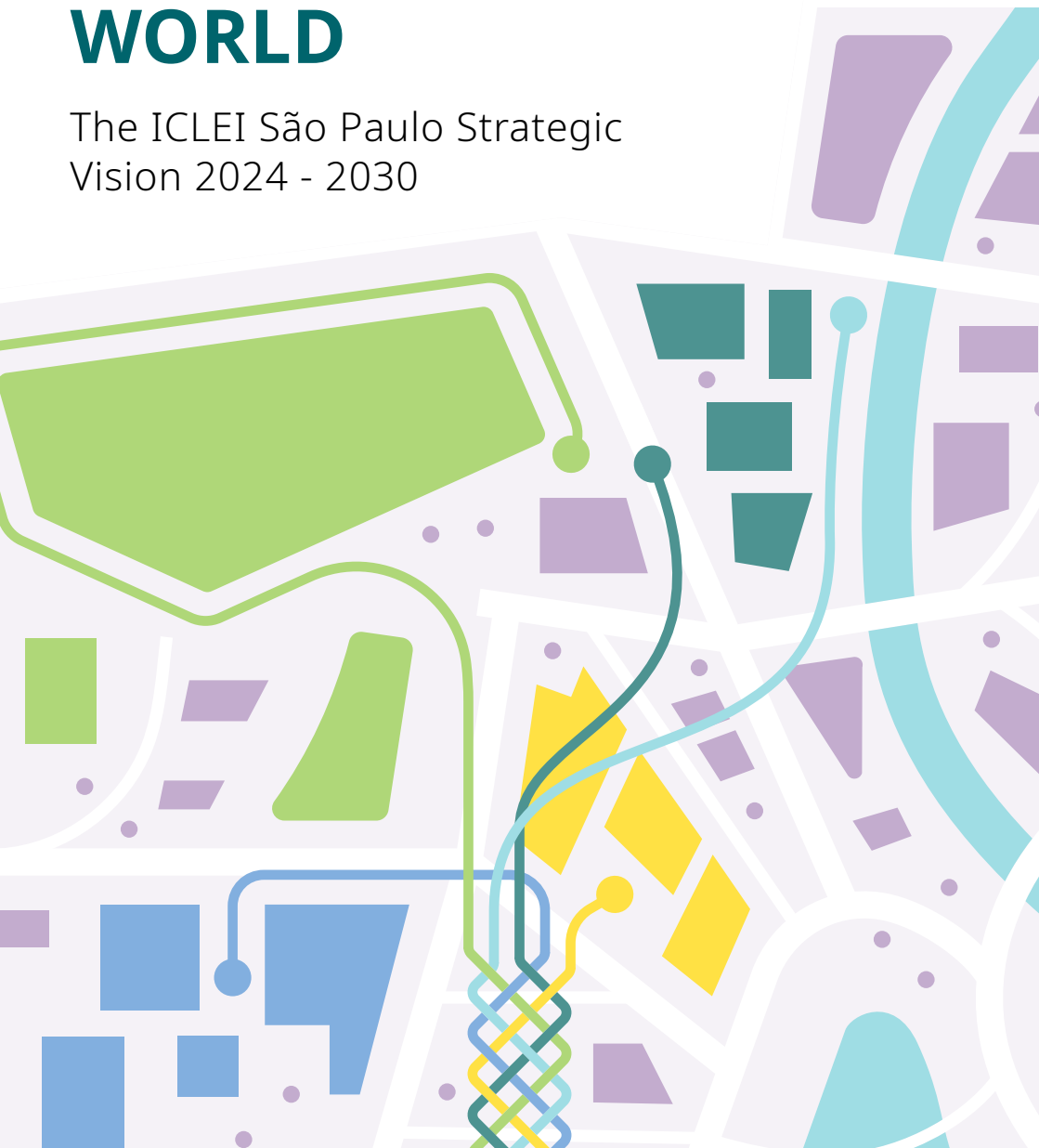


# THE POWER OF OUR NETWORK IN A CHANGING WORLD



The ICLEI São Paulo Strategic  
Vision 2024 - 2030



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## PUBLISHER



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# INTRODUCTION

 *We are facing huge changes in our urban world.*

In an era of unprecedented global shifts, the communities and leaders of cities, towns and regions stand at the frontline, facing complex, multifaceted challenges, including devastating climate change, ecosystem collapse, shocking pollution, demographic shifts and rapid technological evolution.

These issues not only threaten the fabric of urban life but also underscore the urgent need for decisive action across all levels of government to foster resilience, address systemic inequities and harness innovation. Only through tenacity, expanded collaboration and serious political commitment can we bring about the transformation necessary for a sustainable, inclusive, zero emission and resilient future.

Building on previous reports, the World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Risks Report identifies climate change, biodiversity loss and natural resource shortages as the top risks facing humanity over the next decade. It also emphasizes the interconnection of climate change and biodiversity loss - significant existential threats that demand immediate and concerted efforts to avert irreversible damage to societies and ecosystems, with the very real possibility to significantly alter "life as we know it" for all of humanity.

Additionally, we cannot forget United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres' landmark 2020 speech on the state of the planet in which he said that making peace with nature will be "the defining task of the 21st century." 2023's record-breaking heat waves, floods, and storms serve as a stark warning of what lies ahead if we do not make peace with nature. Pressure on our urban infrastructure and services continues to increase markedly as urbanization accelerates. As one example of future scenarios based on currently available scientific models, the 2024 UNDP trends report estimates that by 2050, the number of "climate migrants" will range anywhere between 25 million to 1 billion.

We are facing huge changes in our urban world. Local and regional governments, supported by decades-strong networks like ICLEI, are pivotal in transforming existing and emerging urban centers into beacons of opportunity, inclusion, learning, innovation and, most critically, sustainability.

By spearheading policies and initiatives that tackle unsustainable production and consumption, facilitate social and cultural engagement and inclusion for all, transform and strengthen new, green local economies, and address

the impacts of climate change and natural resource degradation, our cities, towns and regions can and must catalyze meaningful change - ambitiously and rapidly.

The path forward is not easy, with cities and regions facing the day-to-day realities of structural challenges and inequity. However, by building on past successes and strengthening existing frameworks and initiatives, a sustainable urban future where communities and nature thrive is possible. Indeed, many of ICLEI Members have shown that such pathways toward sustainability are not only feasible, but are already well-advanced, positively and fundamentally reshaping our shared urban future.

Over the past decade, starting in 2012 with Rio+20, the sustainability community has witnessed transformative milestones, notably with the Paris Climate Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework, affirming commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Urban Agenda as well as adopting a more holistic view of urbanization. This period marked a departure from isolated efforts, highlighting the interconnectivity between environmental, developmental and urbanization challenges, and stressing the need for a just transition that respects our finite planetary boundaries.

The global acknowledgment of local and regional governments as key partners in these endeavors has strengthened significantly, with

leaders recognizing their influential role and responsibility in steering the world towards sustainability through multilevel governance and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

ICLEI works with our growing network of local and regional governments to elevate local voices, drive change towards more ambitious sustainability policy and legal frameworks, foster equity, diversity and inclusion, mobilize financing, invest in active local to global partnerships and build broad-based coalitions to advance local and regional action.

Through the expedited and holistic implementation of ICLEI's five sustainable development pathways - equitable development, zero emission development, nature-based development, circular development and resilient development - the ICLEI São Paulo Strategic Vision 2024-2030 will play a critical role in accelerating actions of local and regional governments in the ICLEI network.

Together with national governments, our valued partners and the multilateral community, we, the local and regional governments of the ICLEI network, are committed to urgently moving ahead with courage, care and commitment to ensure that all of humanity has a future —much of which will be in cities and urban areas— that is worth looking forward to.



## MESSAGE FROM GINO VAN BEGIN, ICLEI SECRETARY GENERAL

When the ICLEI network last released our strategic vision in 2021, we were still in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic, a catastrophically destabilizing event that affected every corner of the globe.

But hovering behind that catastrophe is the specter of global climate change, biodiversity loss and unsustainable trends that are already destabilizing our world.

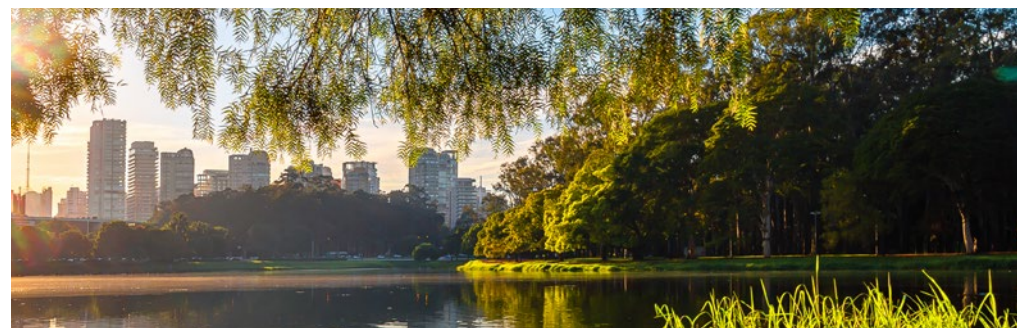
The ICLEI network of local and regional governments committed to sustainability is a counterpoint to these threats. We see local and regional sustainable development as one of the key solutions to so many of our planetary challenges.

The cities, towns and regions that are a part of the ICLEI network are paving the way on so many fronts, demonstrating sustainable solutions that are shaping our future urban world. Together they show the power, and absolute necessity, of local action.

In many ways, these cities and regions, and the communities who call them home, are determining the present and future of the world. They do this in a true multilevel governance fashion, working hand-in-hand with national governments and the international community, understanding the value of partnership, peer-to-peer learning and community.

While ICLEI uses the full power of our network to ensure that local sustainability delivers on the goals and aspirations of the global sustainable development agenda, we continue to extend and measure our impact on the ground through programs, projects and initiatives.

Our flourishing network works with more than 2,500 local and regional governments worldwide, representing small, large, and fast-growing cities, vast metropolitan areas, provinces and regions. ICLEI, as a network, IS the diversity of the urban world and the challenges and opportunities that come with it.



Through the ICLEI São Paulo Strategic Vision 2024 - 2030, local and regional governments of the ICLEI network set a way towards the transformation to sustainable development. This vision, set forth in the voice of our local and regional governments, creates a picture of what is needed for a truly sustainable urban world.

ICLEI is and has always been committed to creating global change through work that starts on the local level. Together, we must demonstrate visionary leadership, lead by example, share our knowledge actively and openly and speak with a united voice. Our São Paulo Strategic Vision 2024 - 2030 is a critical part of that promise.

*The ICLEI São Paulo Strategic Vision, set forth in the voice of our local and regional governments, creates a picture of what is needed for a truly sustainable urban world.*



# ABOUT ICLEI - LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY





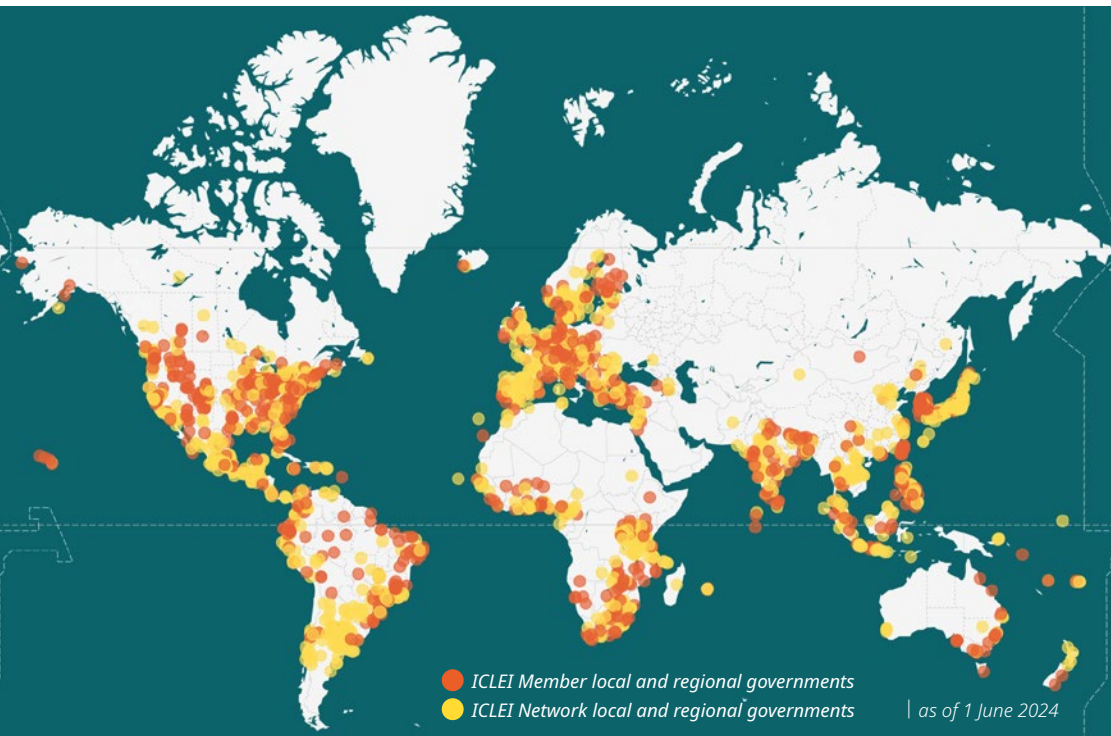
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network working with more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, ICLEI influences sustainability policy and drives local action for zero emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development.

ICLEI brings a strong urban component to national and global sustainability policies and translates these policies into action. We make sustainability an integral part of urban development and create systemic change in urban areas through practical, integrated solutions. We help cities, towns and regions anticipate and respond

to complex challenges, from rapid urbanization and climate change to ecosystem degradation and inequity.

Our Members and team of experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability. ICLEI creates connections among the local, regional, national and global governmental levels. We advocate for robust national and global sustainability policies that reflect the interests of local and regional governments and their communities.

Through our collective efforts to build a sustainable urban world, ICLEI is shifting the trajectory of global development.



## OUR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

The ICLEI Council serves as the representative body of ICLEI Membership at regional and global levels, standing to represent the sustainability efforts of local and regional governments worldwide. They play an **important role in ICLEI's global advocacy strategy** and serve as **political representatives for key thematic sectors** of ICLEI's work.

Governance members include Governors, Mayors and Deputy or Vice Mayors or elected councilors. These leaders stand as candidates for ICLEI leadership and are elected democratically by ICLEI's Membership every three years. They guide the organization's strategic direction by the adoption of three-year strategic plans, statute amendments and may have oversight of ICLEI operations.

ICLEI governance members have a strong influence in role modeling to other local and regional leaders what

championing sustainability looks like, galvanizing local and regional governments in calls to action, pioneering and piloting initiatives, building cross-institutional relationships and encouraging ICLEI Members to consistently work in the pursuit of sustainable development. As ICLEI champions, the governance members actively engage in building relationships with significant international organizations and institutions, brokering opportunities with new partners and speaking at key international events. The role of our governance leaders serving as powerful advocates in the multilateral global sustainability arena has been an important and powerful component of ICLEI's work since our founding. Our leaders bring the concerns, needs and challenges of local and subnational governments to the forefront, while pressing for increased sustainability ambition on global and national levels.

### ICLEI Presidium



PRESIDENT

**KATRIN STIERNFELDT JAMMEH**

Mayor, Malmö, Sweden



FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

**MINNA ARVE**

Mayor, Turku, Finland



VICE-PRESIDENT

**MARJORIE KAUFFMANN**

Secretary of State for Environment and Infrastructure, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



VICE-PRESIDENT

**MOHAMED SEFIANI**

Mayor, Chefchaouen Municipality, Morocco

# ICLEI GLOBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024-2027 | As of 1 June 2024



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AFRICA  
INNOVATIVE FINANCE  
Mayor, Chefchaouen Municipality, Morocco



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EAST ASIA  
Governor, Gyeonggi Provincial Government, Republic of Korea



**MINNA ARVE**  
EUROPE  
CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT  
Mayor, Turku, Finland



**DATIN SAPIAH BINTI HARON**  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSITION  
Mayor, Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council, Malaysia



**ALFREDO CORO**  
BIODIVERSITY  
Mayor, Municipality of Del Carmen, Philippines



**ALIX DESULME**  
SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY  
Mayor, North Miami, USA



**KATJA DÖRNER**  
CLIMATE ACTION GOVERNANCE  
Lord Mayor, Bonn, Germany



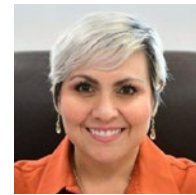
**JORGE ALEJANDRO ALDANA BARDALES**  
MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
Mayor, Tegucigalpa, Central District, Honduras



**JENI ARNDT**  
NORTH AMERICA  
Mayor, Fort Collins, USA



**HY WILLIAM CHAN**  
OCEANIA  
Councillor, Sydney, Australia



**IRENE GALINDO ROMÁN**  
RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT  
Deputy Mayor, Los Cabos, Mexico



**AXEL SCHMIDT GRAEL**  
CLIMATE ACTION SUPPORT  
Mayor, Municipality of Niterói, Brazil



**KATRIN STIERFELDT JAMMEH**  
SUSTAINABLE, CIRCULAR AND INNOVATION PROCUREMENT  
Mayor, Malmö, Sweden



**DIANA ÜRGE-VORSATZ**  
URBAN RESEARCH & INNOVATION  
Vice Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Hungary



**MARJORIE KAUFFMANN**  
SOUTH AMERICA  
Secretary of State for Environment and Infrastructure, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil



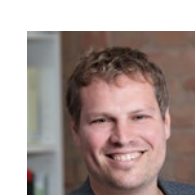
**SMT. NAYNABEN PEDHADIYA**  
SOUTH ASIA  
Mayor, Rajkot Municipal Corporation, India



**MAR-LEN ABIGAIL S. BINAY**  
SOUTHEAST ASIA  
INNOVATIVE FINANCE  
Mayor, Makati, Philippines



**REGINA BAKITTE NAKAZZI MUSOKE**  
ADVISOR - CLIMATE ACTION GOVERNANCE  
Mayor, Nansana, Uganda



**FELIX CREUTZIG**  
ADVISOR - DIGITALIZATION  
Head of working group Land Use, Infrastructure and Transport, Technical University of Berlin, Germany

ICLEI GEXCOM ROLE: REGIONAL SEAT THEMATIC PORTFOLIO SEAT

# ICLEI GLOBAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024-2027 | As of 1 June 2024

ICLEI GEXCOM ROLE: REGIONAL SEAT THEMATIC PORTFOLIO SEAT

# ICLEI COUNCIL 2024-2027

As of 1 June 2024

## Africa



**ERNEST ARTHUR**

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Metropolitan  
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Municipal  
Council, Uganda



**CHILANDO CHITANGALA**

Mayor, Lusaka  
City Council,  
Zambia



**MANUEL DE ARAÚJO**

Mayor, Quelimane  
Municipal Council,  
Mozambique



**MOHAMED SEFIANI**

Mayor,  
Chefchaouen  
Municipality,  
Morocco

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Deputy Mayor,  
New Taipei City,  
Chinese Taipei



**SANGHAN KIM**

Vice Mayor,  
Seoul  
Metropolitan  
Government,  
Republic of  
Korea



**WEISHU LI**

Vice Mayor,  
Changchun  
Municipal  
People's  
Government,  
China



**KOJI MATSUI**

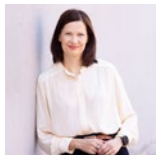
Mayor, Kyoto,  
Japan



**DONG YEON KIM**

Governor,  
Gyeonggi  
Provincial  
Government,  
Republic of  
Korea

## Europe



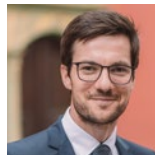
**MINNA ARVE**

Mayor, Turku,  
Finland



**MAIDER ETXEBARRIA GARCIA**

Mayor, Vitoria-  
Gasteiz, Basque  
Country, Spain



**MARTIN HORN**

Lord Mayor,  
Freiburg im  
Breisgau,  
Germany



**LASSE FRIMAND JENSEN**

Mayor, Aalborg,  
Denmark



**LUÍSA SALGUEIRO**

Mayor,  
Matosinhos,  
Portugal

# ICLEI COUNCIL 2024-2027

As of 1 June 2024

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Grand Bahama,  
Bahamas



**MAURICIO VILA DOSAL**

Governor,  
Yucatan, Mexico



**JORGE ALEJANDRO ALDANA BARDALES**

Mayor,  
Tegucigalpa,  
Honduras



**RICARDO QUIÑÓNEZ LEMUS**

Mayor,  
Guatemala City,  
Guatemala

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Mayor, Hastings-  
on-Hudson, NY,  
USA



**JENI ARNDT**

Mayor, Fort  
Collins, CO, USA



**BARBARA BUFFALO**

Mayor,  
Columbia, MO,  
USA



**JILLIAN HUDGINS**

Board Member,  
Fredericton, NB,  
Canada



**IAN MCVEY**

Sustainability  
Manager,  
Durham Region,  
ON, Canada

## Oceania



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Councillor,  
Sydney, Australia



**FRANCIS F. B. GREEN**

Chair, Kiribati  
Local Government  
Association,  
Kiribati



**NUATALI NELMES**

Lord Mayor,  
Newcastle, NSW,  
Australia



**ANNA REYNOLDS**

Lord Mayor,  
Hobart, Tasmania,  
Australia



**AMANDA STONE**

Councillor,  
Yarra, Australia



# ICLEI COUNCIL 2024-2027

As of 1 June 2024

## South America



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CHONG RIOS**

Mayor, Provincial  
Municipality of  
Maynas, Peru



**AXEL  
SCHMIDT  
GRAEL**

Mayor,  
Municipality of  
Niterói, Brazil



**PABLO JAVKIN**

Mayor,  
Municipality  
of Rosario,  
Argentina



**MARJORIE  
KAUFFMANN**

State Secretary for  
Environment and  
Infrastructure,  
State of Rio  
Grande do Sul,  
Brazil



**CRISTIAN  
EDUARDO  
ZAMORA  
MATUTE**

Mayor, Cuenca  
Canton, Ecuador

## South Asia



**M. ANILKUMAR**

Mayor, Kochi  
Municipal  
Corporation,  
India



**UGYEN DORJI**

Mayor, Thimphu,  
Bhutan



**SALINA  
HAYAT IVY**

Mayor,  
Narayanganj  
City Corporation,  
Bangladesh



**SMT.  
NAYNABEN  
PEDHADIYA**

Mayor, Rajkot  
Municipal  
Corporation, India



**BHIM PRASAD  
DHUNGANA**

President,  
Municipal  
Association  
of Nepal, Nepal

## Southeast Asia



**DATIN SAPIAH  
BINTI HARON**

Mayor, Hang  
Tuah Jaya,  
Malaysia



**MAR-LEN  
ABIGAIL S.  
BINAY**

Mayor, Makati,  
Philippines



**ALFREDO CORO**

Mayor, Municipality  
of Del Carmen,  
Philippines

ICLEI Council Meeting, 2022,  
Malmo, Sweden



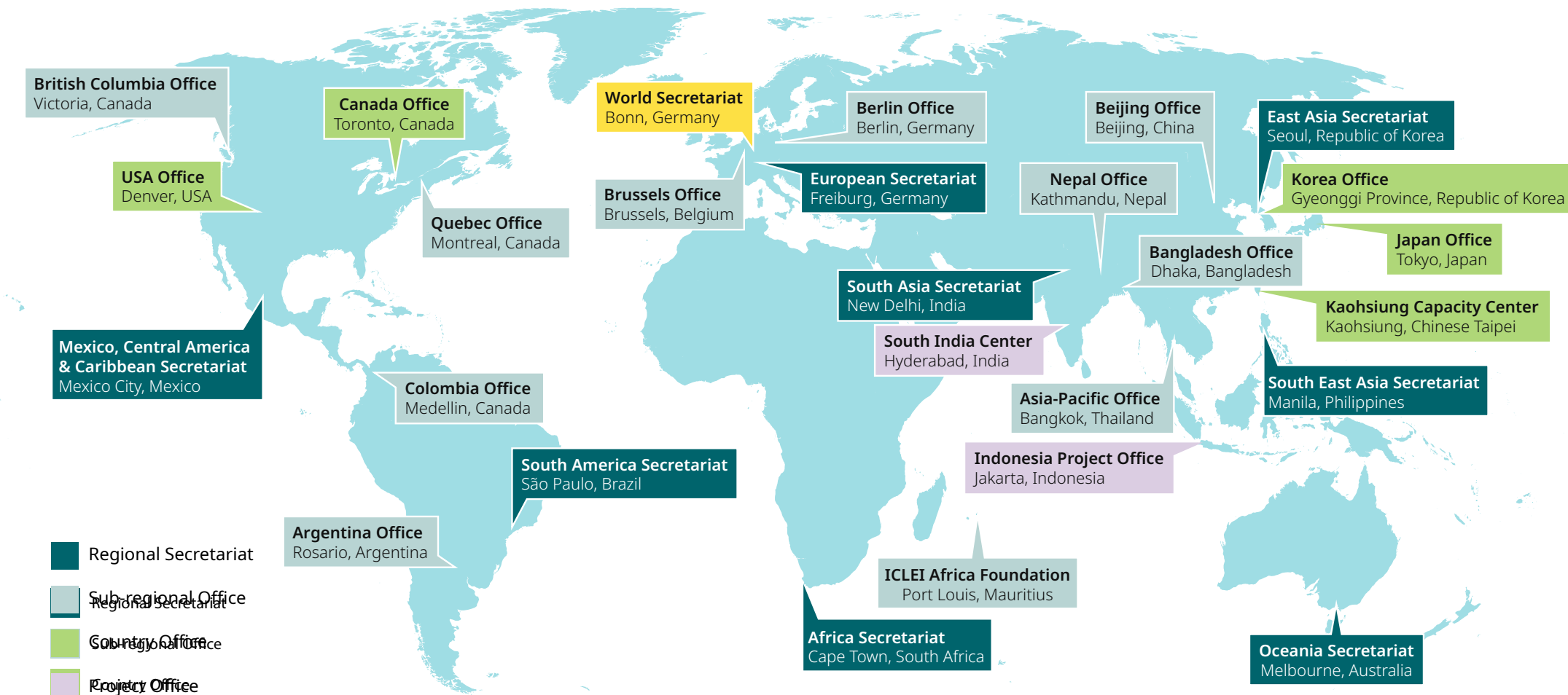
# OUR STAFF

With 600+ specialized staff in our twenty-four offices around the world, ICLEI provides on-the-ground support to our cities, towns and regions, and offers technical assistance and

capacity building in the fields of governance, finance and economics, climate action, resilience and adaptation, sustainable mobility and freight, biodiversity and nature, health, water,

food systems, circular development, procurement, digitalization, sustainable energy, energy access, coastal management, small island developing states, global advocacy and diplomacy,

multilevel governance and cooperation, human rights and equity, culture and heritage, data and monitoring, innovation and research, communications and knowledge management.





ICLEI's Senior Management | *As of 1 June 2024*



**GINO VAN BEGIN**  
Secretary General, ICLEI World Secretariat



**KOBIE BRAND**  
Deputy Secretary General; Regional Director, ICLEI Africa Secretariat; Acting Regional Director, ICLEI Oceania Secretariat



**EMANI KUMAR**  
Deputy Secretary Regional Director, ICLEI South Asia Secretariat



**SHU ZHU**  
Regional Director, ICLEI East Asia Secretariat



**WOLFGANG TEUBNER**  
Regional Director, ICLEI European Secretariat



**EDGAR VILLASEÑOR FRANCO**  
Regional Director, ICLEI Mexico, Central America & Caribbean Secretariat



**RODRIGO DE OLIVEIRA PERPETUO**  
Regional Director, ICLEI South America Secretariat



**VICTORINO AQUITANIA**  
Regional Director, ICLEI Southeast Asia Secretariat



**MEGAN MEANEY**  
Executive Director, ICLEI Canada Office



**TOGO UCHIDA**  
Executive Director, ICLEI Japan Office



**YISHENG YANG**  
Executive Director, ICLEI Kaohsiung Capacity Center



**YEONHEE PARK**  
Executive Director, ICLEI Korea Office

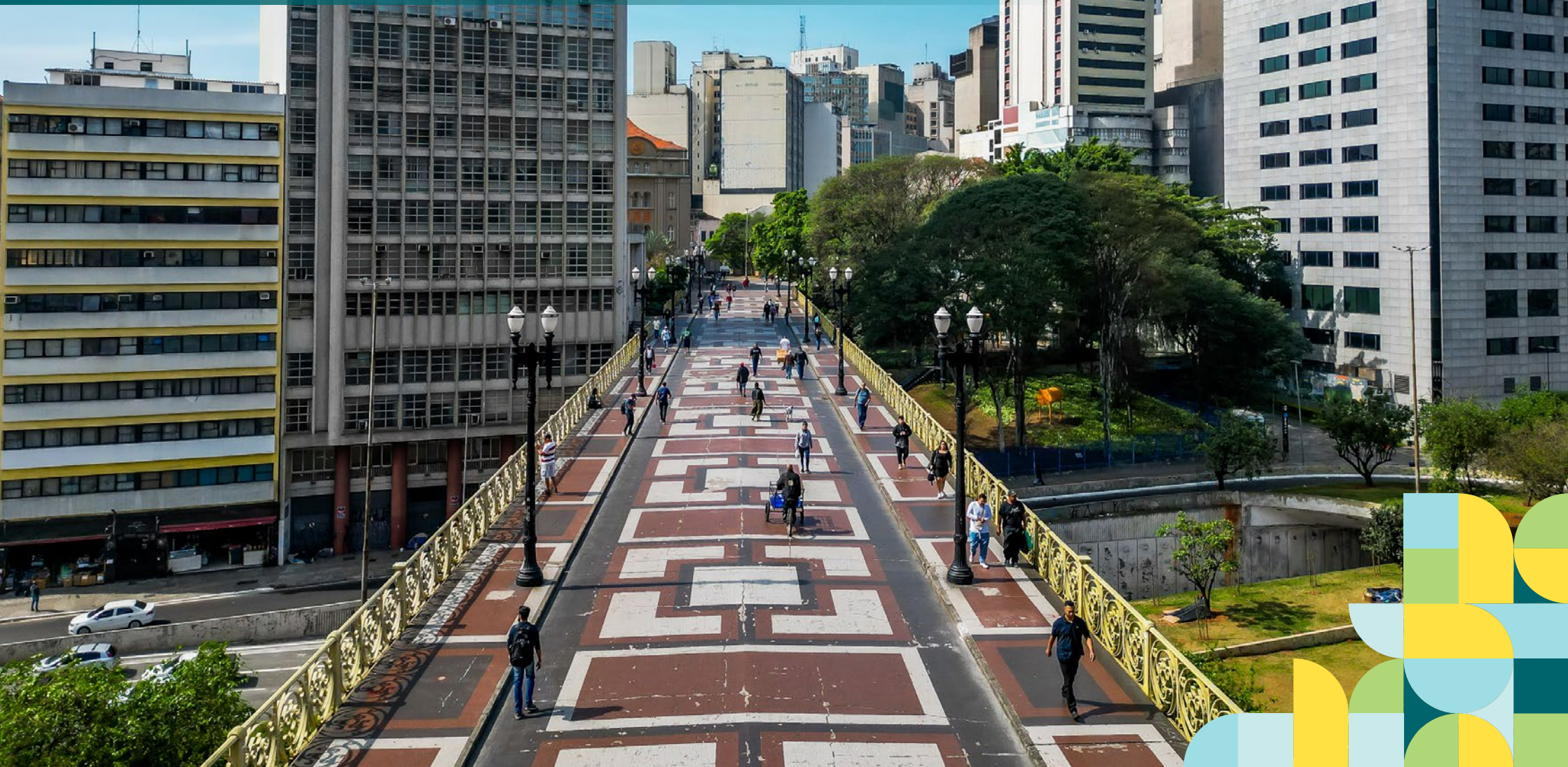


**ANGIE FYFE**  
Executive Director, ICLEI USA Office





# THE ICLEI SÃO PAULO STRATEGIC VISION 2024 - 2030





# NAVIGATING THE DECISIVE DECADE

## Our Opportunity Ahead

Our world today stands on the precipice of an unprecedented global emergency in which we are facing the accelerating forces of the climate crisis, rapid environmental degradation and societal upheaval. We are witnessing massive human-induced loss of species, severe land degradation to large-scale demographic shifts and increased fragility of our ever-expanding urban infrastructures so starkly manifested in our urban landscapes.

The imperative for the leaders and experts in our local and regional governments to enact swift, transformative actions across the spectrum of urban life has never been more evident than right now. As recent events have shown us so clearly, it is often the most vulnerable of our urban populations that feel these impacts first and most strongly.

With the start of the Decade of Action in 2021 and through the UN sustainability frameworks in place towards 2030 and 2050, notably the Paris Climate Agreement (2015), the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Plan (2022), additional climate and nature commitments, the Sustainable

Development Goals (2016) and the New Urban Agenda (2016) – for which we advocated intensively over the last decades – we must now, more than ever, implement the global sustainable development agenda in collaboration with all levels of government, the private sector, academia and research, and civil society.

We find ourselves midway through humanity's decisive decade. Many of our global goals have hard deadlines set for 2030. Most of the targets are not on track to reach these goals in time, if at all. What we do over the span of the next few years will, in so many ways, determine the future of life on earth. The consequence of failure to act will change life as we know it.

For society as a whole, and especially for those governments and their leaders closest to our communities on the ground, it is imperative to respond immediately and decisively. We must dismantle systemic inequities and poverty and harness, co-create and ethically implement technological innovations to ensure a liveable, and indeed a thriving, urban future for today and tomorrow —for all.

Our cities and towns remain bustling, creative bastions of opportunity, liveliness, innovation and social cohesion. They are indeed places of hope and prosperity. Our task as local leaders and those who work with them is to prevent these sanctuaries of hope from becoming battlegrounds where socio-economic disparities, environmental destruction and resource depletion converge.

History has shown that under visionary, kind and inclusive leadership, coupled with the sheer determination of the communities who live there, our cities and towns can swiftly course correct. They can rebuild, transform, ignite change and reinvent themselves into beacons of hope. They can become engines of change that can set themselves and entire nations on a transformative path towards sustainability where people are living in harmony with nature and with each other.



# OUR ICLEI COMMITMENT

## Sustainable, Resilient, Inclusive, Safe Cities, Towns and Regions For All

When a group of forward-thinking cities founded ICLEI in 1990, they took action for sustainability, well before sustainable development was the predominant model for change. The entry point was protecting and conserving the environment. Since then, ICLEI has evolved to focus on mainstreaming sustainable development in all aspects of urban life - interacting with all who congregate, live, trade, work, co-create and recreate in and around our cities, towns and regions.

There is power in our network: being a part of ICLEI nurtures our collective potential for creating and enabling positive change. Our ICLEI network reaches well over 2,500 cities, towns and regions and is widely recognized as a leading organization with visionary leaders and experts acting worldwide. We are deeply united in our commitment to inspire, learn from and work with each other and others on our

shared journey towards a sustainable and equitable urban world.

We are optimistic and energized, understanding how cities, towns and regions can be triggers for change, how they can transform rapidly and systemically, each on its own unique journey, but underscored and encouraged by the actions of others like them and by multilevel governance systems that both enable and necessitate collective local action for global change.

Guided by our five pathways towards sustainable development - **equitable development, zero emission development, nature-based development, circular development and resilient development** - our overall goal is to significantly scale up and expand the commitments of local and regional governments to create sustainable, resilient, inclusive and safe cities, towns and regions around the world.

 *Our overall goal is to significantly scale up and expand the commitments of local and regional governments to create sustainable, resilient, inclusive and safe cities, towns and regions around the world.*

To do this, we, the ICLEI network, commit to:

- **Enable a massive and collective whole-of-society and whole-of-government shift towards sustainable development** in and among our jurisdictions, entrenching sustainability as a fundamental component of all local, national and global development and cooperation in and across jurisdictions.
- **Make our sustainable development strategies more fundamental, systemic, just, inclusive and equitable.** In doing so, we will make profound decisions in the long-term interests of both people and the planet that will ensure the resilience of systems and approaches.
- **Drive a new shared vision for sustainable and dignified living** that respects planetary needs and boundaries, addresses unabated consumption and production patterns and entrenched inequalities, breaks the chains of structural poverty, and actively challenges the status quo.
- **Bring the voice of our communities to the global sustainable development agenda.** Local, national and global policy must be shaped from the ground up and designed from the outset to be implementable at the local level. We are the governmental level closest to our communities, and it is our duty to engage with the people within our communities, listen to, and understand their perspectives, and to spread their messages globally.
- **Celebrate the diversity of the communities we represent and ensure that the distinct voices and interests within them are heard.** We will prioritize diversity and inclusivity across our administrations and communities. Diversity in race, color, religion, creed, gender, age, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientation is a source of strength, innovation and new ideas. We will engage and include disadvantaged and marginalized populations and age groups.
- **Foster strong partnerships to advance global sustainability.** Delivering on the global sustainable development goals requires coordinated action across national, regional and local governments, multilateral organizations, international agencies, research and development institutions, as well as civil society. We will push to define sustainable development as a joint effort, positioning all levels of government to rapidly and boldly advance global sustainability goals and seek support for our actions, including finance, capacity building, research, innovation and co-creation.
- **Strengthen cooperation at a regional scale.** Cities, towns, counties and regions are inextricably linked with, and depend upon, the inter-connection of urban, peri-urban and rural areas, especially considering the ecosystems and services that we all depend on for our health, wellbeing and



livelihoods, such as energy, water, circular economy strategies, and transport of goods and people.

- **Build and make sustainable infrastructure available for all** through scaling up and catalyzing public and private financing sources and creating enabling environments and needed fiscal and technical capacities at the local level in order to make these accessible for sustainable urban infrastructure projects.
- **Use our public procurement potential as an instrument to accelerate the uptake of sustainable and innovative products and services**, and address issues such as working conditions, the marginalization of vulnerable groups, child labor and fair trade practices.
- **Contribute to advancing research on sustainability.** Local and regional governments can guide and inform collaborative research

and use the latest scientific insights informed by local needs and realities for effective sustainability strategies at the city and regional levels. We need fit-for-purpose data, information and knowledge.

- **Drive sustainability innovation and create spaces for co-creation and new solutions.** Participatory planning and development has entered a new age of co-design and co-creation. We will include sustainability innovation in our high-impact sustainability actions across all sectors, working closely with all stakeholders - we will be bold, creative, and think outside the box.

By applying these principles within a local and regional context, we can begin to reverse detrimental practices, bridge divides, restore our relationship with the planet and create healthier, more decent and just, liveable cities, towns and regions around our world.

Every year, ICLEI undertakes hundreds of activities, alongside our local and regional government Members, to deliver sustainable development through our five pathways of zero emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. **Explore our activities →**





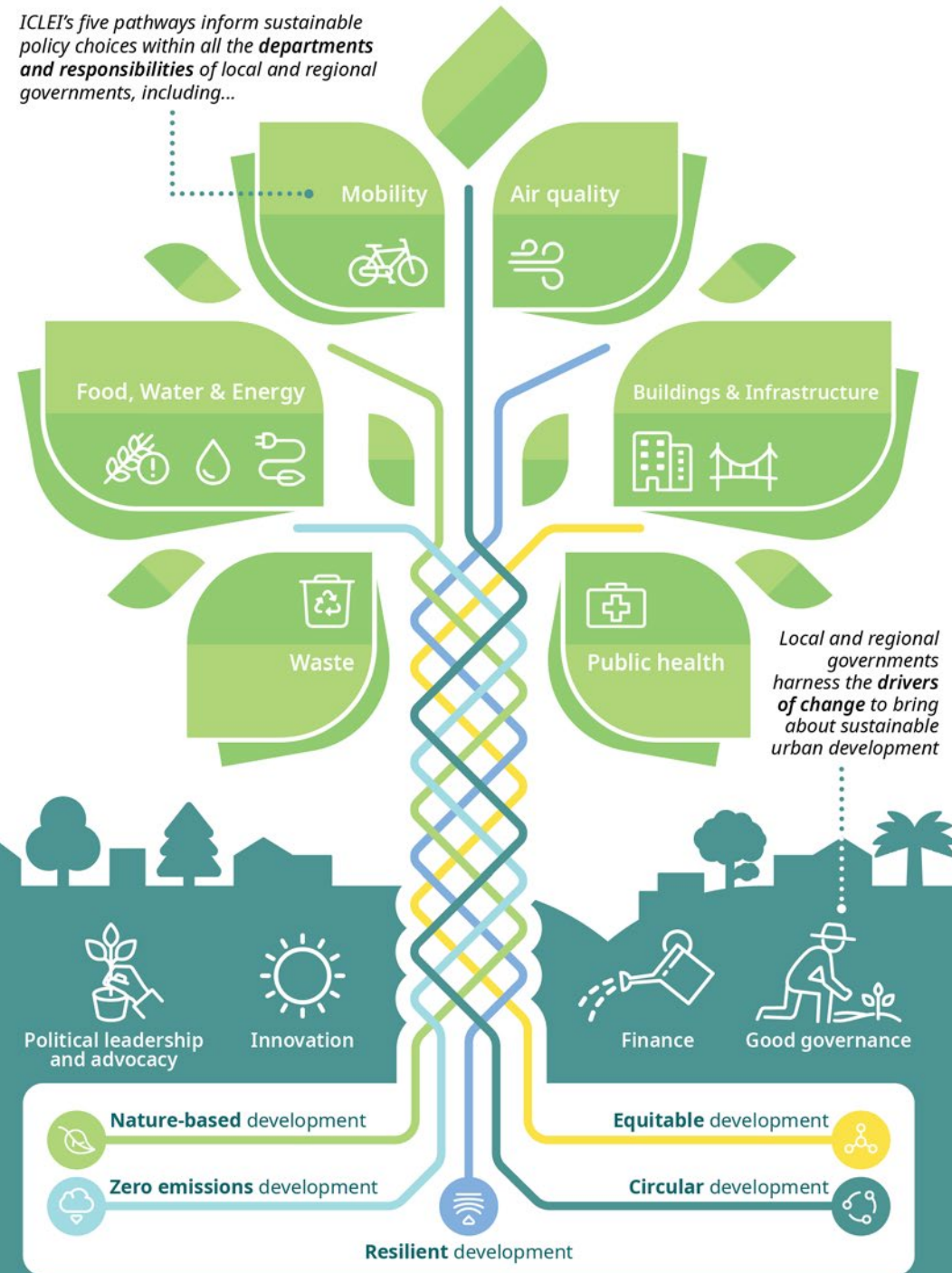
# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH OUR FIVE PATHWAYS

As a compass to direct our actions in a rapidly changing world and to transform our cities, towns and regions, we will drive action through five critical, strategic and interlinked pathways: equitable development, zero emission development, nature-based development, circular development and resilient development. These pathways are the basis for sustainable urban development.

At the local and regional levels, ICLEI drives change along these five interconnected pathways that intersect all sectors in our communities. By following these interconnected pathways, cities, towns and regions worldwide can advance toward the sustainable

future they have envisioned for themselves by developing integrated solutions and creating change across whole urban systems. While an activity or implemented project may be primarily driven by a single or few pathways, the goal is always to implement projects and initiatives in such ways that they generate impact across all five pathways.

ICLEI further accelerates change by supporting our Members in enhancing their capacities and access to enabling factors such as finance, innovation, political leadership and good governance, which are critical for transforming ambitious plans into inspiring sustainable actions.



ICLEI's five pathways create an integrated definition of sustainable urban development

# MAKING GLOBAL GOALS...

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, to which ICLEI's advocacy efforts contributed, aim for a transformational change for people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace by 2030.

The SDGs encompass a comprehensive array of areas to be addressed in the achievement of global sustainability; however, as we conclude the first half of the envisioned 15 years of SDG implementation in 2023, progress

has been painfully slow. More of the same will not bring success by 2030. Indeed, we have backslid in addressing poverty, hunger, health, education, energy resilience (including access, security and poverty) and critical environmental targets.

Local and regional governments are essential to driving the transition to a sustainable present and future. Delivering on the 17 SDGs requires significant human and infrastructure investment. Yet many subnational

# ...A LOCAL REALITY

governments are not able to raise the required finance and investment. More than USD 1 trillion is missing each year for urgently needed urban investments. **The needs for the coming decades amount to at least several trillion dollars.**

The five ICLEI pathways towards sustainable development, with their integrated approach, carry the aims of the SDGs and the global agendas, and they are excellent enablers for cities to find entry points for localizing SDGs

in their jurisdictions in the pursuit of sustainability and overall quality of life.

By aligning implementation with the SDGs' underpinning principles, properly embedded in policy, as well as institutional and regulatory frameworks, we can collectively accelerate progress towards the vision of the 2030 Agenda and show that multilateral and in-country cooperation can solve the urgent, intertwined global challenges. The remaining years leading to 2030 must be a turning point.

## ZERO EMISSION DEVELOPMENT

*By promoting low-carbon technologies, sustainable energy and mobility, local governments can contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions while improving urban quality of life.*



## EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Prioritizing social inclusion and economic opportunities for all is fundamental to ensuring that climate action benefits vulnerable populations.*



## NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

*Emphasizing green and blue infrastructure and biodiversity conservation by mainstreaming biodiversity and nature-based solutions, and thereby help cities and regions contribute to global biodiversity and ecosystem restoration goals of living in harmony with nature.*



## CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT

*Circular economy practices in cities not only reduce resource consumption and waste but also mitigate emissions through sustainable production and consumption patterns.*



## RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

*Building resilient communities and infrastructure safeguards against climate impacts while fostering sustainable development.*







# EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT



**Equitable development** seeks to foster just, inclusive and happy communities in line with the goals of the UN 2030 Agenda. Equitable development addresses the systemic and historical causes of injustice and exclusion by identifying and acting on power imbalances, dismantling existing spatial, social and environmental inequalities, and preventing new and unintended patterns of inequality and exclusion from arising because of environmental solutions. Equitable development also safeguards the natural support systems for human life, ensuring that the natural and built environment in and around our communities improves livability, safety, and health. This pathway acknowledges the diversity of local and regional conditions and the critical importance of taking community-led approaches as a means of addressing diverse needs, challenges and aspirations. Finally, equitable development values trust, care, transparency and solidarity as the foundation for local and regional environmental action.

## ICLEI'S GLOBAL OFFERING FOR EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Malmö Commitment is among ICLEI's global offerings for local and regional governments that embeds social equity at the core of local sustainable development. The initiative gathers local and regional governments that commit to this urban transformation following a four-step process: identify the challenges, monitor social equity indicators, report the progress and enhance the effort taken through neighboring communities. Globally, ICLEI also offers policy strategies, technical specialists and capacity building to local and regional governments on equity and inclusion in planning, resilience and adaptation, multilevel governance and cooperation, sustainable mobility and freight, circular development, procurement, digitalization, sustainable energy, energy access, and urban systems.

## ICLEI'S EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT IN 2024

**79** Equitable Development Activities

*where Equitable Development is the primary pathway*



**650+** from **38**

**cities, towns and regions**

**countries**

*involved in the activities*





## TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE ICLEI NETWORK WILL:

- Protect the fundamental rights of all to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. We recognize the potential for sustainability interventions to have unintended consequences that can perpetuate inequality and unjust systems and will actively endeavor to mitigate these risks.
- Pursue equitable access to resources and services for all by establishing climate-resilient infrastructure systems that provide affordable and proximate access to clean water, safe sanitation, nutritious food, sustainable energy, and internet. To promote community health and wellbeing, we will plan for and facilitate integrated settlements that ensure quality healthcare, education, housing, clean air, productive soils and access to dignified livelihoods. We will ensure that all residents have proximate access to green amenities and support the role of culture, heritage, and spirituality as a vital aspect of achieving sustainable urban development.
- Prioritize policies, initiatives and public investments that support meaningful participation of residents, including marginalized groups, and strengthen the role of communities in implementing sustainable change. We acknowledge that all members of society are knowledge-bearers, and our decision-making processes will elevate and engage with multiple forms of knowledge and evidence, including those of indigenous peoples, residents, researchers, governments, community-led initiatives and civil society, artists, entrepreneurs, and more.
- Work closely with our community partners, including workers, unions and civil society, to enable a just transition for all. In the face of major shifts in our economies and labor markets, we will implement adapted and lifelong educational programs, which are needed to train our communities and allow them to thrive even in uncertain times.
- Promote peace, security and stability by acknowledging and working to reduce the social, economic and environmental determinants of shocks, stressors, conflict and migration. We will support policies and programs that actively reduce climate stressors that may lead or are causing climate migration and forced displacements. We will do so building on climate justice principles that address global systemic inequalities. We will welcome refugees and migrants as best as we are able and support them in finding safety, building comfortable and meaningful lives, and contributing to our urban cultures and economies.



- Advocate for a just, accessible and sustainable energy system for all, particularly those who may be adversely affected by the transition, such as those facing a lack of energy access, energy poverty or precarious livelihoods, women, and the elderly.
- Adopt people-centered mobility approaches and solutions by promoting a just mobility transition that places at the center road safety, just access to urban mobility, fair and dignified transport jobs and climate-friendly and just mobility companies.
- Embrace gender mainstreaming approaches in our policy-making and recognize intersectional and gender-specific vulnerabilities. We will prioritize intergenerational dialogue and learning between youth, adults and elderly, benefiting both from the energy, knowledge and urgency of youth in driving change and the precious knowledge, experience and wisdom of elders. We will ensure the formal participation of youth in decision-making at the subnational level, and support young leaders to grow and contribute to improving and safeguarding their societies and their futures.





**Zero Emission Development** supports achieving climate neutrality across the local territory and for government operations and infrastructure through integrated climate action. Zero emission development follows a clear roadmap to achieve net-zero greenhouse gasses (including short-lived climate pollutants) and resilience through localized solutions for mitigation and the sustainable energy transition, prioritizing a people-centered and just transition. This is enabled through accessing blended finance and using innovative finance mechanisms to secure the necessary support and investment.

## ICLEI'S GLOBAL OFFERING FOR ZERO EMISSION DEVELOPMENT

Globally, the ICLEI GreenClimateCities™ Program and the Climate Neutrality Framework support integrated climate action (combining climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation). Guidance and tools, including regional and national offerings, such as ClearPath and HEATplus, with global support such as the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories (GPC), help frame how to accelerate climate action and the local sustainable energy transition. Progress can be tracked over time through CDP-ICLEI Track, the world's leading climate reporting platform and progress accountability mechanism for subnational territories. These ICLEI initiatives support local and regional governments to also achieve their commitments to many other initiatives, including the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM), the UN Race to Zero campaign and WWF's One Planet City Challenge.

## ICLEI'S ZERO EMISSION DEVELOPMENT IN 2024

**223** Zero Emission Development Activities

where Zero Emission Development is the primary pathway

**2500** from **105**

cities, towns and regions involved in the activities

Through ICLEI's TAP project pipeline, the ICLEI network submitted local priority climate infrastructure projects seeking the investment of

**1.9** billion euro



## TO ACHIEVE ZERO EMISSION DEVELOPMENT, THE ICLEI NETWORK WILL:

- Drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all our governmental and community-scale activities in all sectors, working with our residents, businesses and industries. We commit to implement the Paris Climate Agreement goal and stay on track to limit temperature increase to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels. With the goal to achieve climate neutrality in our communities and governmental infrastructure and operations, we will set science-based targets for 2030 or sooner, including a fair share approach —taking responsibility, enhancing transparency and accountability in our approach.
- Significantly reduce all environmentally harmful pollutants, including air, noise and light pollution, from energy, transport, water, waste and food systems, and the built environment.
- Strive to provide access to affordable, reliable, clean, secure and modern energy critical for our communities' well-being and livelihoods —aiming for 100% renewables and divestment from fossil fuels. We commit to tackle energy poverty, and ensure that our sustainable energy transition is context-specific, socially-sensitive, and nature-conscious, and therefore just and inclusive.
- Reduce energy losses, inefficiencies and intensity through measures such as digitalization, modal shifts, and behavioral change. Investments in sustainable energy infrastructure, including grids and storage technologies, will be ramped up.
- Equip ourselves to access finance from traditional and innovative sources and account for our own climate budgeting.
- Recognizing the power of local and regional purchasing, direct our sustainable public procurement towards services, technologies, infrastructure, and businesses that support the transformation towards net-zero emissions.
- Implement sustainable urban mobility and logistics plans that prioritize zero emissions and multimodal transport for people and goods.
- Advocate for effective whole-of-government and whole-of-society collaboration, good governance and partnership, to coordinate and cooperate, from planning to implementation, with annual reporting for ambitious climate action.

# NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT



**Nature-based development** fosters the restoration of our broken connection with nature and the planet while respecting and enhancing biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems in and around our cities to create more resilient cities and regions where people can live in harmony with nature. Ecosystems form the bedrock of our local economies and play a crucial role in supporting the social integrity, wellbeing and resilience of our communities.

## ICLEI'S GLOBAL OFFERING FOR NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

Globally, ICLEI offers local and regional governments a broad portfolio of tools and supportive services through our team of skilled and dynamic biodiversity and urban development experts, which embeds the values of *'living from, with, in and as nature.'* We seek local solutions and promote innovation and nature-oriented decision-making to address the complex issues surrounding natural capital, biodiversity loss and ecosystem services degradation in a rapidly urbanizing world. CitiesWithNature and RegionsWithNature, a joint partnership initiative between ICLEI, UNEP, IUCN, WWF and numerous other collaborative partners, offer a global platform where cities and regions have access to and can share tools, best practices and resources to guide them in their journey to reconnect and make peace with nature by becoming places where people can thrive and live from, with, in and as nature.

## ICLEI'S NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT IN 2024

**45** Nature-based Development Activities

where Nature-based Development is the primary pathway

**235** from **65**

cities, towns and regions involved in the activities

## TO ACHIEVE NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT, THE ICLEI NETWORK WILL:

- Deploy inspirational, ambitious whole-of-government and whole-of-society initiatives that prioritize creating healthy local environments that respect, protect and nurture our air, water, soil, food and systems that sustain life and health.

# NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT



- Unlock new economic opportunities in our jurisdictions by mainstreaming biodiversity and building our own capacity in planning, budgeting and decision-making processes, applying nature-based solutions (including green and blue infrastructure options), restoring ecosystems, promoting ecological connectivity, and generating resources for reforestation actions, ecosystem restoration, water conservation, protected areas, and the implementation of other effective area-based conservation measures.
- Advocate for cities and regions engagement on the CitiesWithNature and RegionsWithNature online platforms to share, connect, pioneer and learn together in our journey with nature to reshape our cities and regions for today, for future generations and all life on earth; and to report and monitor progress against their commitments to the global biodiversity targets and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) on these two platforms.
- Prioritize the responsible management and conservation of water resources, ensuring access to clean and safe water for all residents.
- Work towards establishing local food systems that prioritize the production of healthy, sustainable, and locally sourced food, promote the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of soil biodiversity, and implement system-wide food policies through multilevel cooperation.
- While acting on the urgent need to transition to sustainable energy sources, prioritize projects that have the least impact on nature and biodiversity, strive to integrate both where possible, and avoid the missteps of fossil-fuel-based energy systems from the past.
- Strengthen our engagement in biodiversity-related Conventions to voice cities' and regions' commitments to the achievement of global biodiversity targets.
- Encourage cities and regions to adopt and implement a One Health approach, as advocated by the World Health Organization and recognized in several Convention on Biological Diversity decisions, in planning and decision-making by recognizing that human health and well-being are intrinsically linked to the health and well-being of the planet.





**Circular development** transitions from our current linear economic model of 'take, make, waste' and moves to an economy where infrastructure, products, components, materials, and nutrients are maintained at their highest value for as long as possible. This systemic approach supports a sustainable urban environment by minimizing resource consumption and waste production while creating opportunities to unlock economic value and growth, increase social equity and responsibility, and enhance the natural environment.

## ICLEI'S GLOBAL OFFERING FOR CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT

ICLEI Circulars is our global platform for cities and regions and revolves around the five R's of our Circular Cities Action Framework: Rethink, Regenerate, Reduce, Reuse, and Recover. We offer cities and regions in different stages of their circular journey relevant technical support, training and knowledge to enter or accelerate their transition to becoming a circular city or region while advocating for the rights of cities and subnational in international fora, such as the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (Global Plastics Treaty).

## ICLEI'S CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT IN 2024

**41** Circular Development Activities

where Circular Development is the primary pathway



**135** from **35**  
cities, towns and regions  
involved in the activities

involved in the activities



## TO ACHIEVE CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT, THE ICLEI NETWORK WILL:

- Embed circularity in our governmental mandates and integrate circularity approaches into existing policies, strategies, plans and procurement processes. We will make use of initial assessments, understanding data gaps, scaling interventions and gaining access to finance for feasible circular interventions, including policy development and implementation.
- Grow the number of cities, towns and regions engaging in circular development strategies and deepen the engagement of those already doing circular development.
- Engage with our own city departments, businesses, community organizations and other stakeholders to ensure access to quality resources and services while creating local jobs, innovation and inclusive prosperity.
- Actively support entrepreneurs through guidance, incubation and platforms that facilitate active communication with policymakers.
- Contribute towards moving to a more equitable society by ensuring a just transition for society at large, specifically for industries that could be negatively impacted by the transition to circularity.
- Foster innovation, sustainability, and the advancement of circular economy principles within our policy landscape by collaborating with private sector partners to allow us to contribute to enabling regulatory environments at the local level.
- Advocate for local and regional governments' role in global sustainability processes relating to circular development and the circular economy, promoting the need for multilevel governance and including policies for implementation and financing at the local and regional levels.



**Resilient development** anticipates, prevents, absorbs and recovers from shocks and stresses, in particular those brought about by rapid environmental, technological, social and demographic change, and improves essential basic response structures and functions. Resilient development makes adaptation and risk-prevention a core part of all municipal strategies and prepares for new risks and impacts, taking into account the rights and needs of vulnerable sections of our society. Resilient development continuously strengthens essential systems through a transparent and inclusive approach that enhances trust in public institutions. Resilient development also aims to diminish socioeconomic inequality and urban risk by facilitating effective, targeted, and interconnected actions addressing both objectives simultaneously. The core strategy involves elevating ambition for climate and disaster risk action planning in cities to mobilize a diverse set of stakeholders for concerted action.

## ICLEI'S GLOBAL OFFERING FOR RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

Globally, ICLEI offers our resilience methodology and tools for local and regional governments and is a proud partner of UNDRR's flagship Making Cities Resilient 2030 campaign, which supports local and regional governments in the design and implementation of resilient-oriented actions and activities. These initiatives support local and regional governments to join the UN Race to Resilience campaign and other partner initiatives by ensuring the completion of a community-wide Risk and Vulnerability (R&V) Assessment in place that encourages the integration of adaptation and resilience principles in urban planning. As co-lead on the Human Settlements Task Force under the Sharm el Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, ICLEI contributes to reporting progress and achieving outcome targets for building the resilience of 4 billion people by 2030.

## ICLEI'S RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN 2024

**80** Resilient Development Activities

where Resilient Development is the primary pathway

**158** from **32**

cities, towns and regions

involved in the activities



## TO ACHIEVE RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT, THE ICLEI NETWORK WILL:

- Build and contribute to resilient, inclusive and gender-sensitive, zero emissions, and nature-oriented cities, towns and regions through an integrated approach to enhance climate and urban risk management.
- Improve our own capacity for urban planning and implementation to strengthen our essential systems, including in government operations and on community level, to prevent, absorb and recover from shocks, stresses, and unforeseen changes, alleviating the burden on people and the environment.
- Promote the adoption of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions in urban development projects to enhance resilience and reduce environmental impacts.
- Foster improved forecast and infrastructure integrated land use to increase prevention, set priorities for transport in the case of emergency, including more autonomous non-fossil fuel-reliant options, decentralize recovery strategies to local communities and businesses, and integrate technology with disaster prevention and response plans.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including meteorological agencies and research institutions, to enhance early warning systems and improve forecasting capabilities for climate-related hazards.
- Support the deployment of innovative technologies to improve the monitoring and management of critical infrastructure and services.
- Promote capacity-building and training, specifically focused on gender-sensitive and inclusive urban planning and management practices.
- Foster community engagement and participatory decision-making processes for resilience in urban planning and disaster management and strengthen partnerships with academic institutions and research organizations to conduct evaluations and assessments of resilience initiatives, ensuring evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement.



# GLOBAL ADVOCACY FOR OUR SHARED INTERESTS






# GLOBAL ADVOCACY FOR OUR SHARED INTERESTS

ICLEI has been working for more than thirty years to continually reinforce the collective power of cities, towns and regions and work together with all levels of government to bring sustainability home.

ICLEI undertakes these advocacy efforts nationally and multilaterally with over 50 advocacy and diplomacy experts in every ICLEI regional secretariat and country office.

 *ICLEI advocates for using multilevel action and urbanization to achieve just and sustainable development. We believe that multilevel cooperation and partnership can significantly address the simultaneous crises of climate, nature and pollution and that it is one of the most effective routes to reach global sustainability.*

By actively engaging in global decision-making processes, ICLEI aims to shape agreements for the interests of our network as well as develop specific pathways, partnerships and programs for rapid implementation of the global agreements.

To attain the successful delivery of the 2030 goals, the United Nations is accelerating its efforts and reforms for inclusive and transparent decision-making as well as effective, efficient and impactful sustainable development. The 2023 SDG Summit

particularly resulted in several UN-wide transformative initiatives, including localization. In the remaining years of Agenda 2030, ICLEI will engage actively in the global sustainability governance by advancing inclusive multilateralism in an enhanced United Nations system and other intergovernmental fora.

To fulfill these promises, ICLEI is working across four distinct advocacy channels to elevate the contributions, needs and challenges of local and regional governments.

## LEADING ADVOCACY FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE GLOBAL CLIMATE, BIODIVERSITY AND DESERTIFICATION AGENDAS

At the Earth Summit in 1992, nine stakeholder groups—including local authorities—were designated as essential partners in implementing the global sustainability agenda, particularly in the Rio Conventions focusing on climate (UNFCCC), biodiversity (CBD) and desertification (UNCCD). The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency (LGMA) comprises networks of local and regional governments and has served as the voice of cities and regions, achieving advocacy success for multilevel action in the climate, nature, and desertification processes.

ICLEI holds a special role in this space, acting as the LGMA Focal Point. Through concerted leadership within the LGMA community in the past 30 years, we have secured wins in multiple climate COP outcomes, including specific references to multilevel action and urbanization throughout the negotiated outcomes, voluntary outcomes, official agendas and stated priorities of the climate COPs since our last strategic vision in 2021. These include clear references to multilevel action in the negotiated outcomes of the COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact and then COP28 United Arab Emirates Consensus. Voluntary initiatives that have been strongly supported by various COP presidencies include Cities Race-to-Resilience in 2021; SURGe in 2022; and the Coalition for High

Ambition Multi-level Partnerships (CHAMP) in 2023. ICLEI has been instrumental in giving cities, towns and regions a voice in the COP proceedings by supporting the inclusion of the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change in the official agenda, the Local Climate Action Summit at COP28, and by mobilizing and organizing the Multilevel Action and Urbanization Pavilion at COP26, COP27 and COP28. COP28 was particularly ground-breaking for multilevel cooperation - powerful references to multilevel action in the outcomes of COP28 mean that national governments should enable all subnational governments to step up integrated climate action, to achieve sustainable, equitable and resilient development. The ICLEI network is prepared to support national governments' inclusion of multilevel action in the next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to raise their level of ambition.

We are also advancing our network's interests in the biodiversity space. ICLEI has a long history of advocating for the ambitions of cities and regions and has since 2008 convened successful Summits of Cities and Regions as official parallel events to the CBD COPs. ICLEI's advocacy efforts have also contributed to an increasing number of decisions being adopted by the Parties at the CBD COPs that recognize the role and contributions of local and subnational governments towards the implementation of the CBD, global biodiversity targets and National Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Since 2008 more than 20 such decisions have been adopted by



the Parties. At COP10, held in Nagoya in 2010, the first dedicated Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity was adopted. COP15, held in Montréal in 2022, was a historic milestone for our constituency, endorsing our key role in contributing to implementation of the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). This strong support was evident in the adoption of a stronger and more ambitious decision and plan of action to engage subnational and local governments in the implementation of GBF. This decision also recognizes CitiesWithNature (CWN) and RegionsWithNature (RWN) as the platform where cities and regions will monitor and report on their voluntary commitments to national and global biodiversity targets and for including such contributions into National Reports. In addition, various COP15 decisions, as well as the GBF, include references recognizing the role of subnational and local governments and, for the first time, a target that is specifically directed at local governments. The Nagoya and Montreal plans of action are significant as they include a mechanism for multilevel governance through the establishment of advisory committees and a global partnership that is unique among the three Rio Conventions.

Under the UNCCD, ICLEI is particularly focusing on linking the land degradation and drought to climate and biodiversity targets.

### **ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GLOBAL TASK FORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND ADVANCING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

In the last twelve years, the United Nations system has continued to expand its collaboration with local and regional governments to other processes from social and economic development to migration, all linking back to sustainable development. Local and regional governments now engage in processes including the UN Environment Assembly, the UN-Habitat Assembly and the High-Level Political Forum. ICLEI supports our constituency's interests and enhances the global visibility of local and regional governments through strategic partnerships across these processes.

Together with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), ICLEI is a founding partner of the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments as the umbrella mechanism for subnational advocacy in these areas.

Additionally, many UN programs, agencies and Convention Secretariats work closely with ICLEI to help drive their practical work on sustainable urban development. These partnerships include UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNDRR, FAO, WHO, and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and the UN Regional Commissions.

### **ENGAGEMENT IN GLOBAL POLITICAL AGENDAS TO ELEVATE MULTILEVEL SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES**

The decision-making in much of the United Nations system depends on consensus and trust-building, which can also happen in non-UN arenas. In fact, mechanisms outside the United Nations system – such as the G7 and G20 – are more flexible in terms of diplomatic procedures and can help nations understand areas for partnership and alignment. ICLEI actively engages in these processes to support multilevel dialogue and collaboration.

### **ADVOCACY AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS AND ENHANCING DIRECT ACCESS TO FINANCE**

The decisions and agreements at the United Nations can impact action only as long as they are embraced at the national level and translate into funding for implementation. ICLEI builds specific relations and partnerships with national and regional and supra-national bodies, such as the European Union, African Union, Forum of Pan-Amazonian Cities, as well as Multilateral Development Banks and other financing institutions.





# CONCLUSION





# CONCLUSION

## Sustainable development is the only viable way forward in today's world

We will deliver visionary leadership and political support to accelerate action on sustainable development worldwide. We will lead by example, share our knowledge openly and speak with a united voice. We will create lasting mechanisms for change that make sustainability a permanent framework, informing all development decisions. This global imperative is vulnerable to political shifts at any moment – and we need durable forces to carry us forward.

The ICLEI Strategic Vision 2024-2030 provides strategic orientation for the comprehensive planning and implementation of sustainability actions at any scale by the ICLEI Members, irrespective of size, region, level of government, or whether a model of local sustainable development is either already in place or will soon be implemented. It lays out how ICLEI will leverage our collective strengths as a network to advance sustainable urban development at all levels of impact in an era in which local, regional, and national governments will continue to advance urgent action on climate, energy, nature, land and health, to create inclusive, safe, resilient and thriving communities despite a continued rise of new and unprecedented sustainability challenges.

The concrete initiatives that ICLEI will undertake to achieve this Strategic Vision are detailed in our [digital ICLEI Action Plan 2024-2027](#) and constitutes a compendium of programs, projects, initiatives, research, tools, methodologies, partnerships, events, capacity building and advocacy actions. The compendium is a living list showcasing how those activities directly support ICLEI Members in creating and enriching their own sustainable development action plans.

Our journey has been marked by significant milestones, reflective of our shared commitment to environmental stewardship and social equity. The efforts of ICLEI Members have not only mitigated environmental impacts but also enhanced the quality of life for their residents. These initiatives, grounded in the principles of sustainability and inclusivity, exemplify our network's capacity to lead by example.

Yet, the path ahead remains fraught with challenges. The specter of global insecurity, the stark realities of the climate change and biodiversity crises, and the deepening divide of inequality call for a renewed sense of purpose and urgency.

In these trying times, the strength of our network—our unity in diversity—becomes our most valuable asset. Together, we possess the collective wisdom, resources, and determination to navigate these complexities. Our collaborative efforts amplify our impact, turning individual actions into a powerful chorus for change.

As we step into the next chapter, let us do so with hope and determination. The challenges we face are daunting, but the opportunities for positive change are immense. By fostering collaboration, embracing innovation, and remaining committed to our shared values, we can achieve our vision of sustainable, resilient, and inclusive cities, towns and regions around the world. Together, we will continue to lead the way, using the power of our network in this changing world to forge a path to true sustainability.



*The challenges we face are daunting, but the opportunities for positive change are immense. Together, we will continue to lead the way, using the power of our network in this changing world to forge a path to true sustainability.*





