

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ICLEI World Congress 2024 in São Paulo demonstrates the collective power of cities and regions to address sustainability

Over 1,500 urban leaders from 96 countries addressed critical issues on climate action and urban resilience, setting the stage for city and region significance at COP30 in Belém, Brazil in 2025

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São Paulo, Brazil / Bonn, Germany (24 June 2024) – Organized by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and hosted by the City of São Paulo, the ICLEI World Congress 2024 brought together over 1,500 global urban leaders to address critical issues in local climate and resilience action, multilevel governance, and the unique role of the Amazon region in global sustainability. The event marked significant strides in sustainable urban development and set the stage for COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, Mayor of Malmö, Sweden and newly elected ICLEI President, said: *"ICLEI is a strong global force and an important network that gives voice to the cities globally. Cities stand for 70% of the greenhouse gas emissions, and it is within the cities a lot of climate adaptation has to be done. The transition cannot be sustainable if it's not affordable. We need to put people at the center of our work, including the situation for women globally. It has been truly empowering to meet face to face at the World Congress in São Paulo and feel the force of the entire ICLEI movement. We are now more determined and inspired to get the work done."*

Gino Van Begin, ICLEI Secretary General, said: *The ICLEI World Congress is a chance to show the power of our network of over 2,600 local and regional governments committed to sustainability. As a result of the Congress, ICLEI is set to*

initiate more than 300 programs, projects, and initiatives over the next three years, with a total investment of \$100 million to bolster its Members' sustainability efforts. Our network exists to serve these forward-thinking local and regional governments, and I'm so proud to see what they have been able to accomplish and to use the ICLEI World Congress as a moment to bolster those partnerships and commitments."

Rodrigo de Oliveira Perpétuo, Regional Director of ICLEI South America Secretariat, said: *"This was a great Congress with a clear call to action. We had more than 1,500 attendees from over 95 countries, and more than 100 mayors delivering hope, and a big, great call to action to do this work together."*

Mohamed Sefiani, Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco and newly elected ICLEI Vice President, said: *"I have been so inspired by the leadership that I see in our ICLEI cities, towns and regions. I am inspired by their unflinching efforts to understand sustainability in their contexts, by their determination to take direct action to improve the lives of their people and by their passion to work together with boldness and tenacity, facing the immense challenges head on. This Congress aimed to transform commitments into action, and the action I have seen has been remarkable – urgent, decisive action being taken across all levels of government to foster resilience, address systemic inequities and harness innovation. However, it is essential that, as an ICLEI community, we work hard to unlock finance at the city scale in order to scale up these actions to achieve the level of transformative change that we need."*

The ICLEI World Congress was the main event of the São Paulo Urban Summit, a week full of activities that highlight the fundamental role of cities. As Brazil officially assumes the presidency of the G20, replacing India, Brazilian cities will lead the U20, elevating the voices of urban centers at the heart of the G20 economies. The week also included the Metropolis Board of Directors Meeting, further reinforcing the importance of cities on the global stage.

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. ICLEI President Makes Debut in New Role

The Congress welcomed ICLEI's [newly elected](#) President, Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, Mayor of Malmö, who presented the organization's Strategic Vision 2024-2030, presenting ambitious goals and pathways to enhance urban sustainability globally.

2. ICLEI's Strategic Vision 2024-2030 Release

[*The Power of Our Network in a Changing World*](#) - ICLEI's strategic vision for the next three years - sets a way towards the transformation to sustainable development. This vision, set forth in the voice of the local and regional governments of the ICLEI network, creates a picture of what is needed for a truly sustainable urban world.

3. ICLEI Gender Declaration announced

ICLEI's new [Gender Declaration](#) marks a significant commitment to embedding gender equity into the organization's core mission. This declaration will serve as a guiding framework for ICLEI's network of over 2,500 local and regional governments, focusing on empowering women, addressing gender-specific challenges, and fostering inclusive governance and planning. The announcement highlighted the critical need for gender-responsive urban planning to ensure equitable benefits for all genders, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and equitable urban development practices.

4. Urban Infrastructure Insurance Facility Project (UIIF) announced first seven city signatories

The Urban Infrastructure Insurance Facility (UIIF) was launched to enhance urban resilience against natural hazards with innovative insurance solutions. [Seven cities from Mexico, Brazil, Jamaica, and Honduras—Curitiba, Porto Alegre, Recife, Reynosa, Mérida, Tegucigalpa, and Kingston—are the first to join.](#) Funded by KfW Development Bank on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), UIIF helps cities measure risks and provides tailored insurance solutions. This initiative is vital for mitigating natural disaster disruptions and fostering sustainable urban development in Latin America and the Caribbean, setting a global example for urban leaders.

5. Cities and Regions Biodiversity Summit announced for the Biodiversity COP in Cali, Colombia

[The 8th Summit for Subnational Governments and Cities, an official parallel event to Convention on Biological Diversity COP16, will take place on 26 October 2024 in the Blue Zone at the CBD COP in Cali,](#) and is part of a 3-day program from 25-27 October. Announced by ICLEI and the City of Cali at the Congress, the Summit will continue a proud tradition, being the eighth such event since the first Summit convened 14 years ago.

6. 100% Renewables Roadmap Project launched three 100% renewable roadmaps

ICLEI, in collaboration with the governments of Avellaneda (Argentina), Kisumu County (Kenya), and West Nusa Tenggara Province (Indonesia), [unveiled tailored roadmaps to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2050](#). These customized plans, adapted to each region's specific needs and resources, highlight the proactive leadership of cities and regions in the global energy transition. The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

7. Call to national associations of local governments to support CHAMP and multilevel climate action

Mayor Katja Dörner, City of Bonn, Germany, and chair of the Climate Action Governance Portfolio for ICLEI's Global Executive Committee [announced a call-to-action](#) inviting all ICLEI leaders to proactively approach their national governments and national associations of local governments for multilevel NDCs by 2025, building on COP28 outcomes and CHAMP initiative, COP28's Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships for Climate Action, which has been signed by 72 countries and is an effort intended to enhance cooperation with subnational governments in financing, implementation, and the monitoring of climate strategies. Leaders were also invited to report their progress at the annual Daring Cities Forum. This followed an announcement on the first day of the Congress that [Frente Nacional de Prefeitas e Prefeitos \(FNP\) - Brazil's national association of cities - released a letter of commitment \(PT\) in which mayors pledged their support for CHAMP](#). This was followed by a [similar resolution by the United States Conference of Mayors later in the week](#).

8. ICLEI and Climate Bonds Initiative partner to boost sustainable development projects

ICLEI and the Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI) announced [a strategic partnership within the framework of the Transformative Actions Program \(TAP\)](#). This collaboration aims to catalyze sustainable development by linking high-impact subnational climate projects with essential financial resources and expertise.

9. New Climate Compliance Partnerships

ICLEI launched partnerships with the governments of Piauí and São Sepé (RS) for Climate Compliance plans, and with Itabirito (MG) for a Climate Compliance plan.

These partnerships aim to develop comprehensive strategies ensuring climate resilience and adherence to international climate standards, advancing ICLEI's mission to foster sustainable urban development.

10. Youth Manifesto launched at the Opening Ceremony

The launch of the Youth Manifesto took place at the opening ceremony of the World Congress with the presence of Darlisson Ramos (Original Communities in the Amazon) and Henrique Barbosa (Instituição A Vida no Cerrado). The document, prepared by young people from different institutions and volunteers, aims to promote a just transition, which prioritizes safeguarding human rights and promoting the political autonomy of young people with recommendations and actions for local governments and society in general. It implores local and regional governments to fulfill their responsibilities and cooperate to achieve sustainable, low-emission and climate-resilient development in their territories and globally, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement with the priority of safeguarding human rights and promoting the political autonomy of young people.

11. ICLEI-Kaohsiung Smart and Net Zero Cities Community

The City of Kaohsiung announced a new partnership with ICLEI to host a community of practice for net zero cities for cities that are committed to a net zero by 2050 goal.

12. ICLEI – IFRC coastal cities initiative kick-off

Building on a [global partnership announced at COP28](#), ICLEI and IFRC kicked off development of a coastal cities initiative for the Asia-Pacific, Africa and Latin America regions, to reduce risks for coastal cities and nurture resilience.

13. New contributors to the Local and Subnational Governments Coalition to end plastics pollution

In April 2024, with the Government of Quebec, Government of Catalonia, UCLG, and further partners, ICLEI [launched the Local and Subnational Governments Coalition to End Plastic Pollution](#). The purpose of the Coalition is to ensure that an ambitious but practical instrument is collectively shaped with local and subnational governments and ensures the participation and resourcing of local and subnational governments to contribute to ending plastic pollution. During the Congress, cities and subnational governments from five continents added their voice to the Coalition.

14. Brazilian National Urban Afforestation Plan announced

ICLEI, the Brazilian Ministry of Environment and INESC R&D Brazil, together with various Federal Universities and the Brazilian Society of Urban Afforestation signed a partnership that will be a significant milestone for urban afforestation in the country towards greener, more resilient, sustainable and healthier cities. Among many initiatives, they will collaborate in the preparation of the National Urban Afforestation Plan, in a participatory process involving various sectors of society, to expand biodiversity and ecosystem services in Brazilian cities.

15. A growing network of local and regional governments

Since June last year, 133 cities and regions have joined ICLEI. While in São Paulo Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality decided to join ICLEI, making the city the very first new ICLEI Member emanating from the Congress.

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FURTHER DETAILS

For additional information and content, please refer to the following links:

- [Full Congress program](#)
- Plenary session recordings
 - [Opening Ceremony](#) | [The Power of a Network](#) | [Our Changing World](#) | [Amazonian cities, unique and irreplaceable](#) | [From global to local to global](#) | [Accelerating forward: Mapping our path to 2030](#)
- Daily Mailers (featuring event highlights, quotes, and further insights):
 - [The ICLEI World Congress 2024 starts today!](#)
 - [The ICLEI World Congress 2024 | Day 1 Recap](#)
 - [The ICLEI World Congress 2024 | Day 2 Recap](#)
 - [The ICLEI World Congress 2024 | Day 3 Recap](#)
 - [The ICLEI World Congress 2024 | Day 4 Recap](#)
- Event Photo Gallery (Photo credit: ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability)
- Daily Highlight Videos: [Day 1](#) | [Day 2](#) | [Day 3](#) | Day 4

Media Information

A media page with the most recent press announcements, media contact, media assets, and further updates is available at <https://worldcongress.iclei.org/media/>.

The official Media Partners of the event include [TheMayor.EU](#), [STIR](#), [All Things Urban](#), [Iklim Haber](#), [ekoIQ](#), [Impakter](#), and the [World Architecture Community](#).

NOTE TO EDITORS

About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (known as "ICLEI") is a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. Our Members and team of experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability.

For more information, please visit: <https://iclei.org/>

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