From Paris to Belém

A Decade of Local Climate Leadership

Foreword

Anne Hidalgo

Mayor of Paris

Ten years ago, in this very city, we made history. The Paris Agreement represented a global turning point—but it also marked the rise of a new kind of climate leadership: local, bold, and deeply rooted in the everyday lives of people. From the start, cities have shown that the climate crisis can be tackled in ways that create jobs, improve public health, enhance public services, and build stronger communities. Today, I am proud to see that what began as an ambitious gathering at Hôtel de Ville has grown into a global movement of more than 13,000 cities. As we look toward COP30 in Belém, we must reaffirm what the past decade has proven: empowering cities is not optional—it is essential to achieving the Paris goals.

Laurence Tubiana

CEO, European Climate Foundation

Frances Climate Change Ambassador and Special Representative for COP21

The Paris Agreement was designed to be a framework for deep societal transformation—not a finish line, but a launching pad. Ten years on, the climate crisis has only grown more urgent. The latest science is clear: we are not on track to meet our global targets. To change course, we need exponential climate action this decade. That means phasing out fossil fuels, scaling renewables, increasing energy efficiency, and delivering finance where it is needed most. Cities and regions are already leading this charge. With CHAMP, we now have a more formal mechanism to embed subnational leadership into national plans. The next chapter begins in Belém—and it must be one of accelerated, inclusive, multilevel action.

Michael R. Bloomberg

UN Special Envoy on Climate Ambition and Solutions

Founder, Bloomberg Philanthropies

Mayor of New York City (2002–2013)

For many years, climate change was generally thought of as a problem for national governments to solve alone, from the top down. But mayors looked at the challenge the other way around: from the bottom up. Mayors have long understood that fighting climate change, growing the economy, and improving public health all go hand-in-hand – and since the Paris Agreement was signed ten years ago, local governments have continued to make enormous strides forward. Mayors have passed ambitious policies to cut greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, while creating new jobs and making communities more resilient to extreme weather. In doing so, they've shown why national governments must look to cities as partners in achieving the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. The next phase of the fight against climate change depends on strengthening those partnerships, and this report outlines important steps we can take. The road to success runs through cities – and the more we work together, the faster we'll make progress.

Looking back at Paris

As world leaders gathered in Paris at COP21 in 2015, global emissions were already approaching 53 gigatons of CO_2 equivalent ($GtCO_2e$) and were forecast to rise 16% by 2030. The impacts of climate change were also increasingly being felt, with deadly flooding, record-breaking heat waves and wildfires, worsening air quality, and water scarcity – threatening the lives and livelihoods of millions around the world. It was in this context that the Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21, to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

While climate change is a global problem, it has local solutions.

In 2015, cities were home to nearly 55% of the global population and responsible for three-quarters of global emissions. Yet it was in cities, where vulnerable groups faced the worst impacts of the climate crisis, that a movement for change began.

To address the scale of the problem and drive real impact through climate action, Mike Bloomberg and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo convened the Climate Summit for Local Leaders for mayors, governors, and local leaders at COP21 in 2015 – the largest-ever gathering of subnational stakeholders on climate change. It was there in Paris that more than 6,000 cities committed to the Compact of Mayors and the European Covenant of Mayors, pledging to make significant and ambitious commitments to meet the climate challenge and to track progress transparently.

Alongside this, 57 state and regional leaders committed to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050 through the Under2 Memorandum of Understanding and the Regions Adapt program was launched.

Together, these commitments by cities and regions were estimated to be able to deliver over half of the world's potential emissions reductions by 2020.

A decade of ambition

Since the Climate Summit for Local Leaders in Paris, major progress has been made by cities and regions to address climate change.

Before 2015, fewer than 100 local and regional governments had committed to ambitious 2030 targets.

The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM) was established the year after COP21 with a focus on helping cities make commitments, plan, act, track, and report transparently. GCoM is supported by a number of local, regional, and global city networks including ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

GCoM has now grown from the initial 6,000 signatories to include more than 13,700 cities and local governments, covering 6 continents and 147 countries, representing 1.2 billion people and more than 13% of the global population.

More than 8,000 GCoM signatories have completed emissions inventories and set emissions reductions targets. A 2021 analysis revealed that more than 75% of GCoM signatories set a more ambitious target than their respective national governments, and more than 50% aimed to achieve their targets faster – representing a crucial 'urban opportunity' to accelerate national climate action.

Meanwhile, the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) continues to support climate ambition in the world's largest megacities. 92 of the 97 global cities in the C40 network have a Paris compliant climate action plan, and 75% of C40 cities are cutting per capita emissions faster than their national governments, with average per capita emissions across C40 cities falling by 7.5% between 2015 and 2024.

Regions have also stepped up: members of the Under2 Coalition, such as California and Scotland, have set some of the world's most ambitious net zero targets—showing the power of state- and province-level climate governance. The Under2 Coalition has grown to over 170 members. Many of these members have the same GDP as small countries. Even beyond these formalized coalitions, more than ever city and regional leaders are demonstrating their accountability for delivering and integrating climate action across their jurisdictions.

COP28 saw an inflection point in delivering recognition to the critical role of cities and regions in shaping climate plans and policies. The COP28 Local Climate Action Summit brought together more than 500 mayors, governors, and local leaders, with the support of all subnational networks and partner organizations - including GCoM, C40, ICLEI, UCLG, Under2 Coalition, Regions4, UN-Habitat and others. The high-level opening of the summit took place during the COP28 World Climate Action Summit, where the COP28 Presidency and Bloomberg Philanthropies launched the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP), a new initiative endorsed by more than 70 national governments committed to working with subnational actors in the planning, financing, implementation, and monitoring of national climate plans and strategies, including the upcoming third generation of Nationally Determined Contributions.

Local Climate Action Summit (LCAS) Mayor and Governors (2023). © Bloomberg Philanthropies

It is clear that cities and regions have raised ambition over the last decade and built powerful platforms enabling inclusive climate action. Their leadership is proven, effective, and indispensable to meeting national and global climate goals. The next decade must fully empower this subnational leadership through integration within national planning, financing arrangements, and multilevel governance frameworks - including through breakthrough initiatives like CHAMP.

A decade of local climate momentum (2015–2024)

2015

COP21: Paris Agreement is adopted; Paris Climate Summit for Local Leaders convenes 1,000+ mayors; Launch of Under2 MoU and RegionsAdapt. more than 100 regional governments sign up to the Under2 Coalition by COP21

2016

GCoM is established; C40 releases Deadline 2020, a set of pathways on how C40 cities can meet the Paris Agreement ambition.

2018

Talanoa Dialogues formally include subnationals in NDC stocktaking; Cities and Climate Science Conference is convened in partnership with IPCC in Edmonton, Alberta; Mayors Migration Council (MMC) is launched, ensuring cities have a voice in global migration and climate frameworks.

2019

First Local Action Track at UN Climate Summit; GCoM launches Data4Cities initiative.

2021

More than 1,000 cities join the Cities Race to Zero and Cities Race to Resilience campaigns ahead of COP26 setting them on a pathway to reaching net-zero by 2050 and prioritize resilient and inclusive and resilient climate action; The Under2 MOU is updated to commit signatories to reach net zero emissions by 2050, at the latest.

2022

First-ever Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at COP27, where the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative is launched

2023

UN Secretary-General launches Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments, First Local Climate Action Summit (LCAS) during the COP28 World Leaders Summit, and launch of CHAMP with 70+ endorsing national governments; Historic Loss and Damage Fund decision calls for direct subnational access to finance.

2024

U20 Summit in Rio: G20 mayors call for US$800B/year for urban climate action by 2030; UNFCCC Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme (MWP) focused on cities, buildings, and urban systems.

Mitigation

Under the Paris Agreement, mitigation refers to efforts to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas emissions—primarily through energy, transport, buildings, land use, and industry. It is central to keeping global climate goals within reach.

Cities account for over 70% of global emissions and energy consumption. To achieve triple-win national pathways that enable domestic job growth, well-being, and alignment with the Paris Agreement goals, policies at the local and regional levels are crucial levers.

An analysis of city-level climate commitments and NDCs reveals that in CHAMP-endorsing countries, a set of cities have set short term targets that, if achieved, would close 37% of the gap between current NDCs and a Paris-aligned emissions reduction trajectory. The potential of local and regional action–spanning clean transport, buildings and energy systems, land use, and waste–is a critical driver of faster, more durable emission reductions.

GHG emissions (MtCO2e)
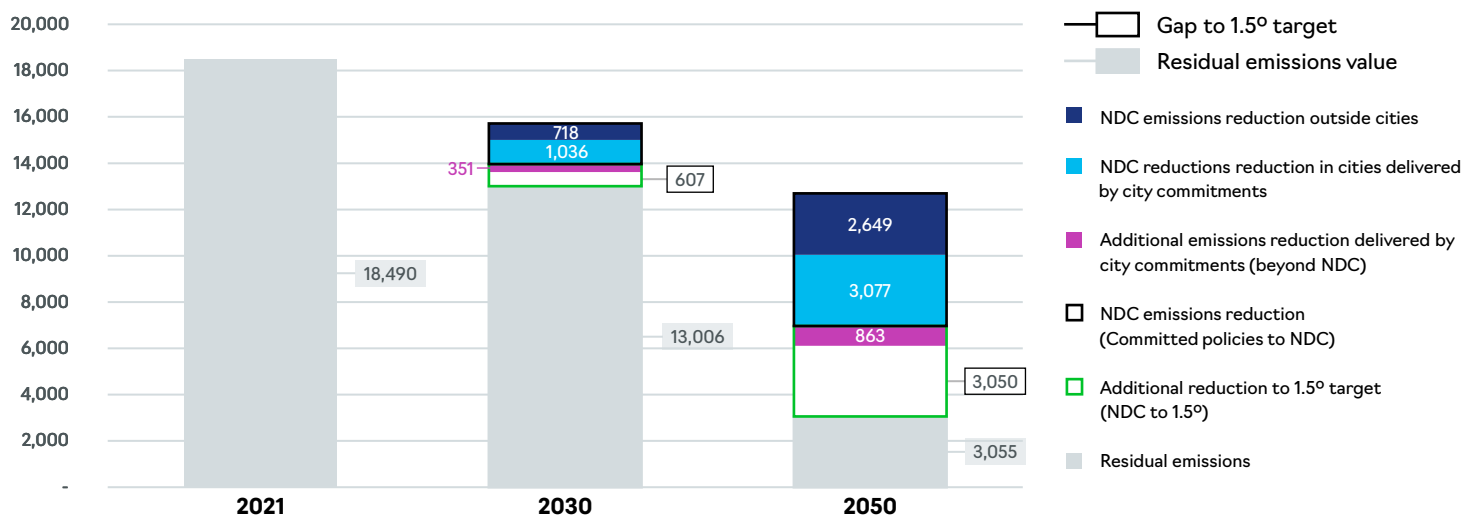
Modelling summary
This analysis is for 5982 cities in CHAMP, representing an urban population of 1785m. The model includes 12686 near-term GHG targets up to 2030 and 865 long-term GHG targets up to 2050. The underlying GCoM dataset has 1328 cities in CHAMP.

(CHAMP GHG Emissions Analysis, ARUP)

CHAMP in Action: Denmark

Denmark is 99% of the way to becoming the first country in the world where every municipality has a climate action plan aiming to reduce emissions and increase local resilience. The municipalities expect to help cut Denmark's total emissions by 73% by 2030 (exceeding the national target of 70%) with the more than 6,500 planned actions across sectors such as energy, transport and agriculture. The Climate Alliance, funded by Realdania and Local Government Denmark, supports the municipalities to deliver climate action.
In 2024, the Green Tripartite Agreement was launched to transform Denmark's nature and agriculture through a world-first livestock emissions tax and new forms of partnerships between municipalities, agricultural and environmental organisations to achieve ambitious targets such as 250,000 hectares of new forest.

Decarbonizing transportation and built environment

Cities are targeting major emissions sources—transport and buildings—through integrated public sector leadership. In China, **Shenzhen** electrified its 16,000-bus fleet, cutting 1.35 million tons of CO_2 annually and reducing PM2.5 by 48%, while **Qingdao**, renovated 24.47 million square metres of residential buildings and 6.47 million square metres of public buildings between 2015 and 2020, leading to average energy savings of 40%.

In the **London Borough of Lambeth**, 72 schools are being retrofitted to eliminate fossil fuel use by 2030 through solar PV, heat pumps, and efficiency upgrades. Similarly, **Buenos Aires** installed solar panels on over 100 schools, integrating climate education and reducing costs.

Pastaza River in Ecuador, © JarnoVerdonk

Promoting sustainable land use and ecosystem restoration

Mitigation is also rooted in land stewardship. In **Pastaza Province, Ecuador**, Indigenous nations partnered with the provincial government to develop a climate strategy based on REDD+ and ancestral knowledge, protecting 1.2M hectares of forest. In **Mata Atlântica, Brazil**, the Conexão project has restored over 4,000 hectares through Payments for Environmental Services, across the states of **Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo,** and **Minas Gerais** linking carbon sequestration with rural livelihoods and biodiversity. **Melbourne** is applying the concept of '20-minute neighbourhoods,' as part of its vision for 2050 to build inclusive, vibrant, and healthy communities, through compact urban development that complements nature-based planning.

Transforming waste systems

Port Vila, Vanuatu is piloting biogas infrastructure to process 531 tons of organic waste annually. Supported by the Gap Fund, the project charts a replicable path for clean energy access in Small Island Developing States. In **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,** a pioneering biomethanisation unit treats 3,000 tons of organic waste per year—including food and pruning waste—through solid-state anaerobic digestion. The facility generates renewable electricity and compost used in reforestation and urban agriculture. This innovative project supports the city's zero-waste and emissions goals, aligns with Brazil's Solid Waste Policy, and demonstrates how circular, nature-based solutions can drive mitigation, resource recovery, and climate resilience in urban systems.
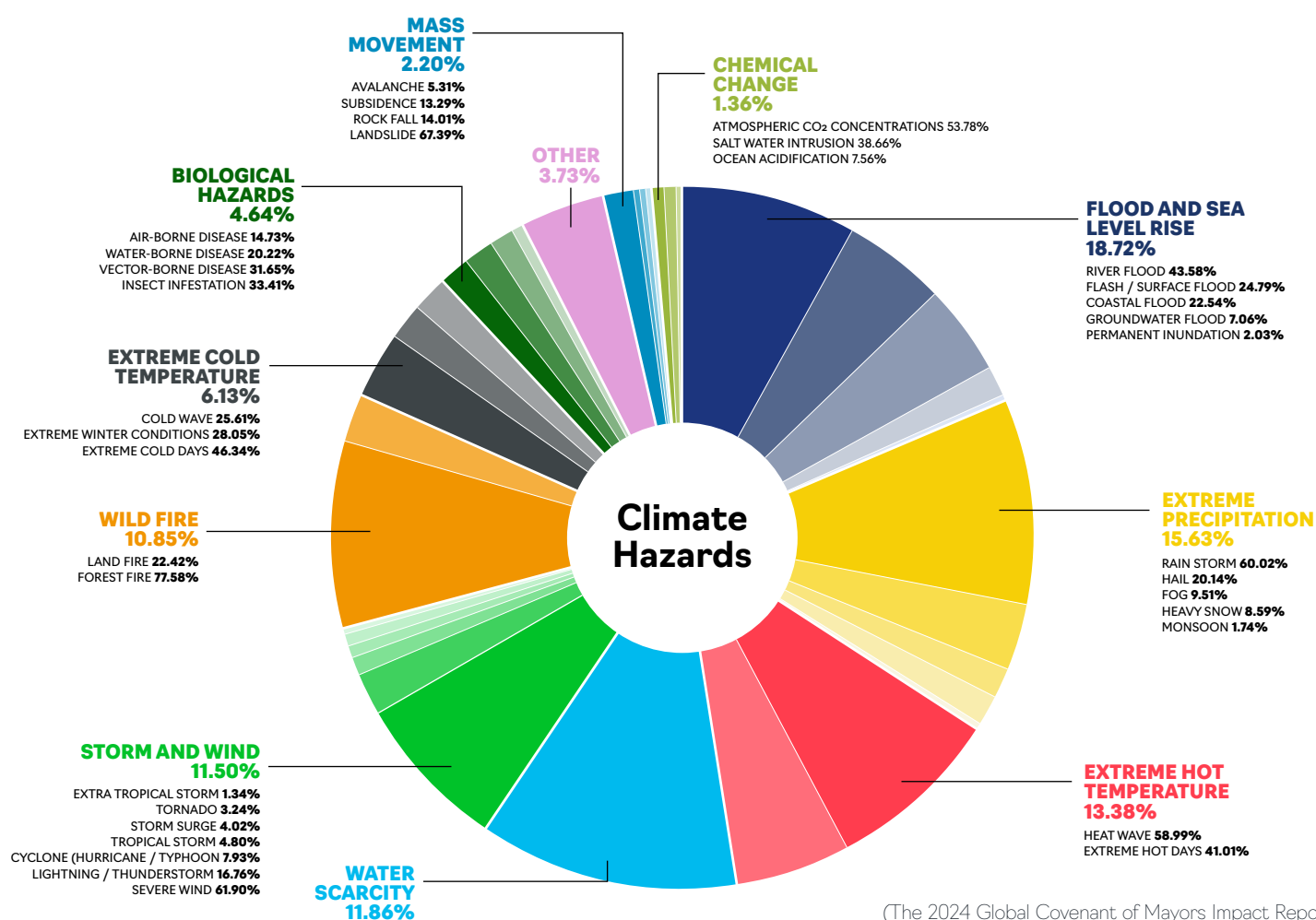

Food Market in Vanuatu, © Khellon

Adaptation, resilience, and loss & damage

The Paris Agreement established the Global Goal on Adaptation and called for action to address loss and damage associated with climate hazards. These pillars recognize the urgent need to build resilience, reduce vulnerability, and respond to irreversible climate impacts.

From flooding and extreme heat to climate displacement and migration, cities and regions face immediate threats that demand tailored solutions. Their data, infrastructure, and community networks make them key to designing adaptation strategies that work and cohere with local and indigenous skills and knowledge. Incorporating these local priorities into national planning will ensure more effective resilience-building measures, and more robust disaster response mechanisms.

MASS MOVEMENT 2.20%
AVALANCHE 5.31%
SUBSIDENCE 13.29%
ROCK FALL 14.01%
LANDSLIDE 67.39%

OTHER 3.73%

CHEMICAL CHANGE 1.36%
ATMOSPHERIC CO₂ CONCENTRATIONS 53.78%
SALT WATER INTRUSION 38.66%
OCEAN ACIDIFICATION 7.56%

BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS 4.64%
AIR-BORNE DISEASE 14.73%
WATER-BORNE DISEASE 20.22%
VECTOR-BORNE DISEASE 31.65%
INSECT INFESTATION 33.41%

FLOOD AND SEA LEVEL RISE 18.72%
RIVER FLOOD 43.58%
FLASH / SURFACE FLOOD 24.79%
COASTAL FLOOD 22.54%
GROUNDWATER FLOOD 7.06%
PERMANENT INUNDATION 2.03%

EXTREME COLD TEMPERATURE 6.13%
COLD WAVE 25.61%
EXTREME WINTER CONDITIONS 28.05%
EXTREME COLD DAYS 46.34%

WILD FIRE 10.85%
LAND FIRE 22.42%
FOREST FIRE 77.58%

EXTREME PRECIPITATION 15.63%
RAIN STORM 60.02%
HAIL 20.14%
FOG 9.51%
HEAVY SNOW 8.59%
MONSOON 1.74%

Climate Hazards

STORM AND WIND 11.50%
EXTRA TROPICAL STORM 1.34%
TORNADO 3.24%
STORM SURGE 4.02%
TROPICAL STORM 4.80%
CYCLONE (HURRICANE / TYPHOON) 7.93%
LIGHTNING / THUNDERSTORM 16.76%
SEVERE WIND 61.90%

EXTREME HOT TEMPERATURE 13.38%
HEAT WAVE 58.99%
EXTREME HOT DAYS 41.01%

WATER SCARCITY 11.86%

(The 2024 Global Covenant of Mayors Impact Report)

CHAMP in action: Brazil

The Green Resilient Cities Program (PCVR) is a federal government initiative in Brazil aimed at improving environmental quality and climate resilience in cities. Through the integration of urban, environmental, and climate policies, it promotes sustainable practices and the enhancement of urban ecosystem services. Its thematic pillars include green areas, sustainable land use, nature-based solutions, low-carbon technologies, sustainable urban mobility, and waste management. The program prioritizes actions in metropolitan regions and vulnerable areas, fostering cooperation between levels of governments and civil society. It is one of many Brazilian examples of Climate Federalism, a key component of the country's updated NDC.

Reducing climate risk through nature-based solutions

Several cities and regions are using nature-based solutions to reduce climate risk. In **Vinnytsia, Ukraine,** riverbank revitalization integrates green space with flood protection for over 60,000 residents. **Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia** is restoring mangroves and managing coastal flooding through a climate-resilient waterfront plan supported by GCoM's Bankable Cities program. In the region of **Saint-Louis, Senegal,** 300 hectares of mangroves are being replanted, while women's groups are empowered through ecotourism and restoration efforts.

Building resilience to heat and water stress

Urban and regional responses to heat and water stress are increasingly focused on equity and affordability. In **Umm El-Jimal, Jordan,** integrated greywater and stormwater systems provide a replicable model for building water resilience in semi-arid municipalities. In **Vancouver, Canada,** the Resilient Neighbourhoods Program—launched after the 2021 heat dome—distributes cooling kits and air filters to vulnerable residents and institutionalizes community-led heat preparedness. In **Telangana, India,** an Under2 Coalition signatory state, the 2023 Cool Roof Policy mandates reflective roofing for government and commercial buildings to lower indoor temperatures by up to 4.3°C, reduce energy demand, and mitigate urban heat—scaling lessons learned from pilots in Hyderabad across the entire state.

Addressing climate-induced displacement and loss & damage

Cities are also leading frontline responses to climate displacement and loss and damage. In **Beira, Mozambique,** local authorities leveraged funding from the Global Cities Fund for Migrants and Refugees to enable the voluntary relocation of 30 high-risk families from cyclone-prone areas and revitalized a public market to house the Disaster Risk Management Committee. In **San Miguelito, Panama,** a cable car system is being developed to improve access and reduce flood and landslide risk, supported by the Gap Fund. Globally, **Scotland** is also helping define and measure L&D impacts, and is calling for direct grant access for frontline communities through the new Loss and Damage Fund ahead of COP30.

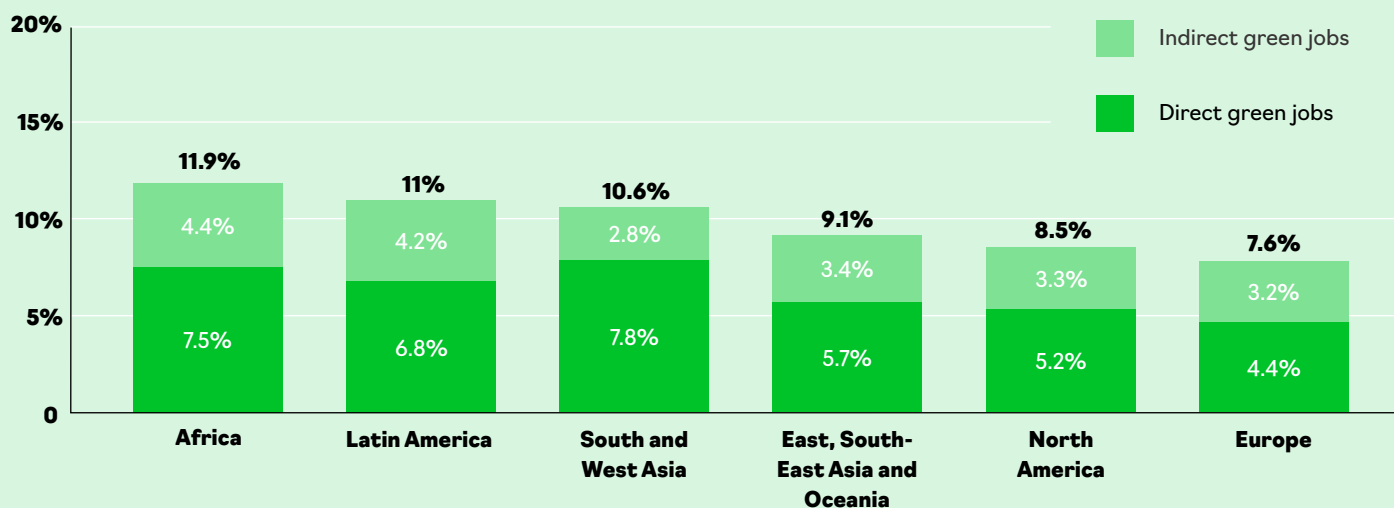Malaysia restored mangroves, © Víctor Barro

Just transition

The Paris Agreement recognizes the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality green jobs as crucial to successful climate action that protects livelihoods, vulnerable populations, and leaves no one behind.

Cities and regions are where the social impacts of climate policies are most directly felt. Whether advancing energy access, retraining workers, or protecting vulnerable communities, subnational governments have demonstrated how to ensure a just and fair transition. Leveraging their powers and experience, strengthening multilevel partnerships and embedding these efforts into national strategies creates more tangible outcomes for workers and communities, while building public support.

Green jobs share per region
Share of direct and indirect green jobs across 74 C40 member cities

Region	Indirect green jobs	Direct green jobs	Total
Africa	4.4%	7.5%	11.9%
Latin America	4.2%	6.8%	11%
South and West Asia	2.8%	7.8%	10.6%
East, South-East Asia and Oceania	3.4%	5.7%	9.1%
North America	3.3%	5.2%	8.5%
Europe	3.2%	4.4%	7.6%

(Publicly available employment data (2019-2022) compiled by Circle Economy for C40 Cities)

CHAMP in action: Colombia

Colombia, a CHAMP endorser, is integrating just transition principles into its NDC3.0 process through a multilevel consultation process. Led by the Ministry of Environment and supported by WRI and GIZ, regional workshops engaged city officials, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups, youth, and women to identify adaptation and equity priorities.

Urban areas emphasized nature-based adaptation—including riverbank restoration in Barranquilla, wetland conservation, and green space expansion—to reduce flooding and heat stress. Participants also stressed peacebuilding and social inclusion as essential to climate action, calling for stronger collaboration across levels of government.

Making energy more accessible and affordable

Cities are empowering local communities to access affordable energy through innovative models. In **Qab Elias, Lebanon,** a partnership between the municipality and a private local supplier enabled half of all homes to adopt rooftop solar without subsidies, enhancing energy independence and lowering energy bills. Meanwhile, in line with its target to eliminate energy poverty by 2030, **Barcelona** has set up Energy Advice Points (EAPs) which have helped lower energy costs, enhance renewable energy access, and protect energy rights for more than 222,000 vulnerable residents. In addition, the city launched a network of 350 Climate Shelters, ensuring most people can access safe, cool spaces during periods of extreme heat.

Shaping more inclusive and resilient local economies

"La Rolita" bus driver, © 2023 Bloomberg Finance LP

Cities are advancing just transitions by creating inclusive economic opportunities rooted in community needs. In **Accra,** informal waste workers gained access to healthcare, childcare, and a new social insurance scheme through structured dialogue with the city. Waste collection rose from 75% to 90%, and recycling from 5% to 18%. **Quezon City** addressed the connected challenges of food insecurity and unemployment through GrowQC, an initiative to transform idle land into productive urban farms, creating 337 gardens and 10 model farms, and training and supporting over 4,100 urban farmers and 258 displaced workers. In **Bogotá,** the La Rolita electric bus program prioritizes the inclusion of women drivers—traditionally underrepresented in transport.

With C40's support, over 92 women have received psychosocial, financial, and workplace training, improving wellbeing, performance, and job retention in the green workforce.

Advancing pro-poor and inclusive housing policy

Cities are safeguarding housing affordability while advancing climate action. In **New York City,** the government created an alternative compliance pathway under Local Law 97 for rent-regulated buildings—prescribing low-cost energy upgrades instead of strict emissions caps—to avoid rent hikes. The city also enabled PACE financing through Local Law 96, allowing building owners to pay the bulk of the cost for retrofits based on projected energy savings of the measures. In the Mukuru settlements in **Nairobi,** a Special Planning Area designation has enabled the community to co-design solutions for climate-resilient infrastructure, green housing, and improved access to services. And in Paris, a right-of-first-refusal ordinance allows the city to purchase multifamily buildings and convert them into subsidized housing, expanding affordability and maintaining social housing supply from existing building stock.
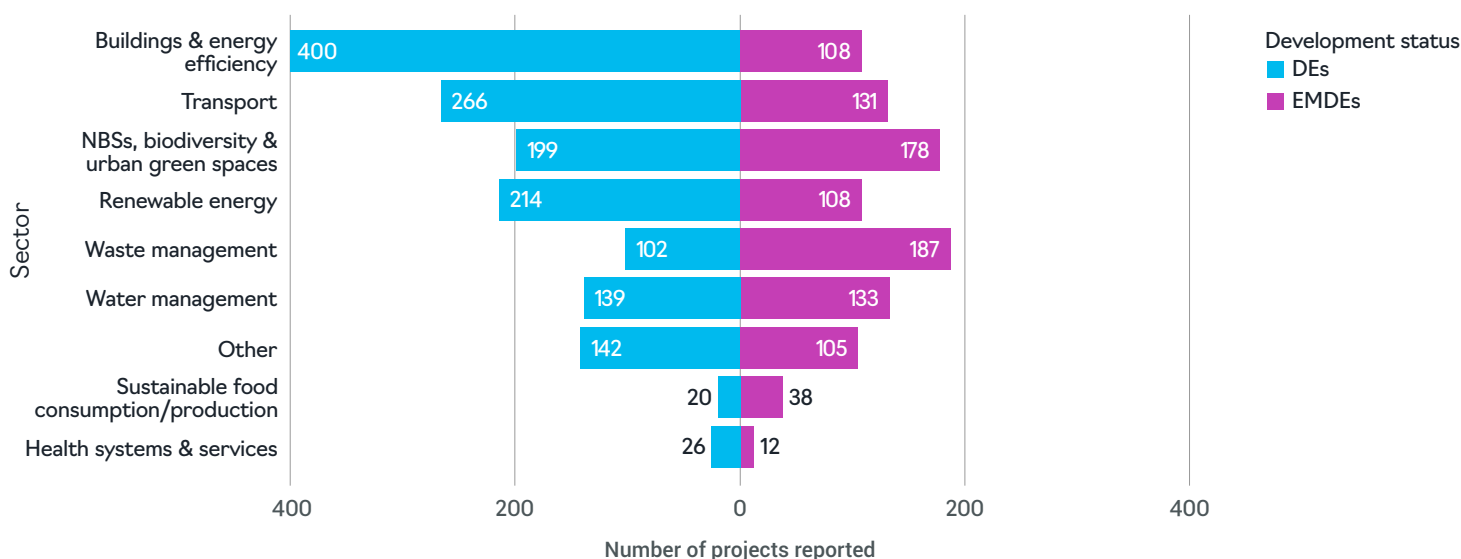
Finance, technology & capacity building

The Paris Agreement recognizes that scaled finance, capacity building, and technology transfer are essential to enabling climate action—especially in developing countries and at the subnational level.

Urban climate finance needs continue to rise, with an estimated USD 4.5 trillion required annually up to 2030. Rapid mobilisation of finance at the local level is essential, including an increase of at least USD 800 billion per year from public investment as called for in the 2024 U20 Communique. This is critical to crowd in additional private sector investment to reach the necessary scale.

In 2024, 611 cities disclosed 2,508 projects worth USD 179 billion and requiring USD 86 billion in investment, representing a 23% increase from 2023. Project reporting highlights the significant opportunity for accelerating multilevel climate action to drive investment across a range of sectors.

Developed Economies (DEs) & Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs)

Development status
- DEs
- EMDEs

Sector	DEs	EMDEs
Buildings & energy efficiency	400	108
Transport	266	131
NBSs, biodiversity & urban green spaces	199	178
Renewable energy	214	108
Waste management	102	187
Water management	139	133
Other	142	105
Sustainable food consumption/production	20	38
Health systems & services	26	12

Number of projects reported

(Projects by sector in DEs and EMDEs, CDP-ICLEI Track data 2024)

Cities and regions are already leveraging innovative finance mechanisms, data and technology to accelerate climate implementation at home and around the world. National strategies that unlock finance and build capacity for local implementation are crucial to further close the gap between commitment and impact on the ground.

CHAMP in action: Bangladesh

In 2024, Bangladesh's Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change secured a $1- million grant for the Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP) from the Asian Development Bank. The BCDP, launched in 2010, is a multi-year, multistakeholder, cross-sectoral platform aimed at scaling climate action through a whole-of-government approach. The BCDP will support the development of a project pipeline, integrate climate risks into fiscal planning at all levels of government, bolster disaster risk reduction efforts, and strengthen and institutionalize the monitoring and reporting of climate-related spending.

Unlocking green finance through innovation

In **Cape Town,** the city issued Africa's first green municipal bond in 2017—raising ZAR 1 billion (€52 million) for renewable energy, water resilience, and energy-efficient buildings. This groundbreaking initiative demonstrated investor confidence in city-led climate projects in the Global South. In **Oslo, Norway,** the city's pioneering Climate Budget integrates carbon targets into municipal financial planning. Introduced in 2016, the budget tracks progress by treating CO_2 emissions like financial expenditures and holding departments accountable, to ensure the city is able to meet the target of 95% emissions reductions by 2030 set out in its climate action plan.

Deploying technology for climate action and health

Freetown has planted over 550,000 trees through the #FreetownTheTreeTown campaign, using mobile technology to track maintenance and offer digital payments to community growers— creating over 600 green jobs. Meanwhile, since 2019, **Sydney** has engaged a local university partner to deploy a total of 21 low-cost environmental monitoring sensors (including 14 air quality sensors) and to develop a plan for a Breathable Sydney. **Lima** has increased its citywide air quality monitoring capacity by 176% since 2019, with 35 air quality modules deployed at strategic points in the city – five of those focusing on children's exposure to air pollution.

Supporting global climate action

Paris allocates €6.5 million annually from its municipal budget to support city-to-city partnerships with Global South peers. These projects advance mitigation, adaptation, and climate justice through direct funding and peer-to-peer technical support. Priority is given to locally driven solutions and capacity building. Meanwhile, the province of **Québec** is using its carbon market revenues to finance adaptation efforts both within its own borders and beyond through the International Climate Cooperation Program (ICCP). With a budget of $34.5 million, the ICCP focuses on helping vulnerable communities in Francophone countries across Africa and the Caribbean to address climate impacts.

Freetown TreeTown initiative, © Urban Shift

Looking ahead: the decade of implementation

As COP30 in Belém draws closer, countries face a pivotal moment: the submission of new national climate plans (NDCs and NAPs) that must not only reflect the urgency of the climate crisis, but match its scale. To have any chance of limiting global temperature rise and managing its impacts, these plans must signal an acceleration across all fronts—ramping up renewable energy deployment, cutting methane and other superpollutants, speeding the transition away from fossil fuels, transforming transport and infrastructure, and restoring nature at scale.

But ambition and plans alone are no longer enough. What matters equally–if not more–is execution, and that will depend on how effectively national governments work with the cities and regions already leading the way to deliver truly transformative action that can have the greatest impact on people's lives. Local and regional governments are responsible for, and already, delivering tangible outcomes: electrifying buses, scaling solar, redesigning buildings, streets, neighbourhoods, and entire cities, restoring ecosystems, and expanding access to basic services. In doing so, they are leading the charge in choosing to build the sustainable economies of the future, helping create good green jobs that represent more than just new livelihoods, but cleaner air, healthier communities, and safer futures. These are the building blocks of resilience and prosperity.

Cities are already home to over half the world's population and produce more than 70% of global emissions. By 2050, urban areas will absorb the majority of global population growth and be the frontline for climate migration–particularly in the Global South– while regions, states and territories will play a critical part in directing and guiding sustainable urbanization. Acknowledging the urgency to focus global climate efforts and resources on these frontlines is a critical first step, but more is needed. As the World Bank and others have recently affirmed, these places need more than recognition—they need resources. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) alone, an estimated $256-$821 billion per year in urban public capital investment is needed to unlock resilient and low-carbon urban development trajectories. And yet, only a fraction of current global climate finance directly reaches the local level. Empowering subnational actors with direct financial access, not just via national intermediaries, is critical to unlocking their full delivery potential and meeting global investment needs.

The cost of inaction—on infrastructure, on livelihoods, on ecosystems—is too great to ignore.

Brazil's COP30 Presidency has called for a Global Mutirão—a unifying call to collective action, grounded in solidarity and mutual support.

The next decade must therefore be defined by convergence: between subnational realities and national plans, between international finance and frontline needs, between global ambition and local implementation.

In this spirit, and on the road to Belém, cities and regions recognize their responsibility to deliver a just, fair, and orderly transition, to protect and restore ecosystems and to safeguard vulnerable communities from the worst impacts of climate change. But they cannot do this alone.

The following recommendations represent what is needed to fully harness the potential of subnational climate action in both global and domestic contexts:

1. Enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs 3.0) and National Adaptation Plans should be economy-wide, and reflect a whole-of-government approach, formally recognising and including local and regional contributions and responsibilities in implementing mitigation, adaptation, and just transition measures, in line with the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP).

2. NDCs 3.0 should include subnational investment needs and demonstrate or signal clear plans for financing and implementing measures identified in the NDCs in collaboration with subnational authorities.

3. COP30 negotiations and outcome decisions should progress the discourse and practice of multi-level partnerships to deliver the ambition of the Paris Agreement, including creating a dedicated space in the negotiating process to organise Parties' efforts in supporting subnational climate action, and accounting for local and regional investment needs in the Baku to Belém Roadmap to $1.3T.

4. COP30 must also leverage the High-Level Climate Champions and the Action Agenda to foster practical and action-oriented partnerships for subnational climate solutions.

With thanks to the following partners for their continued collaboration:

America is All In

Arup

CDP

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

European Climate Foundation

GIZ

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

NDC Partnership

Regions4

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

UN-Habitat

UNDP

UNEP

UNFCCC

Under2 Coalition

University of Maryland Center for Global Sustainability

The World Bank

World Resources Institute