LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' REPORT TO THE 2024 HLPF

PAPER 2

LOCALIZING CLIMATE ACTION AND SDG 13 THROUGH BOLD INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

A Planet approach

GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Facilitated by:

UCLG
United Cities and Local Governments

#SDG13
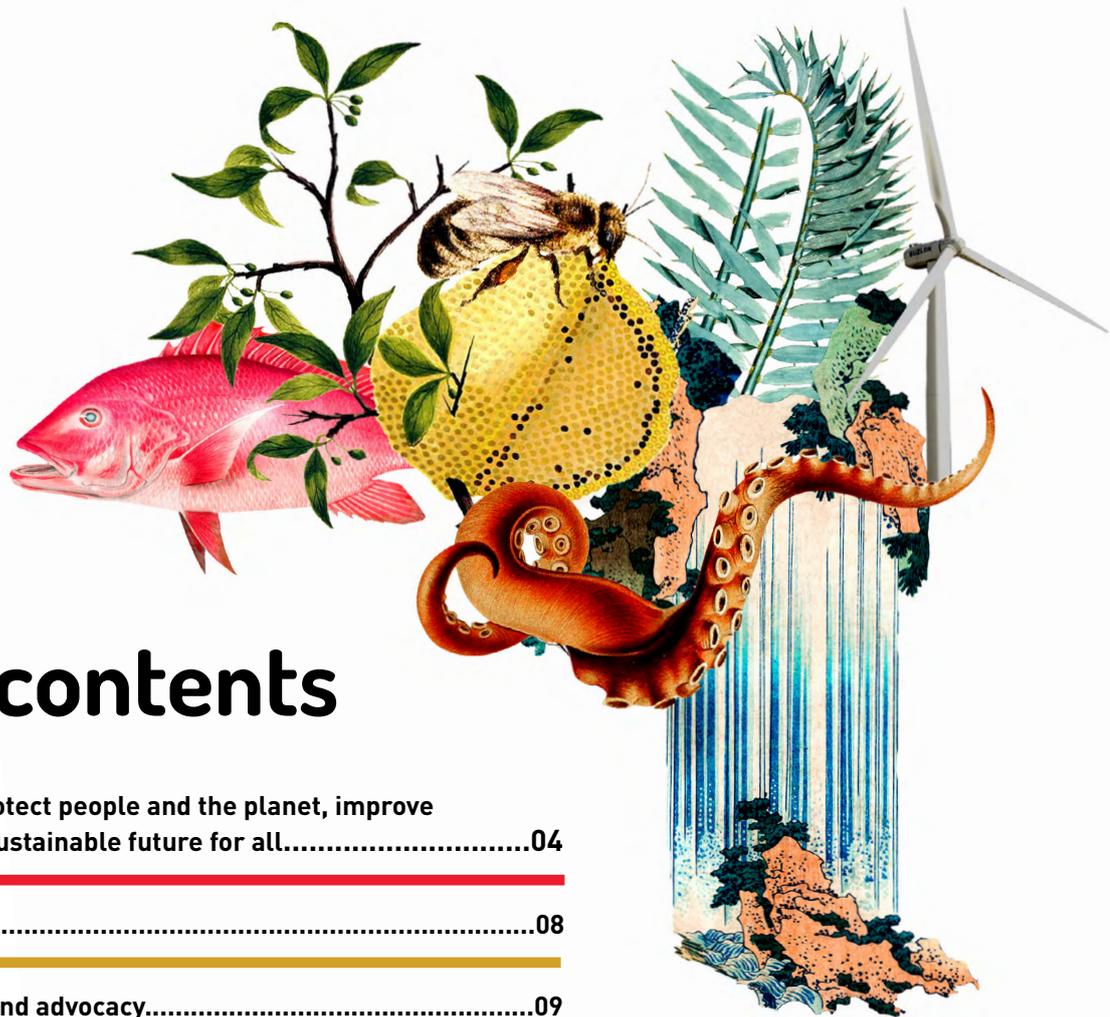#HLPF2024
#Listen2Cities

13 CLIMATE ACTION

DISCLAIMERS:

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1.

LOCALIZATION EFFORTS TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND THE PLANET, IMPROVE GOVERNMENT AND ENSURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR ALL

At the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda, our progress as an international community is far off track. Despite relatively steady improvement through 2020, the world is now seeing stagnation and even regression on many Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets. Projections show that the world will not achieve the SDGs by 2030. As urbanization continues at an exponential rate and the multilateral system requires increasing recognition and involvement of bottom-up solutions, the 2030 Agenda emerges as both a challenging and indispensable blueprint for humanity.

Despite pre-pandemic progress, the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) underscores a distressing trend across numerous SDGs from 2020 to 2023. Recent crises have disrupted progress on ending extreme poverty (indicator 1.1.1), while other targets, such as achieving food security (indicator 2.1.2) and reducing global greenhouse gas emissions (indicator 13.2.2), continue to regress. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lingers; it has slowed, disrupted or reversed progress across the SDGs; exacerbated existing inequalities; and contributed to the highest level of State-based armed conflicts since 1945.

With 1.2 billion people living in multidimensional poverty in 2022 (including many deprivations linked to housing, sanitation, drinking water, school attendance and child mortality), urgent action is imperative. Indeed, the GSDR signals that up to 205 million individuals face acute food insecurity. Global warming poses an imminent threat, risking destabilization of the climate system. Unprecedented natural disasters have damaged crucial agricultural production areas, fisheries, forests and ecosystems that people across the world rely on. SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) underscores the necessity of fostering peaceful, inclusive societies with access to justice and effective, accountable institutions. Yet, current geopolitical conflicts have put attaining this SDG, which plays an enabling role for achieving other SDGs, at stake. While partnerships, research and capacity building at different levels are being strengthened, foreign aid and other resources are strained and still far from the 0.7% target needed to support investments in longer-term sustainable development.

The global community requires swift and profound transformation as we journey towards 2030. **Local and regional governments (LRGs), whether by explicitly using the SDG framework or not, have exhibited unwavering dedication, ambition and ingenuity in driving this crucial agenda forward.** Their proximity to communities empowers them to customize policies and services according to the unique needs and aspirations of their populations, particularly in vital sectors such as education, health care, housing and food security, which prove instrumental in alleviating poverty (SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 2: Zero Hunger). By integrating bold climate actions into their policies and planning, LRGs are enhancing resilience and advocating for harmony with nature, alongside efforts to promote social and transboundary justice (SDG 13: Climate Action). Utilizing city diplomacy and localized initiatives, they play a crucial role in advancing peace and curbing urban violence, while also facilitating access to justice. They cultivate robust, accountable and transparent institutions by bolstering egalitarian, inclusive and participatory governance structures; reducing corruption; and ensuring widespread availability of accurate and trustworthy information (SDG 16). Undoubtedly, LRGs execute all these visions and actions by harnessing multilevel and multistakeholder partnerships, aiming to contribute more effectively to shared objectives (SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals).

This paper, together with the other two papers included in the 8th Towards the localization of the SDGs report, assesses the SDGs highlighted in this year's High-Level Political Forum (SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17). Drawing from discussions and research findings, which frequently emphasized national and global progress and hurdles, it digs deeper into local-level impacts, localized challenges and opportunities. Moreover, it sheds light on innovative and forward-looking policy and practice shifts and interventions led by LRGs, together with local stakeholders, which have proved to accelerate these transformations from the grassroots level upward. This paper offers multiple policy recommendations to harness local innovations and transform the current negative trajectories, driving us towards the creation of profoundly sustainable, equitable and inclusive cities and territories.

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The three papers offer a comprehensive and harmonized perspective on LRGs' approaches to advancing the specific SDGs under assessment, as well as other closely aligned SDGs:

- **Paper 1**, written from a "people" entry point, aims to analyze localization efforts focused on SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 2 (Zero Hunger) and, in connection, SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being, 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

- **Paper 2**, written from a "planet" entry point, assesses localization efforts focused on SDG 13 (Climate Action) and, in connection, SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

- **Paper 3**, written from a "government" entry point, studies localization efforts focused on SDGs 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and, in connection, SDGs 1 (No Poverty) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

The three papers are rooted in comprehensive secondary research. They leverage strategic partnerships within the Global Taskforce (GTF) and its partners in an effort to strengthen the shared visions upon which the analyses and proposals are based. Coordinated by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) World Secretariat, Paper 1 has been drafted by this secretariat's research team in collaboration with its other teams. Paper 2 is a collaboration between ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and UCLG, and Paper 3 has been produced in partnership with the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, and the Peace in Our Cities initiative. The papers leverage insights, experiences and policies gleaned from cities, regions, local government associations, networks within the GTF and collaborative partners, including inputs from a team of researchers commissioned to craft the GSDR. This wealth of knowledge has been garnered from various avenues, mainly the GTF/UCLG 2024 Survey, written consultations and interactive online sessions.

HIGHLIGHTS

SDG localization increasingly present in UN-led processes and reporting

1.

2015:
The 2030 Agenda is adopted

2017:
First GTF's *Towards the localization of the SDGs* report
130 LED-led inspiring practices compiled

2018:
21 VLRs available

2019:
The first GSDR acknowledges urban and peri-urban development as one of the six most promising entry points for achieving the desired transformations at the necessary scale and speed

2020:
88 VLRs and 6 VSRs available

2024:
Eighth GTF's Towards the localization of the SDGs report
Over 4,000 LRG-led inspiring practices compiled

2023:
The independent group of scientists in charge of the 2023 GSDR extend consultations with the organized constituency of LRGs as part of the report drafting process

Recognition of LRG leadership, VLRs and VSRs

2022:
232 VLRs and 26 VSRs available

2030:
Deadline to achieve the SDGs

287 VLRs and 44 VSRs available

The SDG Summit Political Declaration recognizes the New Urban Agenda as a critical accelerator of the 2030 Agenda through localization
SDG localization and multi-level coordination are acknowledged as necessary to achieve the SDGs

The High-Impact Initiative on Localization is one of 12 High-Impact Initiatives, led by UN-system entities, that showcase select programmatic offerings and initiatives to support Member States' efforts towards just development transitions and SDG achievement

% of countries with LRGs' high and medium participation in VNR processes and in the national SDG coordination mechanisms

— VNR processes   — national SDG coordination mechanisms
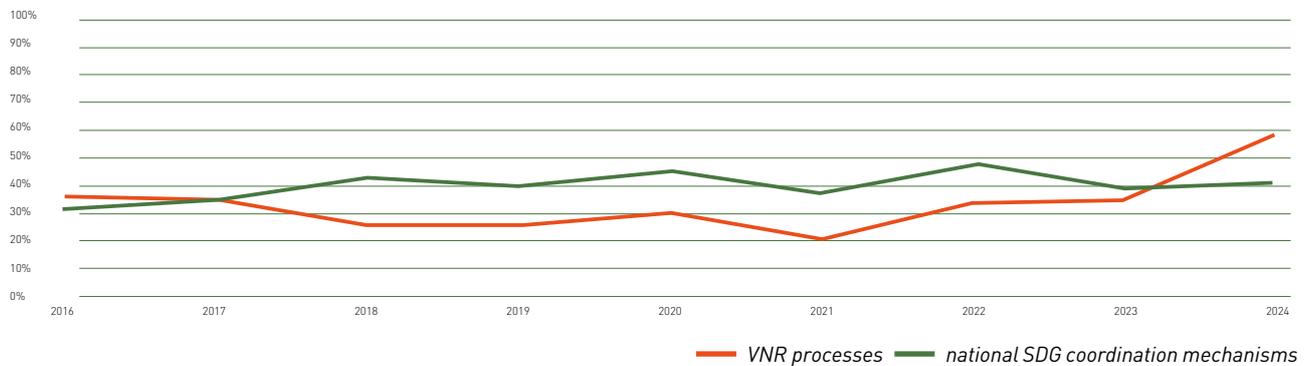
Cities', regions' and associations' best practices mentioned in the three papers

1.

● PAPER 1 ● PAPER 2 ● PAPER 3
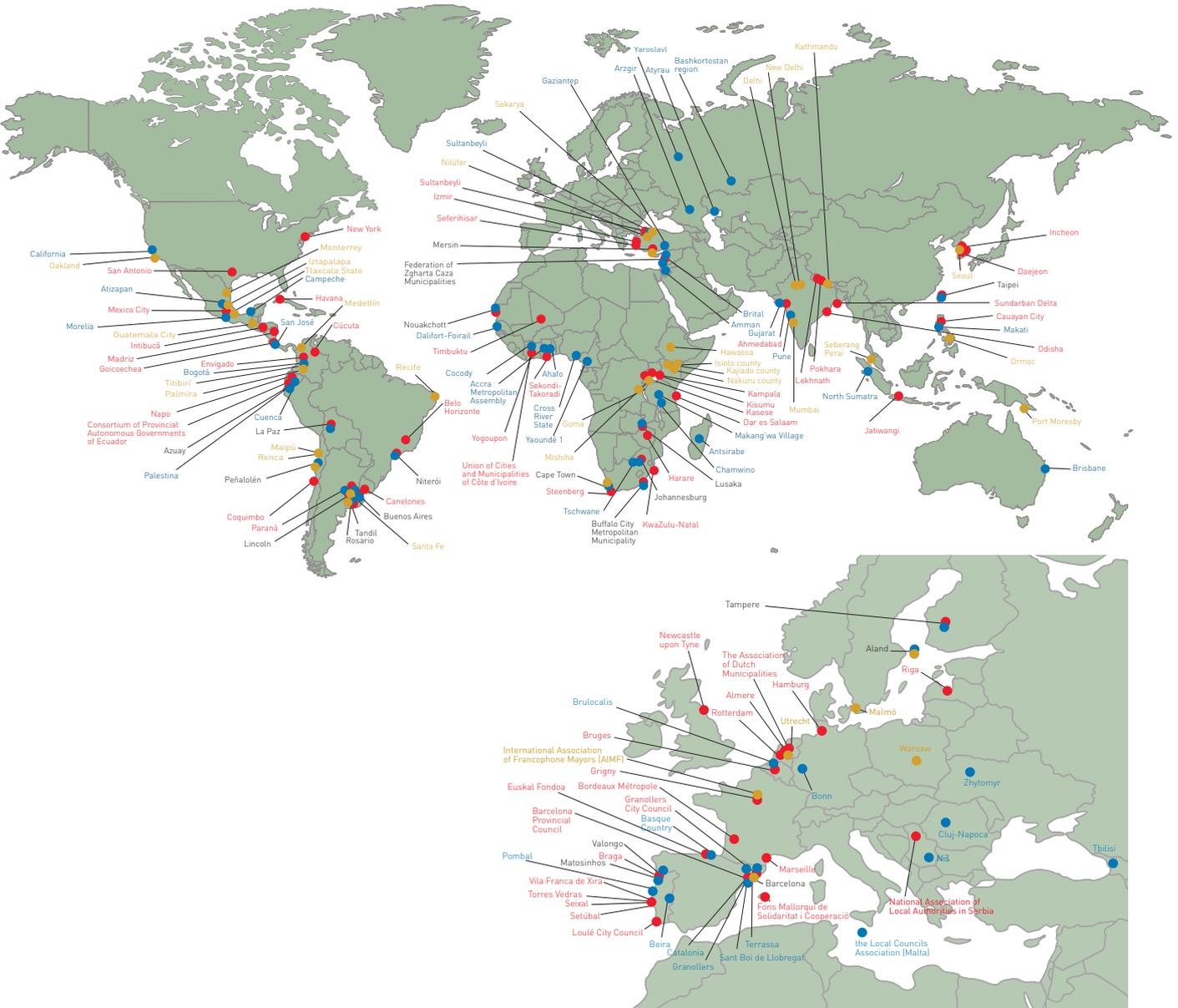
Ways forward for SDG localization

01 Eradicating poverty from the bottom-up through LRG-led sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions

02 Enhancing decentralization to empower LRGs and increase their participation in national strategies and coordination mechanisms for implementing the SDGs

03 Organizing LRGs' participation in national reporting processes and aiding LRGs in their reporting endeavors, especially VLRs and VSRs

04 Accelerating transformation through human rights-based and caring approaches

05 Fostering a renewed and networked multilateral system to ensure the representation of our communities and localizing the Pact for the Future

2. INTRODUCTION

Today, countries and territories are experiencing global disasters caused by climate change. In Latin America and Asia-Pacific, heavy rains and hurricanes impact both oceans and land, while Europe, East Asia and Africa are coping with the effects of drought as well as alternating desertification and large floods. The world's climate emergency has shown its first global and transboundary impacts. As temperatures continue to rise, extreme events will intensify and pose increasingly difficult challenges. Heatwaves exacerbate the effects of drought, intensify wildfire activity, amplify water scarcity resulting in agricultural losses and inflict considerable harm on communities worldwide.

In its latest *State of the Global Climate* report, the World Meteorological Organization officially declared 2023 as the hottest year ever recorded, with the global average near-surface temperature standing at 1.45°C compared to pre-industrial levels. The average temperature rise has reached 1.2°C over the last 10 years and could exceed 1.5°C, the threshold for averting the worst impacts of climate change, in just five years. The global population's exposure to heatwaves is expected to rise further with continued warming. Without additional interventions and adaptation measures, geographical disparities in heat-related mortality mean that marginalized communities with limited resources will be disproportionately impacted. All of this urgently underscores the need for global mechanisms to fight climate change, a phenomenon directly linked to other global emergencies.

Despite this harsh context, local and regional governments (LRGs) have been at the forefront of responses to achieve a just and sustainable future for all. LRGs have innovated mitigation and adaptation solutions to improve urban planning, advanced sustainable production and consumption of goods and services, responded to electrification needs through low-emission and alternative energy solutions, enhanced carbon uptake and storage (e.g. using green spaces, ponds, trees) and offered myriad other responses that can be customized for existing, rapidly growing and new cities. LRGs are fostering a just ecological transition by linking social and climate justice efforts, seeking to transcend territorial economic dependence on unsustainable natural resource extraction. To promote planetary resilience, they are also tackling the uneven distribution of risks for marginalized groups, such as displacement, gentrification and commodification.

This paper seeks to assess progress on localizing SDG 13 (Climate Action) in light of the global processes undertaken in and beyond the framework of the Paris Agreement. The paper begins by examining LRGs' commitment and action in addressing climate change and SDG 13, highlighting the significance of urbanization and recent international developments and agreements. It then evaluates various local approaches for achieving SDG 13: (a) global advocacy actions; (b) efforts to achieve SDG 13's specific targets; and (c) cross-cutting efforts to achieve SDG 13 in conjunction with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). Subsequently, it identifies the primary challenges and opportunities related to the effective realization of SDG 13 and its interconnected goals. Lastly, the paper concludes with a series of key policy recommendations across different governance levels. This paper draws upon thorough secondary research, complemented by insights gleaned from the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (GTF)/ United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) 2024 Survey responses, ensuring a comprehensive and rich analysis.
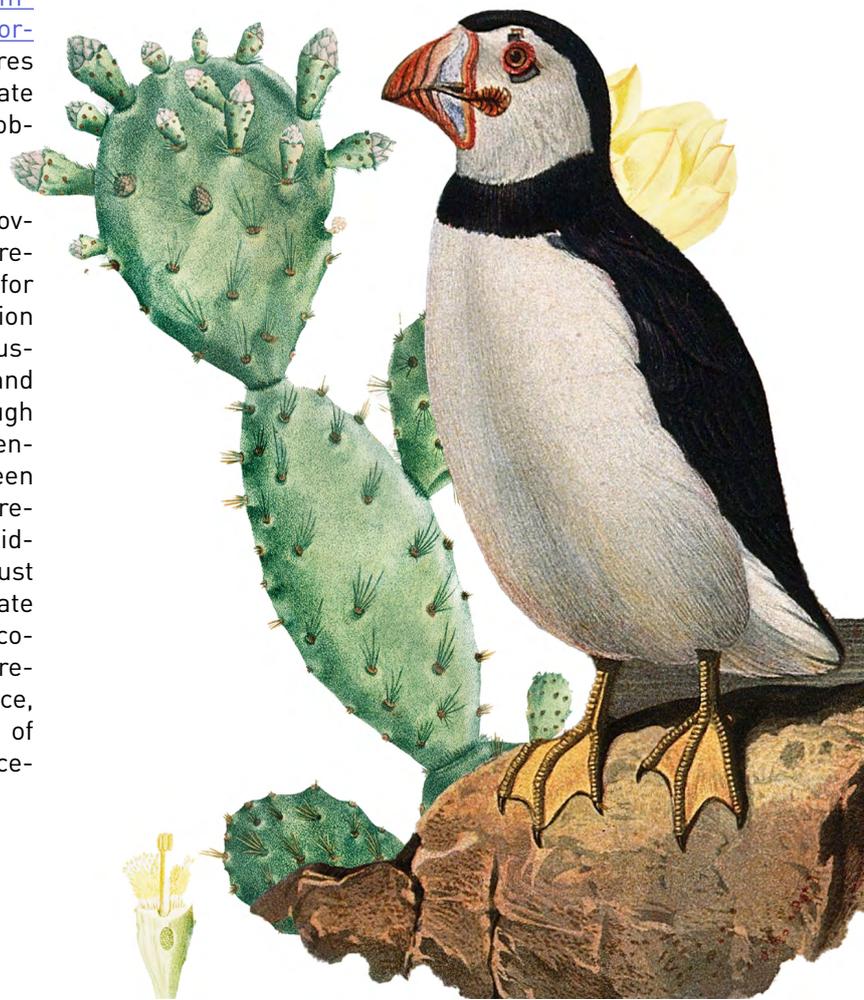
3. TRENDS IN SDG 13 ACTION AND ADVOCACY

Analyzing the state of SDG 13 localization requires first examining the global frameworks driving progress on climate action at different levels as well as the trends that are facilitating (or hampering) achievement of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda recognizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as "the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change." Recently, global policy-making has centred efforts on the specific implementation of the Paris Agreement, which supports implementing SDG 13. **While not explicitly mentioned in the Paris Agreement, some SDG 13 targets are necessary to achieve its goals; they are addressed by the UNFCCC's other work.**

Since its inception, the Paris Agreement has spurred nearly universal engagement in addressing climate change by establishing objectives and conveying a sense of urgency to the international community in responding to the climate emergency. However, worldwide emissions continue to diverge from projected global mitigation trajectories to meet the temperature target outlined in the Paris Agreement. As a result, the window for fulfilling current pledges is rapidly closing, underscoring the pressing need to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The *Summary for Urban Policy-makers* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC's) *Sixth Assessment Report* indicates that without immediate and deep reductions in emissions, global warming would exceed 2°C by 2050 (5°C in the Arab region), affecting even more cities and their people, infrastructure and ecosystems. Indeed, limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C requires a deep, rapid and sustained reduction in global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 43% by 2030 and 60% by 2035 compared to the 2019 level, as well as reaching net zero carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions by 2050.

The IPCC's *Sixth Assessment Report* reveals that **urbanization has exacerbated the effects of global warming in cities, especially those lacking vegetation and bodies of water**. The combination of extreme seawater events, increased by both sea level rise and storm surge, with extreme rainfall and river flow events will increase the probability of flooding. SDG 13 is the SDG with the most regression in Asia-Pacific and other regions. In the Arab region, there is insufficient data for four out of the five targets. In Latin America, progress on SDG targets 13.2 and 13.3 is regressing, while no data is available for the other three targets. Even Europe is unlikely to get on track with cutting GHG emissions by 2030, and the number of persons affected by disasters is constantly increasing.

Localizing and realizing both the Paris Agreement and SDG 13 depends on the world's ability to respond to the effects of the triple planetary crisis, which encompasses climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental pollution. Moreover, following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, small island developing States and least developed countries and territories encountered significant setbacks in their progress towards the SDGs. They are falling behind and struggling to catch up with their regional counterparts. Through localization, LRGs can lead the necessary responses to the triple planetary crisis, addressing the territorial dimensions of global challenges and elevating their demands to the global level in the framework of the multilateral system.

According to the CDP-ICLEI Track reporting platform, in 2022, **80% of almost 1,000 reporting cities were facing significant climate hazards, from extreme heat to floods**. In 28% of these cities, hazards threatened at least 70% of their population, and 25% were facing a high-risk hazard expected to increase in intensity and frequency by 2025. Environmental stressors such as climate change and pollution, combined with urban sprawl and the transformation of open areas, exert significant pressure on the socio-ecological systems of cities and their outskirts. These phenomena can exacerbate the deterioration and loss of natural habitats; fragment ecosystems; and impact human health, wellbeing, social unity, equity and city resilience.

Transport, infrastructure and buildings are three critical drivers of climate change linked to urbanization. Mitigation action in these sectors, as well as increased adaptation finance, led to global climate finance flows reaching an annual average of 803 billion USD in 2019–2020, a 12% increase over the 2017–2018 period. The third edition of the *SLOCAT Transport, Climate and Sustainability Global Status Report* reveals that urban transport accounted for 8% of global CO_2 emissions and around 40% of global transport emissions in 2020. Unless interventions are taken, motorized mobility in cities could rise by 94% between 2015 and 2050. According to the GlobalABC 2022 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction, 158 out of 196 countries (81%) mention buildings in their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) action plans, and 79 out of 196 (40%) have building energy codes; however, only 26% of coun-

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tries have mandatory codes for all buildings. Unfortunately, the report does not capture information on LRGs' building energy codes or standards.

Marginalized communities, especially in the Global South, suffer disproportionate impacts from climate change despite their minimal contribution to it. From 2010 to 2020, regions highly vulnerable to disasters, where around 3.3 to 3.6 billion individuals reside, encountered human mortality rates from floods, droughts and storms that were 15 times higher compared to regions with minimal vulnerability. Within cities, the first quintile of the population (i.e. the lowest-income residents) face the most severe gaps in urban adaptation – and are thus exposed to greater climate risk. Smaller and lower-income cities are more likely to lack adaptation planning capacity. The IPCC's *Sixth Assessment Report* reminds us that addressing inequalities and climate action must go hand in hand, underscoring the need for a strong loss and damage mechanism that enables reparations and restorations. Here, LRGs are asking to be, and must be, part of the solution.

The Paris Agreement views NDCs, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and long-term strategies and plans to lower GHG emissions as critical tools to advance climate goals. Through their innovative approaches and community engagement, LRGs are indispensable in bridging the gap between national ambitions and ground-level implementation, ensuring that NDCs lead to tangible and lasting climate resilience, sustainability and a just ecological transition. **While countries are already submitting either updated or second NDCs** (including, for example, 29 out of 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean) **to adapt and mitigate vulnerability to climate change impacts, LRGs are not often included in defining, implementing or assessing NDCs**. Urban content in NDCs is likewise deficient: according to a study by UN-Habitat, United Nations Development Programme and University of Southern Denmark, 34% of the 194 NDCs analyzed have low or no explicit urban references (including some from the Global North), while 39% have only moderate urban references. As sustainable urbanization is essential to bridging climate goals and action, collaboration across all levels of government is urgently needed, with LRGs' full and meaningful participation in defining, implementing, monitoring and evaluating such instruments.

With time slipping away, taking swift and significant action – beyond just making plans and commitments – is essential. Achieving net zero emissions, setting higher targets to mitigate and adapt to climate change and applying an environmental justice lens to all our actions are urgent if we are to prevent disastrous outcomes and ensure a sustainable future. This inevitably requires bringing LRGs on board as full decision-makers.
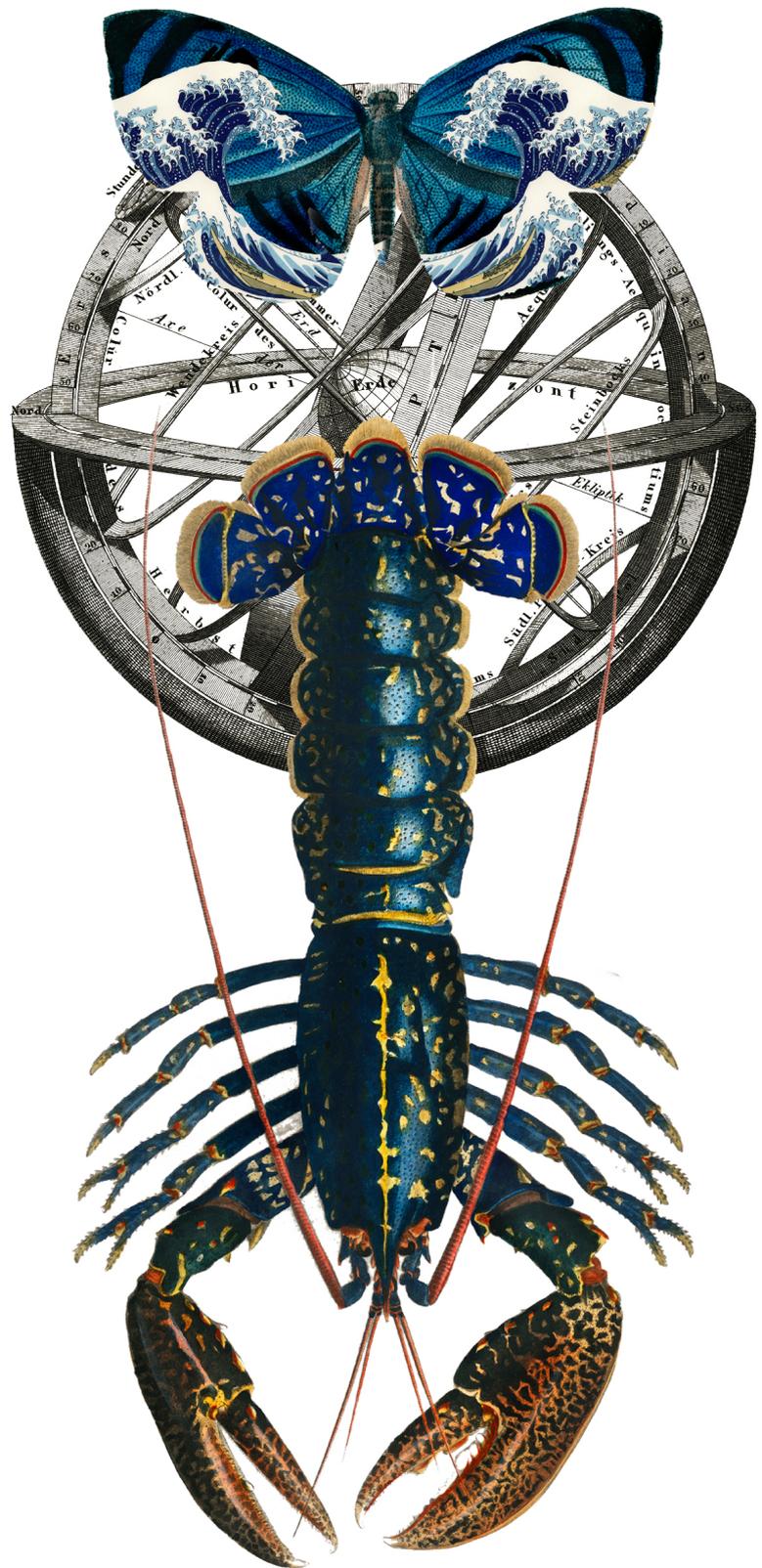
4.

PROGRESS ON LOCALIZING SDG 13 WHILE CLOSING THE CLIMATE ACTION GAP THROUGH THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THE UNFCCC, SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION (SDG 11), CLEAN WATER (SDG 6) AND AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY (SDG 7)

LRGs have a critical role in taking climate action and responding to the triple planetary crisis. In the face of the urgent need to limit global warming to 1.5°C and the increasing climate hazards faced by cities globally, progress has been significant with many cities committing to ambitious climate targets and actions. LRGs' responses have covered a wide range of governance actions (see Figure 3.2.1).This paper seeks to assess progress on localizing SDG 13 (Climate Action) in light of the global processes undertaken in and beyond the framework of the Paris Agreement. The paper begins by examining

Figure 3.2.1 Pathways for climate adaptation and mitigation in cities

Source: 2019 IPCC Global Research and Action Agenda on Cities and Climate Change Science

Looking ahead, multilevel and global partnerships and inclusive actions will be crucial to achieving the targets outlined in SDG 13 and the Paris Agreement. The momentum generated by recent international climate conferences, such as the 2021, 2022 and 2023 UN Climate Change Conferences (COP26, COP27 and COP28), signals growing recognition of LRGs' vital role in global climate efforts. Neverthe-

less, efforts must now run in two directions: first, parties must translate commitments into tangible on-the-ground actions to effectively combat climate change. Second, they must restore the losses and damages from emerging climate change impacts, as voted by the parties at COP27 with the creation of the Loss and Damage Mechanism.

This section analyzes the commitments and efforts made by LRGs worldwide to fulfil the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in the six coming years, as well as the role they may take on for the remainder of the Decade of Restoration. The subsections below discuss advocating for a greater recognition of LRGs' role in defining and implementing solutions, as well as contributing to SDG 13 targets and other closely related SDGs: SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy).

4.1 LRGs' climate action advocacy

Since 1995 at the UN climate negotiations, the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency (LGMA) has been representing towns, cities and regions on behalf of the GTF. After the recognition of all levels of governments in the preamble of the 2015 Paris Agreement, thousands of cities and regions have declared climate emergencies, adopted ambitious targets and helped to elevate national commitments, demonstrating that multilevel action is critical to stay under the 1.5°C threshold. The preamble of the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact recognized the urgent need for multilevel action. The first-ever Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change, convened by UNFCCC and UN-Habitat, recognized multilevel partnerships through the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative during COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt) in November 2022.

In the leadup to the first global stocktake of the Paris Agreement at COP28 in Dubai (United Arab Emirates, UAE) in December 2023, **cities and regions across all continents convened their official local stocktakes, focusing on local commitments, interaction with their national plans and actions for climate justice domestically and globally**. They also actively engaged in the UNFCCC technical dialogues. Mean-

while, from the Amazon Cities Forum to the Africa Climate Summit and the first-ever G7 Roundtable on Subnational Climate Actions with U7 (a group of urban networks from across the world), multilevel action has been one of the strongest elements across numerous intergovernmental processes.

4.

BOX 1

BOX 3.2.1 LUSAKA'S LOCAL STOCK-TAKE

In **Lusaka** (Zambia), the LusakaStocktake4ClimateEmergency session provided a forum for the mayor to speak with youth representatives, councillors and community leaders to assess their joint vision, key challenges and opportunities in reaching climate goals. Participants identified the main challenges as increasing floods, waste management needs, dependence on the use of charcoal (which depletes forests), a widespread lack of awareness of climate change, and limited access to healthy food. One priority solution identified was clean cooking technologies to replace charcoal. These conversations demonstrated the need for multilevel alignment with the Zambian NDC through, for example, engaging NDC committees. Participants also requested improving the Constituency Development Fund to increase the share of green investments and disaster funds from 5% to 20% to foster stable income and climate change solutions.

At COP28, the LGMA supported convening the Local Climate Action Summit, hosted by the COP28 Presidency and Bloomberg Philanthropies, alongside the World Climate Action Summit, resulting in the launch of the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP). COP28 also saw the second edition of the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change, and the LGMA convened the third edition of the Multilevel Action and Urbanization Pavilion and actively engaged in the UNFCCC negotiations.

By the end of the COP28 Local Climate Action Summit and the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change, 72 nations had endorsed the CHAMP initiative, and the COP28 UAE Consensus included at least 15 specific paragraphs on multilevel action and urbanization in various decisions. One such paragraph was paragraph 161 of the Global Stocktake decision, which urges Parties and non-Party stakeholders to join efforts to accelerate delivery through inclusive, multilevel, gender-responsive and cooperative action.

Table 3.2.1 Subnational climate advocacy under the UNFCCC, 1990–2024

4.

Period	UNFCCC event or milestone	LGMA initiatives	Subnational achievements
1990–1999	• 1992: Earth Summit • 1995: First UNFCCC Conference of the Parties • 1997: Kyoto Protocol adopted	• 1990: ICLEI, Climate Alliance • 1992: Local Agenda 21 • 1995–1997: Municipal Leaders' Summits on Climate Change	The **LGMA** is designated as essential partners under the UNFCCC alongside businesses and CSOs.
2000–2009	• 2005: Kyoto Protocol entry into force • 2007: Bali Road Map • 2009: Copenhagen Summit (COP15)	• 2005: US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement • 2008: European Covenant of Mayors • 2008: C40, UCLG, Regions4 and The Climate Group included in the LGMA • 2009: Local Government Climate Lounge	The **Local Government Climate Roadmap** is born with a mission to recognize, engage and empower LRGs.
2010–2015	• 2010: Cancún Climate Change Conference/Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (COP16) • 2012: Lima-Paris Action Agenda • 2015: Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) platform • 2015: NDCs	• 2010: Mexico City Pact • 2010: Establishment of carbonn Climate Registry • 2011: Durban Adaptation Charter • 2015: Creation of Under2 Coalition • 2013: Resilient Cities • 2014: Compact of Mayors • 2013: Friends of Cities	The **Paris Agreement preamble** recognizes the importance of all levels of governments in climate action.
2016–Present	• 2016: Marrakech Partnership • 2021: Talanoa Dialogues • 2020: LGMA's higher connection with High-Level Champions • 2023: Global Stocktake	• 2016: Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy • 2018: CitiesIPCC • 2019: First Climate emergency declarations • 2019: CDP/ICLEI Track reporting platform • 2019: Friends of Multilevel Action initiative • 2020: City Climate Finance Gap Fund • 2020: Race to Zero campaign and breakthroughs • 2021: Race to Resilience campaign and breakthroughs • 2022: SURGe • 2022: Sharm-El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda • 2022–2023: Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change • 2021–2023: Multilevel Action and Urbanization Pavilions • 2023: Daring Cities • 2023: CHAMP	The **Glasgow Climate Pact preamble** underscores the urgent need for multilevel action, and paragraph 161 of the **Global Stocktake decision** urges Parties to take multilevel action.

Source: Compiled based on information from the LGMA website (www.cities-and-regions.org)

Table 3.2.2 Key milestones since the 2019 HLPF review of SDG 13 in relation to cities and regions

4.

UN/UNFCCC	National/global	LGMA/GTF
• 2019: Climate Action Summit: ICLA Track, City Climate Finance Gap Fund	• 2019: International Conference on Climate Action Heidelberg Conference	• 2019: Coalition for Urban Transitions report, Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance
• 2019: IPCC Cities and Climate Action Agenda	• 2021: G20 Platform on SDGs Localisation and Intermediary Cities (G20 PLIC)	• 2019–2023: U20 Mayors Summits
• 2020: Race to Zero campaign, Making Cities Resilient 2030	• 2021: NDC2.0, some with urban components and multilevel action	• 2020–2023: Daring Cities forums
• 2021: Glasgow Climate Pact, with preamble highlighting multilevel climate action	• 2022/2023: G7 communiques with multilevel and urbanization references	• 2021–2023: Multilevel Action and Urbanization Pavilions at COP Blue Zone
• 2021/2023: UNEA-5/6 Cities and Regions Summit	• 2023: G7 Roundtable on Subnational Climate Actions, including Climate and Urbanization Ministries as well as U7 representatives	• 2021–2023: U7 Mayors Summits
• 2021: Coalition on Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Food Systems (UFS Coalition)	• 2023: Amazon Cities Forum, Africa Climate Summit	• 2021: Cities Race to Zero
• 2022: Call to Local Action for Migrants and Refugees	• 2023: COP28 Local Climate Action Summit and CHAMP initiative	• 2021: Innovate4Cities initiative
• 2022: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework with target 12 on urban green space and the second ten-year Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities		• 2022: IPCC's *Summary for Urban Policymakers* (part of its Sixth Assessment Report)
• 2022: Desertification decision on urban-rural linkages		• 2022: Cities Race to Resilience, RegionsAdapt, CDP-ICLEI Track platform
• 2022: Sharm-El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, SURGe		• 2023: Sustainable Development Solutions Network's Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance
• 2022–2023: Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change		• 2023: Stocktake4ClimateEmergency
• 2023: International Zero Waste Day		
• 2023: UN-Habitat Assembly (UNHA2) Resolution		
• 2023: SDG Summit-Localization, UN Climate Ambition Summit		
• 2023: Global Stocktake decision, UAE Consensus (paragraph 161 urging multilevel action)		

Source: Compiled based on information from the LGMA website (www.cities-and-regions.org)

4.

4.2 Delivering the SDG 13 targets

Localizing SDG target 13.1 on strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters

When disasters strike locally, LRGs' ability to respond and recover is tested. As the nearest level of governance to the people, LRGs serve as first responders. Most disaster risk reduction (DRR) measures fall under their responsibility, often tied to municipal services, placing LRGs at the forefront of DRR.

Localizing SDG target 13.1 is crucial for strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters at all levels. Indeed, SDG indicator 13.1.3 emphasizes the importance of this local-level focus, tracking the proportion of LRGs that adopt and implement these crucial DRR strategies. According to the CDP-ICLEI Track platform, 573 LRGs have an adaptation plan. This work underscores LRGs' vital role in advancing the global agenda for DRR and climate resilience and achieving broader national and global objectives. Likewise, LRGs' commitment and progress towards the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 are pivotal. However, even though DRR strategies have been adopted rather comprehensively on national and local levels in Europe, bold efforts are still needed in the rest of the world's regions.

Among the many LRGs worldwide that have adopted resilience and DRR laws, plans and strategies, Taipei, the **Canelones** department (Uruguay) and **Niterói** (Brazil) are notable example. Latin America and the Caribbean ranks as the second most disaster-prone region globally. From 2000 to 2019, it experienced 1,205 disasters, including 548 floods, with floods being the most frequent hazard in the region. At high risk of disaster, **La Paz** (Bolivia) has experienced geodynamic events (e.g. landslides and mud flows) and hydrometeorological events (e.g. floods, cyclones and river overflows), exacerbated by population growth and human action. To face this risk, the municipality enacted Municipal Autonomous Law No. 005/2010 on Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management as the regulatory basis for emergency response. This law addresses the issues of prevention, response to emergencies and disasters, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

To reduce the risk of flooding around the Ocloro River, **San José** (Costa Rica) created a Risk Mitigation Plan including short-, mid- and long-term steps. To minimize immediate risks, it upgraded two bridges, widened a street and enhanced drainage areas. The city also added green spaces and greenery on rooftops and walls for better water retention.

Long-term plans identified 11 major projects such as building new bridges, expanding the drainage system and transitioning to medium-rise buildings for more green space, while an early warning system was implemented for flood preparedness. San José's approach highlights the **importance of combining technical and scientific expertise with robust political support and active involvement of communities and local stakeholders**.

In governing DRR and climate change adaptation and mitigation, LRGs often place human rights and climate justice at the centre of their initiatives. This approach is essential, particularly in addressing climate-induced displacement and ensuring that marginalized populations are protected and supported. By integrating principles of equity and justice into their climate actions, LRGs help safeguard the well-being of all community members, ensuring that no one is left behind. The **Accra Metropolitan Assembly** (Ghana) has shown its dedication to mitigating migrants' climate vulnerabilities. This commitment involves producing data on the presence of migrants in the city's informal economy, enhancing this economy's resilience to climate change impacts and improving working conditions for migrants engaged in informal waste management. With support from the Global Cities Fund for Migrants and Refugees, **Beira** (Portugal) is undertaking significant initiatives to support the dignified relocation and reintegration of displaced communities affected by severe coastal storms, converting markets into temporary shelters and relocating up to 100 families to a safer area.

Building on the success of the first Making Cities Resilient (MCR) campaign, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction launched the MCR2030 Campaign in 2020 as a global partnership to strengthen DRR and resilience. The campaign strives to ensure cities become resilient and sustainable by 2030, contributing directly to the achievement of SDGs 11 and 13, among others. It has built on the 10-year legacy of the Resilient Cities Congress, which emphasized the need for more efficient multilevel and multistakeholder collaborations, improved financing for LRG action, better planning and action, mainstreaming of resilience in the sustainability agenda and broader inclusion of marginalized populations. As of 2023, over 1,500 cities are participating in the MCR2030 process, including the 28 cities announced as MCR2030 Resilience Hubs. These cities have benefitted from analyses, tools and capacity building that support them to better understand and respond to DRR and resilience needs.

Similarly, in the framework of the UNFCCC global climate action agenda and its Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns, the Cities Race to Resilience campaign was launched by a coalition formed by C40 Cities, CDP, the Global Covenant of Mayors

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for Climate & Energy, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Resilient Cities Network, UCLG, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the World Resources Institute. This campaign, which includes hundreds of committed cities such as **Makati** (the Philippines), **Peñalolén** (Chile), **Gaziantep** (Türkiye) and **Cocody** (Côte d'Ivoire), focuses on driving them to join and pledge their commitment to the global fight against climate change. These cities are committed to implementing inclusive and resilient climate actions ahead of and beyond COP27. The RegionsAdapt Initiative is leading regional governments' engagement in the UNFCCC Race to Resilience. Around 80 regions are involved, such as **Ahafo** (Ghana), **Campeche** (Mexico), **Cross River State** (Nigeria), **Gujarat** (India) and **North Sumatra** (Indonesia).

Overall, **localizing SDG target 13.1 empowers LRGs to lead on climate action, fostering resilient and adaptive communities**. LRGs' proactive governance, commitment to sustainable practices and focus on inclusive and just policies are instrumental in building a resilient future capable of withstanding climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

Localizing SDG target 13.2 on integrating climate change measures into policies, strategies and planning

Throughout history, cities have emerged as compact settlements within vast, thriving natural environments. Currently, urban areas consume the majority of natural resources, contributing to most negative environmental impacts. Indeed, they account for about 78% of the world's energy consumption and emit more than 70% of GHG emissions. If cities do not change their relationship with their natural environments, nature's ability to support a global population exceeding nine billion by 2050, with two-thirds residing in urban regions, will be jeopardized.

LRGs play a pivotal role in transforming public policy-making towards just, ecological transitions and sustainable development, particularly through innovative urban and territorial planning. **By re-naturing cities through strategic planning, LRGs work to re-embed urban systems within natural ecosystems in a compatible, sustainable and long-term manner, enhancing the vitality of both.** This approach involves challenging socio-spatial fragmentation and promoting policies that ensure proximity, accessibility and urban-rural reciprocity. LRGs play a crucial role in providing sustainable public services, including fostering energy efficiency and climate neutrality; managing waste, wastewater and sanitation; improving the sustainability of their transport services; and fostering biodiversity, green areas and belts, and urban gardens, ensuring these services meet the needs of their communities.

Despite the missed opportunities for multilevel coordination with their national governments through NDCs, among other instruments, LRGs continue to set ambitious targets in various sectors. According to the *Renewables in Cities 2021 Global Status Report*, 830 cities in 72 countries have set renewable energy targets in at least one sector (power, heating and cooling or transport), and over 610 of these cities have established 100% renewable energy targets. In addition, the 2022 impact report of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy reveals that with its 12,500+ signatories in 144 countries, one billion people live in cities committed to climate mitigation and adaptation. By 2050, these signatories are projected to reduce global GHG emissions by 4.1 gigatonnes of CO_2 equivalent. LRGs' have a significant role in promoting capacity-strengthening mechanisms for effective climate change-related planning and management in all world regions (SDG target 13.b).

By prioritizing pollution reduction in their plans and strategies, LRGs contribute heavily to creating healthier and more sustainable living environments. In particular, **LRGs' climate efforts have centred on energy efficiency and climate neutrality, aiming to diminish reliance on fossil fuels and shift towards more sustainable and renewable energy consumption patterns**. LRGs who have committed to becoming climate neutral by 2050 or earlier include **Johannesburg** (South Africa), **Buenos Aires** (Argentina), **Bonn** (Germany), **Cluj-Napoca** (Romania) and **Åland** (Finland).

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BOX 2

BECOMING CARBON NEUTRAL IN BRAZIL

In Brazil, **Niterói**'s Social Carbon Neutrality Programme promotes discussion about climate change in low-income communities. It aims to expand to other areas, reaching the entire city to engage all citizens in concrete actions to reduce GHG emissions. As the national coordinating body of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy in Brazil, the **Brazilian Association of Municipalities** has actively delivered in-depth support to over 30 municipalities to develop a GHG emissions inventory, vulnerability and risk assessments and local climate action plans to overcome municipalities' lack of expertise, political support and financial resources, particularly in small and medium-sized municipalities.

The **Brulocalis** (Belgium) local government association has organized several working groups and awareness-raising activities focused on promoting the shift from fossil-fuelled vehicles to electric vehicles and enhancing the use of alternative modes of transport, in line with the Good Move regional strategy. Additionally, Brulocalis has recently become involved in the Renolution regional strategy, which aims to expedite the renovation of energy-efficient buildings in Brussels. As part of this effort, Brulocalis is organizing a working group to address collective and group renovation projects.

The **Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality** (South Africa) initiated the Model Energy-Efficient Public Building project to demonstrate the potential of alternative energy solutions for sustainable energy production and distribution. The project aimed to raise awareness and build capacities about energy needs, reduce demand and use renewables within the building. In Cameroon, several women mayors who are part of the Network of Locally Elected Women of Africa, Cameroon section (REFELA-CAM), launched the Women Sustainable Energy Programme. The programme aimed to establish REFELA-CAM as a recognized entity, advocate for access to services (particularly electrification), fight climate change and train and support women-led cooperatives to collaborate with municipalities for energy service upkeep.

In parallel, LRGs have taken actions to diversify and improve their means of public transport to reduce their impact on the planet. Globally, the transport sector contributes to over 24% of CO2 emissions and 14% of annual GHG emissions. Road transport ac-

counts for approximately 72% of the total CO2 emissions from the transport sector. In certain regional contexts, the use of private transport is predominant. For example, only one-third of the urban population has convenient access to public transport in regions such as North Africa and West Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and South Asia. Other issues deepen transport-related inequalities, such as time spent travelling; access to various modes of transport, especially public transit; affordability; and safety and non-discrimination. In **Amman** (Jordan), the accessible, diverse and low-carbon transport system includes bus rapid transit, public and non-motorized transport options and enhanced pedestrian infrastructure and green spaces. It has focused on the city's poorer and more densely populated neighbourhoods and involved community members of all ages.

As main providers of essential public services, LRGs are responsible for reducing waste and developing sustainable waste management systems for environmental protection purposes. The 2021–2025 **La Paz** en Movimiento Municipal Plan (Bolivia) includes promoting a clean city through sustainable, participatory and integrated environmental and solid waste management. In **Atyrau** (Kazakhstan), a climate roadmap requires rethinking the use of solid waste landfills to adhere to all updated environmental regulations as well as include waste recycling, leaving burying waste as a last resort. It also prioritizes working with industries. For example, the city aims to minimize the negative impacts of the Atyrau oil refinery on groundwater, flora, fauna and atmospheric air by rebuilding the mechanical treatment facilities and the standard treated wastewater channel. By integrating waste recyclers into its social waste management system, **Pune** (India) has taken bold climate action and provided citizens with more affordable and reliable waste services. In turn, recyclers, who usually work in the informal economy, gain more secure livelihoods and formal recognition for their work.

Some LRGs have broken with the assumption of unlimited resources and moved to alternative economic models that involve a substantial reworking of resource extraction and use systems. In doing so, they promote a renewed relationship with resources such as waste, energy, food and time. The sponge city model in **Shenzhen** (China); the solar-powered water supply project in **Makang'wa Village** and **Chamwino** (Tanzania); the **Federation of Municipalities of Zgharta Caza**'s reduction and rationing of water use through improved governance with the water, agriculture and tourism sectors; public schools' rainwater collection systems in **Atizapán** (Mexico); and support to community-level waste reduction in **Brisbane** (Australia) all contribute to the rethink, regenerate, reduce, reuse and recover framework of the circular economy.

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On another note, **LRGs are actively engaged in efforts to regenerate local natural commons, resources and ecosystems; enhance biodiversity; and improve the quality of life for both human and non-human living beings**. They are moving away from solely anthropocentric conceptions of development and considering the rights of future generations.

Nature, urban trees and forests offer a systemic approach to localize the SDGs and climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, which is especially important considering that biodiversity loss is ranked as the third-highest severe risk for the world over the next 10 years (up from fifth place in 2021). Efficient and cost-effective nature-based solutions can cool cities by up to 8°C, increase resilience to floods and landslides, reduce energy consumption, capture localized traffic pollution, increase biodiversity, improve citizens' health and foster vibrant neighbourhoods. LRGs worldwide have taken the opportunity to strategically plan and sustainably oversee urban trees and forests, thereby contributing to realizing the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the New Urban Agenda. Over 300 LRGs are part of CitiesWithNature and RegionsWithNature, the official platforms where LRGs report on their actions and voluntary commitments to the global biodiversity framework. This represents strong support for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including target 12 on urban green spaces, and the Convention on Biological Diversity's second 10-year Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities.

BOX 3

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS TO DRIVE CLIMATE ACTION, RECOVER HERITAGE AND BUILD COMMUNITY

Local efforts by LRGs and multilevel, collaborative spaces demonstrate an unparalleled drive to restore, safeguard and expand the quantity and quality of green spaces and biodiversity within urban areas. The reforestation experience of **Antsirabe** (Madagascar) illustrates this point. Likewise, **Tandil** (Argentina) has planted over 212,000 trees in three years, improving air quality and providing shade. It combined this work with a programme on solid waste management, new recycling points and new solar and wind farms. The province of **Azuay** (Ecuador) aims to plant over a million endogenous trees to preserve and recover the forest heritage of the territory.

In Spain, the green belts of **Terrassa** and **Sant Boi de Llobregat** and the *Congost Natura* project of **Granollers** contribute to establishing interconnected urban green and blue infrastructure. This infrastructure integrates cities with their surrounding environments, ensuring the sustainable and comprehensive conservation of natural, agricultural and forest areas. These LRGs defined this transformation together with citizens, users, workers and property owners, contributing to the sustainability and liveability of the Barcelona metropolitan area, one of the most densely populated areas in Europe.

In these efforts, rural-urban symbiosis plays a key role in addressing challenges related to cities' ecological transition. Intermediary cities have been critical for territorial cohesion. **By adopting integrated territorial approaches and horizontal collaborations, LRGs can enhance ecological resilience, ensure food security and support sustainable agricultural practices. Such actions facilitate resource sharing and economic interdependence, while also addressing socio-economic disparities, unsustainable production and consumption patterns and environmental challenges.** Against this backdrop, intermediary cities are crucial actors for re-evaluating life systems and reestablishing social connections with all population groups, local stakeholders and other levels of government. Notable examples include the Sustainable Fair in the intermediary city of **Lincoln** (Argentina), which serves as a direct platform for producers to meet with consumers. **Valongo** (Portugal) created four urban vegetable gardens with 500 plots, some of which are accessible to people with disabilities, to foster sustainability, organic farming, social inclusion and quality of life. The Greening **Bogotá** project (Colombia) illustrates how in times of food insecurity, establishing public vegetable gardens offers concrete solutions to climate change, serves as a supply of fresh and nutritious products, strengthens community bonds and preserves indigenous plants and seeds.

Heritage lies at the heart of the discussion on culture and the climate crisis, as increasingly acknowledged by global leaders, for example, at COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh. LRGs have long included creative, cultural and heritage perspectives into climate action to envision new futures not bound to the carbon economy. They are increasingly understanding nature and culture as interconnected and incorporate this perspective in activities addressing the climate emergency. Despite the significant potential of cultural heritage to drive climate action and support communities in transitioning to low-carbon, climate-resilient futures, this potential is often overlooked. Preserving natural and cultural heritage, repurposing buildings and safeguarding traditional knowledge are vital for addressing climate change and creating more resilient cities and communities.

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In this regard, the state of **California** (USA) conducted a comprehensive analysis to integrate cultural heritage and climate action, aiming to better comprehend the intersection of culture with climate-related efforts by government entities in the state's different territories. In the historic centre of **Morelia** (Mexico), the city is preserving heritage buildings and monuments for new purposes: fostering creative hubs, reducing environmental stress, enhancing the circular economy and engaging the local community.

Localizing SDG target 13.3 on improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

SDG indicator 13.3.1, which doubles as SDG indicator 4.7.1, aims to measure the extent to which education on global citizenship and sustainable development is mainstreamed in different policies, curricula, teacher education and student assessment. According to the *2023 Sustainable Development Goals Report*, **47% of national curricula in the 100 countries analyzed do not address climate change**. Furthermore, **only one-third of teachers can explain climate change's local impacts and 70% of young people can, at best, grasp the basic principles of climate change**. Applying their competences and skills in education, training, climate issues and public participation, LRGs play a crucial role in localizing SDG target 13.3. Sustainable development topics are broad, and LRGs focus on their interconnection, including ecological ethics; climate action; disaster preparedness education; water, sanitation and hygiene; sustainable food and agriculture education; and net zero emissions.

Under the Green Schools Partnership Programme, **Lusaka** (Zambia) is collaborating with schools, community organizations and businesses to create a holistic and sustainable approach to environmental education. The initiative integrates water, sanitation, hygiene and climate change education principles into the school curriculum. It fosters a sense of collective commitment and responsibility for sustainable practices, addresses the specific needs of diverse communities and promotes equitable access to essential environmental education. The cross-departmental collaboration within the LRG has been critical to enhance the programme's effectiveness. **Taipei City** is promoting small-scale planting on all public school roofs, with a surface of over 166,000 square metres, integrating food and agriculture education and reducing indoor temperatures.

Through a public space reforestation programme, the municipality of **Palestina** (Ecuador) offered trees to schools to foster students' commitment to restoring the ecosystem and minimize pollution. Other cities such as **Matosinhos** and **Pombal** (Portugal) support their schools through regional or international programmes such as the Eco-Schools programme led by the European Blue Flag Association. Schools that develop a plan with their students and community with specific initiatives for sustainability and climate action receive a flag as a reward, a source of pride and motivation for continued and sustained action. **Niš** (Serbia) supports a youth-based NGO that organizes lectures and cleaning actions with entrepreneurs.

BOX 4

BUILDING CAPACITIES AND FOSTERING PARTICIPATION FOR CLIMATE TRANSFORMATION

Beyond direct work with young people and their teachers, LRGs have long raised awareness and built capacities among public and private stakeholders. **Brital** (Lebanon) raises awareness and human and institutional capabilities to mitigate climate change, adapt to it, reduce its impact and provide early warning by holding awareness campaigns in educational institutions and civic gatherings. In **Yaroslavl** (Russia), the First Green Forum focused on the business community to exchange urban greening practices and launch a strategic programme to monitor green areas and restore green funds. **Sultanbeyli** (Türkiye) has prioritized participatory and data-based local strategies to tackle climate change and become more resilient.
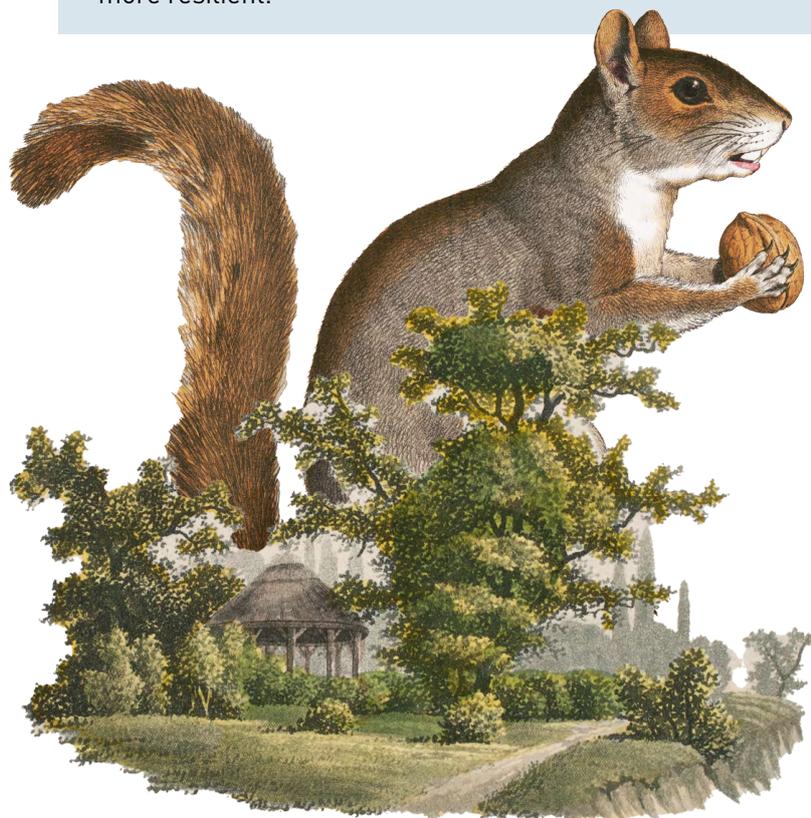
4.

At the global level, initiatives such as UCLG's Climate Resilience Modules 1 and 2, peer learning on climate issues (including the peer learning note *Urban Ecosystem Restoration & Nature-based Solutions* from the INTERLACE project) and the C40 Knowledge Hub provide local policy-makers and practitioners with tools, practical experiences, useful information and LRG insights to advance climate action in their territories. Likewise, since 2010, the Adaptation Fund has invested more than 1 billion USD in climate change adaptation and resilience initiatives, supporting 160 localized projects targeting the most marginalized communities from both urban and rural areas in developing countries and impacting over 43 million people worldwide. For example, a project in central Lao PDR has helped enhance climate resilience in rural, small towns along the country's east-west economic corridor. It provided socially inclusive and climate-resilient water infrastructure, incorporated climate change considerations into urban planning and built awareness and capacities at all levels.

These and other initiatives support the quest of multilateral global governance institutions, including the UN system and LRG networks, to shape and institutionalize climate action at the local level.

BOX 5

THE YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION FUND

Bloomberg Philanthropies is collaborating with UCLG and the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University to deliver the Youth Climate Action Fund. This innovative programme provides technical assistance and funding to support 98 cities worldwide in engaging tens of thousands of youth aged 15 to 24 in designing, producing and overseeing urgent climate solutions, from tree-planting to policy-making. Microgrant-funded efforts, proposed by youth and selected by cities, are expected to ignite awareness and action in communities to advance climate goals as critical as meeting decarbonization targets and reducing consumption-based emissions.

By enhancing city capacities in engaging youth for climate action, the fund directly contributes to SDG 13 targets. Most specifically, it supports target 13.3 by improving education and capacity on climate change mitigation and adaptation, fostering local projects that empower youth to lead sustainable urban transformations. By the end of the programme, LRGs are expected to have improved capacity for climate action and see improved youth knowledge on ways to mitigate or adapt to the impacts of climate change.

4.3 The cross-cutting dimensions of SDG 13 and climate emergency declarations as integrated solutions to the climate crisis

Initiating urgent, profound and consistent reductions in GHG emissions across all sectors is essential for mitigating climate change. In addition to worldwide action for climate-resilient development and expedited implementation of adaptation and mitigation strategies, emissions reduction requires maximizing synergies among SDGs and minimizing their trade-offs. Indeed, tackling issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and increasing inequalities necessitates finding a balance among environmental, social and economic goals. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework for approaching these challenges in a systematic and integrated way. **Understanding the relationships between SDG 13 and SDGs 11, 6 and 7 and strategically planning efforts to localize the 2030 Agenda are critical components of climate action.**

First, to accomplish SDG 11 on creating inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements, LRGs must also prioritize climate action. For example, enhancing public transport (SDG target 11.2) aims to reduce the number of private vehicles, thereby decreasing GHG emissions. Urban planning that prioritizes green spaces and energy-efficient buildings (SDG target 11.7) not only makes cities more liveable but also helps mitigate urban heat islands and reduce overall energy consumption. Cities that adopt waste management and recycling programmes can lower their carbon footprints while improving local environments (SDG target 11.6).

The need for clean water (SDG 6) in human society is taking on increasing importance. As our world progresses, threats to this vital resource are particularly concerning. Climate change-induced temperature spikes pose a significant threat to water security across the world. In the Arab region in particular, 13 countries are already falling below the absolute annual renewable freshwater scarcity threshold, set at 500 cubic metres per capita. This trajectory will exacerbate phenomena such as heatwaves, droughts, flash floods, wildfires and sea level rise, all of which carry profound implications for food security. But the erratic shifts in the planet's climate are not the sole contributing factor. Factors such as population growth, urban congestion, tourist influxes, rising living standards, various forms of waste and excessive consumption are all placing mounting pressure on water security.

Water remains a common good essential for all humanity. Beyond its role in sustaining daily life, water stands as a cornerstone of human dignity, underscoring its status as a fundamental public service.

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The human right to water and sanitation is, however, often inadequately acknowledged and inconsistently respected, with unfair resource distribution. LRGs, including urban centres and rural areas, bear a growing responsibility to ensure access to water and sanitation while mitigating water-related disasters such as floods and droughts. Beyond their commitment – demonstrated, for example, through LRGs' declaration on "Water for Shared Prosperity" after the 2024 World Water Forum in Bali – LRGs have put this responsibility into practice, protecting communities, nature and the water cycle.

The two boxes below illustrate how LRGs are facing one of the most pressing water-, urbanization- and overall climate-related challenges: droughts.

BOX 6

HOW CAPE TOWN FACED AN UNPRECEDENTED DROUGHT

In summer 2018, **Cape Town** (South Africa) faced an unprecedented environmental crisis due to a three-year drought. Described as a one-in-300-year climate event, the drought threatened to leave the city's municipal dams dry. The city's resilience planning models were insufficient and did not anticipate a drought of such magnitude, leading to underestimation of climate change impacts on dam inflows, despite initial assessments indicating water security until 2022.

In response, the city outlined potential emergency water rationing. If necessary, the emergency measures would begin on "Day Zero," when water would be shut off to suburban homes and businesses. The police and military would be placed on standby for possible civil unrest. While Day Zero was ultimately averted, the episode underscores cities' fragility when faced with environmental shocks exacerbated by political, bureaucratic and infrastructure challenges.

According to the OECD, the threat of "Day Zero" prompted significant actions, including risk assessments, communication efforts and regulatory changes during the peak of the drought from 2017 to 2018. The city council appointed a Water Resilience Task Team in May 2017 to develop a Water Resilience Plan with augmentation targets, focusing on groundwater, reuse and desalination. The city's new Water Strategy, released in 2019, aims to transform Cape Town into a water-sensitive city by leveraging diverse water resources, varied infrastructure and ecological principles for flood control, aquifer recharge and water reuse. Additionally, the city is pursuing partnerships with various entities to enhance freshwater quality and manage water pollution.

The Cape Town experience offered several lessons learned, such as the need to strengthen integrated basin governance; advance the water allocation reform to better manage trade-offs and address inequalities; foster accurate data to promote the development of evidence-based policies and decisions; improve technical and economic efficiency and sustainability of water and sanitation services; strengthen capacities; and foster transparency, integrity and stakeholder engagement.

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BOX 7

DROUGHT MITIGATION EFFORTS IN CATALONIA AND THE BARCELONA METROPOLITAN AREA

Catalonia (Spain) has also faced climate change-related droughts. On 2 January 2024, the Catalan Water Agency declared a drought emergency for the Ter-Llobregat reservoir system, affecting over 200 municipalities with a total of six million inhabitants. It activated its emergency plan after water reserves fell below 16%. The region restricted water consumption to 200 litres/person/day (with 90 litres recommended), encompassing domestic, industrial, commercial and public sector use. Specific constraints included a ban on watering gardens (except for trees in public parks, for which municipalities use groundwater for subsistence irrigation), refilling pools in most cases and washing cars at home, as well as limitations on watering grass pitches for sports.

Within the Catalonia region, the **Barcelona Metropolitan Area** has one of the lowest per capita water consumption rates in Europe at around 106 litres/person/day. Building on its progress to reduce household water consumption by around 16% between 1999 and 2021, in 2023, it developed the Strategic Plan for the Comprehensive Water Cycle. This plan seeks to reduce the water deficit that Barcelona could experience and sets objectives for 2050. It also aims to tackle five main challenges: increasing guaranteed water supply and system efficiency; increasing the resilience of the water cycle; enhancing water quality; adapting current systems to future requirements; and improving governance, management, knowledge and transparency.

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (SDG 7) also falls within integrated climate action. Fostering renewable energies and reducing reliance on coal and oil for generating electricity moves significantly towards reducing GHG emissions, enhancing energy security, mitigating climate change and decreasing vulnerability to price fluctuations. Indeed, both SDG 13 and SDG 7 call for a drastic change in our energy consumption to complete a just transition.

Despite improvements in certain components of SDG 7, all global regions show concerning reverse trends for SDG 13. To face these challenges, LRGs have demonstrated many good practices that contribute to both goals. For instance, in line with its overall position on sustainable energy, the ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability network adopted its voluntary 100% Renewables Cities and Regions Energy Compact and created the 100% Renewables Cities and Regions Roadmap. Cities such as **Zhytomyr** (Ukraine), **Rosario** (Argentina) and **Makati** (the Philippines) have signalled their commitments to these goals by joining these initiatives. Showcasing its belief in the need for multistakeholder cooperation, ICLEI also joined the 24/7 Carbon-Free Energy Compact led by Sustainable Energy for All to push for the full decarbonization of electricity systems.

Crucially, creating effective policies requires understanding the various environmental effects of urbanization as well as clean water, sanitation and energy design, manufacturing, project locations and utility operations. For instance, compared to conventional energy plants, many renewable energy technologies produce significantly less emissions of traditional air pollutants over their life cycles. However, manufacturing or constructing these technologies may account for significant emissions or may impact biodiversity and wildlife when technologies are placed in vast areas instead of integrated in existing spaces. Implementing extensive green infrastructure and retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency can be costly and resource-intensive, potentially diverting funds from other essential urban services such as health, education or affordable housing (or even cause gentrification and raise property and rent prices). Reducing emissions from industrial and agricultural processes can sometimes lead to increased water use or water pollution if not carefully managed. LRGs can innovate to monitor the current adverse effects of their SDG-related actions and find solutions to these trade-offs. For example, contrast painting of blade turbines can decrease annual bird collisions and subsequent fatalities from wind power plants.

As climate change continues to pose increasing threats, over 1,900 LRGs in more than 34 countries have declared a climate emergency. These declarations acknowledge the crisis affecting all aspects of local life, humans, nature and the planet as a whole. They compel municipalities to make urgently needed changes such as emissions reductions; rethink the climate impacts of urbanization and the provision of water, sanitation and energy for all; and build resilience. LRGs declaring a climate emergency thus go beyond mere declarations: they are investing resources and enacting policies to address the root causes of GHG emissions, while encouraging engagement from their community. This movement underscores **the critical role that local leadership plays in the global fight against climate change, the importance of localized, holistic strategies and plans that tackle climate impacts and inequalities, and the need for coordinated action at all levels of governance**.

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One of the first cities that declared a climate emergency was Bonn (Germany) in 2019, sending a strong signal to national and international legislation. Building on its declaration, in 2023, the council adopted the Climate Plan 2035. The plan includes an overall strategy with seven fields of action, as well as 37 action plans with over 200 concrete first steps, describing what the city must do to achieve climate neutrality and stay within the 1.5°C threshold per the Paris Agreement. More than 320 randomly selected citizens, numerous important stakeholders, city employees and municipal enterprises all contributed to the plan through four Bonn4Future climate forums. Based on its successful emergency declaration, the German city, together with ICLEI, launched Daring Cities in 2020. This global initiative supports urban leaders to take on the climate emergency, and it drove growing global momentum through climate emergency declarations and preparations towards COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, including a 10-point Call for Transformation.

Another notable city is **Makati** (the Philippines), which is often hit by typhoons (20 per year in the country) and increasingly intense and unpredictable storms. As part of the broader Comprehensive City Development Plan, the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan includes incentives to encourage flexible, innovative and disaster-resilient planning and actions in the development process. This plan encompasses policy formulation, land use and urban planning, infrastructure, housing and solid waste management, among other areas, and builds on multilevel and multistakeholder collaborations.

To summarize, climate emergency declarations demonstrate it is critical to thoroughly assess the existing and potential trade-offs between these goals and the actions that LRGs and other actors put into practice to achieve each of them. Integrated policy approaches that consider the interdependencies among climate action, urbanization, water management and energy efficiency for all are essential. Achieving a harmonious balance between sustainable urban development and climate action requires careful, inclusive and strategic planning and policy-making that considers both environmental and social dimensions of sustainability.
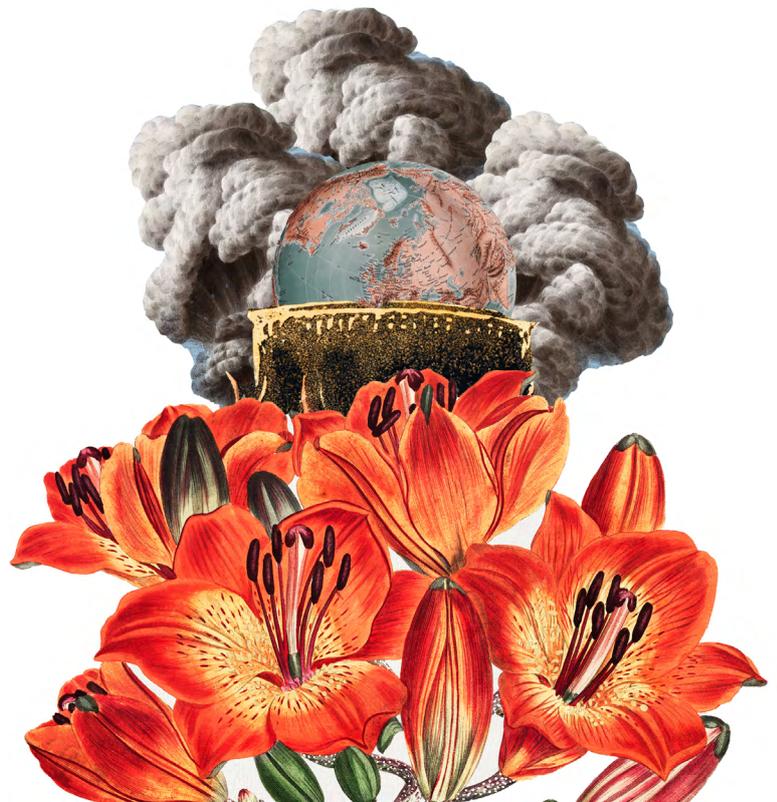
5.   CHALLENGES

Top-down approaches and the lack of sound multi-level coordination schemes hamper local contributions to achieving SDG 13. As discussed above, LRGs are rarely included in NDCs or other nation-level plans and strategies, and urban content in these instruments has been rather scarce and vague across all world regions. LRGs are still regarded as mere implementers of national decisions, undermining their capacity to drive the innovation and transformation required by the 2030 Agenda. Paragraph 161 of the COP28 Global Stocktake decision urged UNFCCC Parties to ensure multilevel action, operationalizing one of the most important goals of the LRG constituency in the climate negotiations.

Several countries have already demonstrated numerous models of such collaboration. In Japan, the Ministry of Environment secured climate neutrality commitments from 300+ cities and prefectures. These commitments serve as a precursor to committing to climate neutrality in the revised Japanese NDC. In the USA, the revised NDC praises commitments by cities, states and Native American nations as the basis to increase national climate ambitions after the country rejoined the Paris Agreement in 2021. Many countries in the Global South including the Dominican Republic, Rwanda, Chile and Morocco elevated their national commitments in collaboration with their LRGs, in particular through support from the NDC Partnership. Parties are invited to submit their second NDCs with a timeframe of implementation until 2035. While every nation will define their own way of implementing such a commitment, the COP28 CHAMP initiative endorsed by 72 nations as of April 2024 offers an opportunity for a coordinated and collaborative approach. In it, LRGs are involved in designing and implementing these new NDCs to be presented by Parties at COP30 in Belém in 2025.

Limited technical and financial support also pose critical barriers to achieving SDG 13. According to a recent analysis by UNFCCC, developing countries require close to 6 trillion USD by 2030 to fulfil their NDCs. The United Nations Environment Programme suggests that adaptation costs alone could potentially rise to 330 billion USD annually by 2030. Fulfilling COP28 commitments and proposals requires additional skills, technologies and policies. However, and despite LRGs providing a large share of the public investments necessary to comply with and implement them (in the OECD, 70% of public investments), **decentralization processes are generally not mature enough to finance ambitious investment schemes necessary to meet the challenges LRGs face**.

Recently, direct subnational access to the Loss and Damage Fund has been introduced, and sustainable urbanization has been recognized as a non-market approach under Paris Agreement article 6.8. LRGs' bankability has been increased through project pipeline facilities such as the Transformative Actions Programme or Cities Finance Facility, multilateral development banks and international finance architecture have been reformed, and initiatives such as the Adaptation Fund, through its enhanced direct access mechanisms, have allowed countries to directly secure funding and create local projects through accredited national implementing entities. All these initiatives offer valuable opportunities to broaden the share of national and international climate finance allocated to LRGs. In addition, LRGs can act as catalysts for unlocking the potential of their populations through soft loan schemes, green bonds and cooperative models, for example, and of the private sector through energy performance certificate facilities, for instance.

At the same time, while many LRGs possess innovation skills and have numerous potential projects, some are not investment-ready. They require enhanced capacities to conduct feasibility studies and develop business models. To effectively harness local potential, it is crucial to support LRGs in bridging the gap between their climate and energy plans and adequate financing solutions. This work is particularly necessary to promote capacity-raising mechanisms in small island developing States and least developed countries (SDG target 13.b).

6. OPPORTUNITIES

Despite the many challenges, significant opportunities for localizing and achieving SDG 13 exist:

● **Local climate budgeting, climate funds and public procurement ensure targeted, efficient allocation of resources to effectively address climate change impacts that respond to citizens' and local stakeholders' needs, innovations and capabilities.** Public procurement accounts for 15 to 20% of global GDP, and LRGs are responsible for almost 50% of procurement decisions. **Tampere**'s (Finland) climate budget integrates climate action into the city's budget and financial statements. It monitors progress towards the goal of carbon neutrality and the adequacy of implemented actions, while also providing information for decision-making and increasing transparency for residents. **Catalonia**'s (Spain) Climate Fund, backed by the 2017 Climate Change Law, has financed research and development projects in climate change mitigation and adaptation. LRGs, research centres, private companies and civil society organizations have implemented such projects. The fund obtains 50% of its resources from the CO2 emission tax applied to motor vehicles and 20% from the tax targeting facilities that impact the environment. In **Tshwane** (South Africa), the city's procurement officials are encouraged to systematically include green requirements in all tenders, including as minimum criteria in sectors such as transport, food, energy and construction. The Tshwane Sustainable Public Procurement Strategy seeks to stimulate a domestic market for more sustainable goods and services, support resource efficiency across economic sectors and reduce GHG emissions.

● **By developing 15/30-minute cities or neighbourhoods, LRGs have aligned their strategic planning to decarbonization and re-naturing scenarios**. While reducing congestion, car dependence and air pollution, these models also ensure that daily resources and amenities are accessible on foot or by bike, fostering equality. **Buenos Aires**'s (Argentina) Third Climate Action Plan 2050 targets a reduction of more than 50% in emissions by 2030 compared to 2015. It aims for total carbon neutrality by 2050. Among its four areas of action, Buenos Aires has prioritized building a city of proximity, in which pedestrians can access all necessary spaces and services quickly and closely. It also aims to foster an inclusive city, guaranteeing fair distribution of the benefits of climate action and including all neighbourhoods.

In Malta, the **Local Councils' Association**, in partnership with Transport Malta and the Planning Authority, is implementing the Slow Streets initiative, geared towards giving streets back to people rather than cars and focusing primarily on residents' wellbeing. These new strategies plan to ensure safe, sustainable, healthy and efficient mobility within localities, in addition to providing more public open space that contributes to better quality of life. These initiatives offer residents the chance to experience their neighbourhoods anew, with a network of safe walking and cycling corridors linking civic landmarks, medical facilities, children's creative play areas and other essential services. **Tbilisi**'s (Georgia) comprehensive approach to proximity includes a superblocks programme, a Cycling Master Plan, a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, the construction of bus rapid transit corridors and community involvement in the creation of new parks in the city.

● **Participatory budgeting, citizen participation and community-led climate action are essential levers for sustainable and inclusive responses to climate change.** From campaigns to raise awareness among youth on the importance of sustainability and climate action to the involvement of local communities and stakeholders in the different stages of climate action planning and implementation, these initiatives demonstrate the power of grassroots engagement in driving meaningful change. Communities can tailor climate strategies to their specific needs and contexts, ensuring more effective and equitable outcomes. Such participatory approaches not only enhance the relevance and acceptance of climate policies but also foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among local populations, ultimately leading to more resilient and adaptive societies.

Participatory budgeting has proven to be an effective tool for gauging climate change and adaptation needs. It provides a quick and cost-efficient method for identifying real-time needs and strategic resource allocation. Additionally, it can be used to detect trends and forecast the location, timing and severity of climate change impacts, similar to how a barometer predicts weather patterns. Its capacity to rebuild trust in

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public institutions, foster community ownership of the commons and enhance citizen participation in decision-making is likewise essential to revitalize democratic systems necessary for driving societal transformation.

A growing number of cities and regions are using participatory budgeting to find shared solutions to various local effects of climate change. **Arzgir** (Russia) converted abandoned buildings into fire stations and renovated and cleaned water reservoirs, allowing firefighters to reach most of the municipality in less than 20 minutes. Also in Russia, the **Bashkortostan** region built an emergency information system to alert local people to wildfires in agricultural areas using loudspeakers, among other means. In Senegal, **Dalifort-Foirail**'s communities adopted various projects to install rainwater drainage systems to tackle increasingly frequent problems with flooding. **Luhwindja** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) built seven bridges and repaired other infrastructure destroyed by heavy rains and flooding, enabling remote and rural communities to remain connected. **Yaoundé 1** (Cameroon) ensured people's access to water through a community fountain in the Etoudi neighbourhood during the dry season, allowing it to ration water use and reduce waste.

Cuenca (Ecuador) used participatory budgeting processes to better understand the needs of residents in the municipality's 21 rural parishes with the highest levels of poverty and migration, who are also most affected by the city's environmental hazards. Most of these projects were related to water access and management. A study conducted by the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy, UCLG and other institutions in 2020 found that the 10 cities analyzed with available data (small and middle-sized cities from both the Global North and South) spent around 22 million USD in climate adaptation and/or mitigation efforts through 900 participatory budgeting-approved projects over a two year period. These results demonstrate how this practice can propel climate action.

Creating partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders also requires listening to, encouraging, enabling and sustaining innovative community-led practices. Among others, LRGs can contribute to this by adjusting existing regulatory frameworks and providing land, means, opportunities and funding to facilitate the shift towards more sustainable lifestyles and human settlements, as demonstrated throughout UCLG's 2022 *GOLD VI Report: Pathways to Urban and Territorial Equality*. The **Basque Country** (Spain) has launched the Energía-Ekiola project, which supports citizen cooperatives in generating renewable energy. This initiative particularly aims to reduce inequalities and contribute to achieving the region's goal of 20% renewable energy in final energy consumption.

● **Human rights-based and social justice approaches to climate action have been embraced by numerous LRGs globally to address environmental sustainability and social equity.** LRGs have integrated these principles into their resource allocation, policies, programmes and projects, seeking to overcome territorial economic dependence on unsustainable natural resource extraction. At the same time, they aim to tackle the uneven distribution of risks for marginalized groups, such as displacement, gentrification and commodification. For example, through its urban agriculture programme, the **Nouakchott** region (Mauritania) aspires to achieve food self-sufficiency, reversing its traditional dependence on food imports. Such policies advance a paradigm shift, prioritizing quality of life and wellbeing rather than growth and economic performance and placing care at the core of life sustainability. The rethinking and prioritization of local and global commons are key for solidarity and collective prosperity and resilience, and LRGs can further protect, revitalize and strengthen such efforts.

● **Decentralized cooperation has emerged as a key driver for local and sustainable actions.** In the vein of reversing traditional North-South relations towards more horizontal collaborations that put Global South local knowledge and values upfront, decentralized cooperation is often considered the best investment in capacity development. By fostering collaboration at the local level, it brings climate initiatives closer to the communities most affected, ensuring that actions are tailored to local needs and conditions. This approach enhances local ownership and accountability, engages local institutions and actors and leverages local knowledge and participation. As seen throughout this paper, global networks of cities have been particularly active in supporting city-to-city cooperation for environmental and climate change initiatives.

The **Barcelona Provincial Council** (Spain) is at the cutting edge of decentralized cooperation practices. The council has launched several projects with the general objective of promoting the resilience of Mediterranean landscapes and forests in the face of climate change, addressing the impact of land abandonment and highlighting the importance of protecting natural and cultural heritage. In addition, work has been done to strengthen the capacities of actors from

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different Mediterranean countries, empower municipalities and local communities in Lebanon and promote new cooperation in forestry matters with local entities in Morocco.

● **The Loss and Damage Mechanism serves as an opportunity to promote a just transition and climate justice, especially for the Global South (including least developed countries and small island developing States) and marginalized communities.** This fund, which resulted from strong lobbying from the African parties, was adopted by the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) and the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA). It focuses on assisting developing countries that are particularly exposed to the adverse effects of climate change in responding to economic and non-economic losses and damages associated with these adverse effects, including extreme weather events and slow onset events.

Under a whole-of-governance approach, this mechanism could foster a renewed approach to mitigating harm and planning future development and growth. Cities and territories have an opportunity to identify the losses and damages regarding biodiversity, identity, culture and other parameters that this fund may encompass. To further the fund's purposes, LRGs can identify territorial-level issues and support mobilizing solutions.

● **The IPCC has recognized LRGs' role in climate action.** The IPCC's 2018 *Summary for Policymakers* calls for drawing on local knowledge and strengthening the capacity of municipal teams to support local, national and global policy-making. To go beyond national, regional and global figures, scientists need to dig deeper into locally adapted contextualized knowledge. At the same time, local policy-makers need to leverage the scientific parameters and knowledge in order to evaluate the ambition of planning mechanisms and tools. Together, they can plan smart territories in an integrated manner, applying the different global agendas but focusing on climate action as the key lever. **Joining strengths between scientists and policy-makers to better assess local action and multilevel governance in a renewed multilateralism is thus key.**

● **The new global CHAMP initiative presents opportunities for LRGs to influence national-level climate action instruments.** The CHAMP initiative, adopted at COP28 (the most ambitious, inclusive, and fruitful conference yet for multilevel action and urbanization, according to LGMA), has begun developing a strategy

for countries that have endorsed the CHAMP pledge. **As multilevel dialogues for climate action are still being defined, LRGs have many opportunities to support their national governments in defining climate strategies.** According to LRGs, this process should allow (a) consulting across the different spheres of governance; (b) collaborating to unlock mitigation and adaptation action opportunities; (c) creating inclusive institutional and informal processes when defining the new NDCs; (d) supporting investments in NDCs throughout the different spheres of governance and stakeholders; (e) undertaking regular and inclusive country-led reviews of national and subnational progress on implementing CHAMP commitments through existing processes; and (f) meeting with LRG leaders, among the CHAMP endorsers, at a global High-Level Political Dialogue on Multilevel Climate Action in the leadup to both COP29 and COP30 to share good practices and lessons learned in implementing the CHAMP commitments.

Although new parameters have entered the process with the UNFCCC COP progress, a proper measurement of the implementation of SDG 13 and its targets may be useful to be addressed in conjunction with the UNFCCC resolutions.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LRGs respond first to climate disasters, drive community action for the ecological transition and serve as guardians of our commons. Complementing LRGs' efforts and innovations, the multilateral global governance system (including the UN and LRG networks) is helping to shape and institutionalize climate action at the local level. The latest COP outcomes, particularly from COP28, target more inclusive, ambitious and multilevel action and place a renewed focus on social and ecological dimensions. In this vein, climate action can better respond to communities' needs and priorities to build just, net zero, nature-positive and land-neutral societies.

Monitoring the implementation of SDG 13 must go beyond evaluating the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Acknowledging the current state of the planet, accelerated actions by all stakeholders are needed to stay under the 1.5°C threshold. Strengthening and operationalizing the commitments made by LRGs and the parties, as well as ensuring NDCs and other national plans and strategies include LRGs, will be necessary to raise ambitions towards 2030 and 2050. Action is needed despite the pressing social and economic problems, threats such as wars and military conflicts, and short-term policy priorities.

This paper offers several recommendations for driving bold, holistic and inclusive climate action:

● **Foster collaboration across governmental tiers:** Ensure LRGs' active and substantive involvement in shaping, executing, overseeing and assessing NDCs, NAPs and long-term strategies to reduce GHG emissions. Establish supportive policy and regulatory frameworks that advance and accelerate climate action from the bottom up, acknowledging soft knowledge and science-based data from different stakeholders.

● **Enhance complementary actions by UN agencies, LRG networks and other actors for strengthened multilateralism:** Support efforts to build inclusive multilateralism and ensure ambitious outcomes of the UN Summit of the Future.

● **Tackle structural North-South and socio-spatial inequalities:** Develop a holistic approach to climate losses and damages that puts marginalized communities and Indigenous populations at the core of planet restoration. Include LRGs in the governance of the new Loss and Damage Mechanism, from assessment and implementation to evaluation.

● **Localize finance for local climate action:** Furthermore, systemically integrate the LRG constituency in multilevel governance and finance strategies and global climate conversations and agreements.

● **Support an integrated perspective on SDG 13:** Consider the holistic nature of the 2030 Agenda, leveraging synergies among SDGs while minimizing trade-offs. Uphold the principles of leaving no one behind and fostering transparency at all times.

● **Promote climate justice in urban re-naturing:** Ensure that expanded re-naturing efforts focus on social inclusion and reconnecting all people to natural systems. Combine LRG and civil society actions and participation under a human rights-based approach to bring climate justice into the re-naturing of urban environments

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