



# **THE ICLEI MONTRÉAL COMMITMENT AND STRATEGIC VISION 2018 - 2024**

**BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE  
URBAN WORLD**

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# THE MONTRÉAL COMMITMENT AND STRATEGIC VISION 2018 - 2024

## COMMITMENTS

**SCALE UP**  
AND EXPAND THE MODEL OF  
**SUSTAINABLE**  
CITIES AND REGIONS

MAKE SUSTAINABILITY A  
**FUNDAMENTAL**  
PART OF ALL LOCAL AND  
GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

TACKLE THE MOST  
**PRESSING ISSUES**  
OF OUR TIME TO PROTECT THE  
LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF  
**CITIZENS**

UNDERTAKE A  
**COLLECTIVE**  
**EFFORT**  
FOR GLOBAL CHANGE ACROSS ALL  
SECTORS AND LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

**LOW EMISSION**  
DEVELOPMENT



**RESILIENT**  
DEVELOPMENT



**CIRCULAR**  
DEVELOPMENT



**EQUITABLE AND**  
**PEOPLE-CENTERED**  
DEVELOPMENT



**NATURE-BASED**  
DEVELOPMENT



## PATHWAYS

## POLICY

OUR POLICY APPROACHES  
**TO DRIVE GLOBAL**  
TRANSFORMATION

**SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE**  
& MANAGEMENT: SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IS A  
COLLECTIVE EFFORT

**INNOVATION & SCIENCE:**  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
MUST WORK WITH  
**AND FOR ALL**

FINANCE: SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT NEEDS  
**INNOVATIVE**  
MODELS OF FINANCE





# WE LIVE IN AN URBAN CENTURY

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## WE LIVE IN AN URBAN CENTURY

More than ever, our cities and surrounding regions are on the front line of a globally changing world and need to rapidly adapt to shifts in nearly every dimension of urban life.

The impacts of increasing urbanization, demographic change, climate change, technological advancement and development challenges, including public health crises, and the need to end systemic inequities and poverty, are particularly visible in our urban environments.

Many perceive our cities and surrounding regions as centers of opportunity and prosperity and, indeed, they are important hubs of economy, innovation, production, consumption, social and cultural interaction. At the same time, numerous cities are places where deep poverty and inequity prevail, and where severe natural degradation proliferates with ecosystems pushed past their thresholds.

As our cities rise, grow and change, so do the demands on our finite natural resources, thus further reinforcing disparities in communities across the world.

Therefore, the only way forward is to urgently reverse this trend and drastically re-orient the patterns of our daily life, our built environment and the natural systems in and around our cities.

Over centuries, we have built urban environments and today they accommodate half of humanity. For decades we experimented, pioneered and made efforts to create sustainable cities and neighboring regions. In many cases we have been successful. Now, we must accelerate and scale up these experiences to create an entire urban world that is sustainable.





## OUR MONTRÉAL COMMITMENT: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE URBAN WORLD

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## OUR MONTRÉAL COMMITMENT: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE URBAN WORLD

When a group of forward-thinking cities founded ICLEI in 1990, they took action before sustainable development was the predominant model for change. Today, in ICLEI, we are mainstreaming sustainable development in all aspects within and interacting with our shared urban future.

Being part of ICLEI nurtures our collective potential for creating change. Our ICLEI network of more than 1,500 members and network-cities is widely recognized as a leading organization with visionary local leaders acting worldwide. We represent small, large and often fast growing cities, vast metropolitan areas, capitals, provinces and regions. Yet, we are deeply united in our commitment to inspire, learn from and work with each other on our shared journey towards a sustainable urban world.

With new UN sustainability frameworks in place towards 2030 and 2050, notably the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda – each for which we advocated so intensively over the last decades – we can now, more than ever, shape the global sustainable development agenda in collaboration with nations, subnational governments, business and civil society.

Therefore, we - the ICLEI members - commit:

- > to scale up and expand the model of sustainable cities and regions to create a sustainable urban world. We regard sustainable development not just as smart but as fundamental to life on Earth; it is a right of all and not a privilege of a few.
- > to shift the balance towards sustainable development in and among our jurisdictions and make sustainability a fundamental and inextricable part of all local and global development.
- > to tackle the most pressing issues of our time in more fundamental and systemic ways than ever before and, in doing so, take profound decisions in the long-term interests of our citizens.
- > to undertake a collective effort for global change, pushing for action by all sectors and levels of government. The sum of our efforts, actions and policies will be a catalyst for the global change that humanity needs in this urban century.





## OUR VISION: ACTING THROUGH 5 STRATEGIC PATHWAYS

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As a compass to manage our rapidly changing urban and global environment and to transform our cities and regions that surround them, we – the ICLEI members- will drive action through five critical and strategic pathways which are closely interlinked.

## OUR VISION: ACTING THROUGH 5 STRATEGIC PATHWAYS

To achieve a sustainable urban world, we will undertake transformative actions that support:

### LOW EMISSION DEVELOPMENT

to curb climate change, create new economic opportunities and improve the health of people and natural systems.

- > We will drastically reduce all environmentally harmful pollutants and emissions from heating, cooling, lighting and food systems as well as reduce noise. We will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in all our activities, especially in our transport, waste and building sector. We commit to implement the Paris Climate Agreement goal of keeping the global warming increase to well below 2°C and will pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- > We will aim to achieve climate neutrality in our own infrastructure and operations before mid-century and actively promote the renewable energy era, by divesting from fossil fuels, by committing to 100 percent renewable energy and by using nature-based solutions.
- > We will promote sustainable passenger and freight mobility, prioritize clean fuel policies and electric vehicles from renewable energy where possible, and give priority to walking, cycling, public transit and shared mobility as part of people-centered solutions.

### NATURE-BASED DEVELOPMENT

to protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecosystems in and around our cities, which underpin key aspects of our local economies and upon which we depend for the well-being and resilience of our communities.

- > We will prioritize healthy local environments, in which air, water, soil and all natural resources that sustain life and health are protected and nurtured.
- > We will deploy strategies and plans that use the potential nature has to provide essential ecosystem services and to unlock new economic opportunities in our jurisdictions.
- > We will apply nature-based solutions, use blue and green infrastructure options and promote green zones to reconnect and engage with nature in our new urban world.

## CIRCULAR DEVELOPMENT

and new models of production and consumption to build sustainable societies that use recyclable, sharable and regenerative resources, to end the linear model of “produce, consume, discard” and to meet the material/development needs of a growing global population.

- > We will decouple urban, economic development from resource consumption and environmental degradation and factor environmental and social costs into the price of goods and services. We will encourage equitable access to resources and create closed-loop urban and peri-urban systems to end linear economic activity.
- > We will support new local economies that are productive and not extractive, where resources are exchanged and not wasted. We will prioritize sustainable waste management options including prevention, re-use and recycling of waste.
- > We will work with the business sector from early-market engagement to the delivery of solutions that support local sustainability goals and that meet the needs of all citizens. We will use our procurement power to green our economies.

## RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

to anticipate, prevent, absorb and recover from shocks and stresses, in particular those brought about by rapid environmental, technological, social and demographic change, and to improve essential basic response structures and functions.

- > We will make resilience a core part of our municipal strategies and prepare for new risks and impacts taking into account the rights and needs of vulnerable sections of our society.
- > We will continuously strengthen our essential systems, including our municipal operations, to prevent, absorb and recover from shocks, stresses and unforeseen changes, alleviating the burden on people and the environment.
- > We will pursue a transparent and inclusive approach on resilience that will enhance trust in our institutions and the processes that support them.

## EQUITABLE AND PEOPLE-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT

to build more just, livable and inclusive urban communities and address poverty.

- > We will pursue processes and patterns of an “inclusive development for all” that safeguard the natural support systems for human life.
- > We will ensure that the natural and built environment in and around cities improves livability and safety, mitigates disease, promotes human health and well-being. We pursue secure and safe access to food, water, energy, sanitation for all, culture and education, as well as clean air and soil.
- > We will create and sustain human-centered, safe, and culturally vibrant communities where tangible and non-tangible cultural heritage activities are important assets and where diversity is woven into the social fabric.

# OUR POLICY APPROACHES TO DRIVE GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION

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By applying sustainable development principles within a local and regional context, ICLEI members can effectively address and even reverse detrimental practices, bridging divides and connecting actors, sectors and regions of the world.

To support this commitment and strategic vision, we will strengthen transformative, innovative niches of sustainability, undertake necessary regulation, mitigate and manage social and environmental risk and halt the many manifestations of unsustainable behavior in our jurisdictions.

## SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

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### WE WILL PRIORITIZE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY ACROSS OUR ADMINISTRATIONS AND COMMUNITIES.

Diversity in race, color, religion, creed, gender, age, physical and mental capabilities and sexual orientation will be a source of strength, innovation and new ideas. We celebrate the diversity of the communities we represent and ensure that the distinct voices and interests within them are heard.

### WE WILL STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AT A REGIONAL SCALE.

Cities are inextricably linked with and depend on the peri-urban and rural areas and their ecosystems. We will therefore formulate and implement urban sustainable development strategies that are designed with a territorial and supply-chain approach.



## **WE WILL BRING THE VOICE OF OUR CITIZENS TO THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEBATE.**

Local, national and global policy must be shaped from the ground up. Our governments are the closest to the citizens of the world, and we can best demonstrate how development decisions impact their real lives, every day. It is our duty to engage with the people of our communities, to understand their perspectives and to spread the message globally. We will unite our voices and advocate for appropriate, formal consultation and hearings at all relevant international organizations, agencies and institutions.

## **WE WILL FOSTER STRONG PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY.**

Delivering on the global sustainable development goals requires coordinated action across national, regional and local governments, multilateral organizations, international agencies, research and development institutions, as well as civil society. We will push to redefine sustainable development as a joint effort, positioning all levels of government to rapidly advance global sustainability goals and seek support for our actions, including finance, capacity building, research and innovation. We will work in partnership, from the UN level to the local level, to expand sustainability across the urban world.

## **INNOVATION & SCIENCE: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MUST WORK WITH AND FOR ALL**

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### **WE WILL USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AS A TOOL FOR INCLUSION AND SAFEGUARD SUSTAINABILITY-DRIVEN DIGITALIZATION.**

Our connected, technological world creates many new challenges and risks for sustainable cities, including data security risks, increased infrastructure vulnerability and large resource use. At the same time, technology provides new tools for community engagement, data collection and co-creation of solutions. We will promote conscious, sustainability-driven use of these tools to promote citizen-driven action, crowdsourced ideas and co-designed solutions, bridging all forms of the social divide. We will use these open processes to empower communities and to enable citizens to drive digitalization transparently, democratically, safely, responsibly and in line with sustainability principles.

## **WE WILL PROMOTE EVIDENCE-DRIVEN AND SCIENCE-BASED POLICY AND ACTION AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.**

Scientific evidence and practitioner expertise are the foundations of sound policy. We will improve the collection, creation and dissemination of scientifically sound knowledge and accurate information and enhance transparency and accountability in the process. We will take such information to national and global conversations, making sure that decisions are connected to what happens on the ground. We will empower our officials and leaders to collaborate with the scientific community, increase funding for urban research, craft and jointly pursue targeted research agendas as well as co-create and apply new knowledge and insights.

## **WE WILL DRIVE INNOVATION THROUGH CITY-BUSINESS COLLABORATION AND CREATE SPACE FOR OPEN INNOVATION.**

Participatory planning and development has entered a new age of co-design and co-creation. We will set up partnerships with institutions and communities to generate ideas, test solutions and evaluate the potential impacts of new policies based on real-life scenarios.

## **FINANCE: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS INNOVATIVE MODELS OF FINANCE**

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### **WE WILL SHIFT THE FINANCING AND PROCUREMENT LANDSCAPE.**

All the aforementioned activity requires financing and we will seek funding partnerships to support our long term commitment. Making funding more directly accessible to all levels of government and distributing that same funding more appropriately is essential to advance sustainable development at our level.

We will push to unlock financing for our projects and will design innovative local mechanisms to raise capital and increase sustainable investments. We will use our public procurement potential as an instrument to accelerate the uptake of sustainable and innovative products and services.



## **Sustainable development is the only viable pathway for global change in today's world.**

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

The ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision is our pledge to make sustainable development the only model for development in the urban 21st century. Our joint programs, projects, initiatives, research, capacity building and advocacy in ICLEI drive worldwide action. Our mutual support for and solidarity with one another are core reasons why we are part of ICLEI. Our interactions build a global movement that includes a growing number of local and regional governments worldwide. We spark local action at a global scale and in doing so we leverage the power of the ICLEI network. The world is watching our actions and takes cues from our ambition.

This ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision “Building a Sustainable Urban World” was adopted by the ICLEI Council on 30 May 2018, in advance to the ICLEI World Congress 2018 in Montréal, Canada and is referred to as the ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision 2018 - 2024. This ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision provides strategic orientation for action by ICLEI members and network cities, of any size, at any subnational level, on any continent and where a sustainable model of development may soon take hold or is already well ongoing. It lays out how ICLEI members and network-cities advance sustainable urban development, now through 2024, locally and globally, in an era where new game-changing global frameworks have come into force, including the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda, and where a new model of sustainable development governance that includes more stakeholders is emerging.

The ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision informs the ICLEI Global Action Plan 2018 - 2021 that provides an overview of programs, projects, initiatives, research, capacity building and advocacy that ICLEI offices will undertake, now through 2021, and in which ICLEI members and network cities can participate to fulfill the ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision 2018 - 2024.









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