Talanoa and Beyond:
Raising Ambition with Cities and Regions

"When we learn about what is actually being delivered at the local level, we may find that our NDCs can be enhanced relatively easily. Because so much is already happening there that has not yet been accounted for."

H.E. Frank Bainimarama, COP23 President and Prime Minister of Fiji

Each tier of government (national, regional, local) has a unique and potentially complementary role to play in delivering low emission and climate resilient development. This means that effectively co-ordinated multi-level action can help nations implement their NDCs. Without this, achieving success will be much harder.
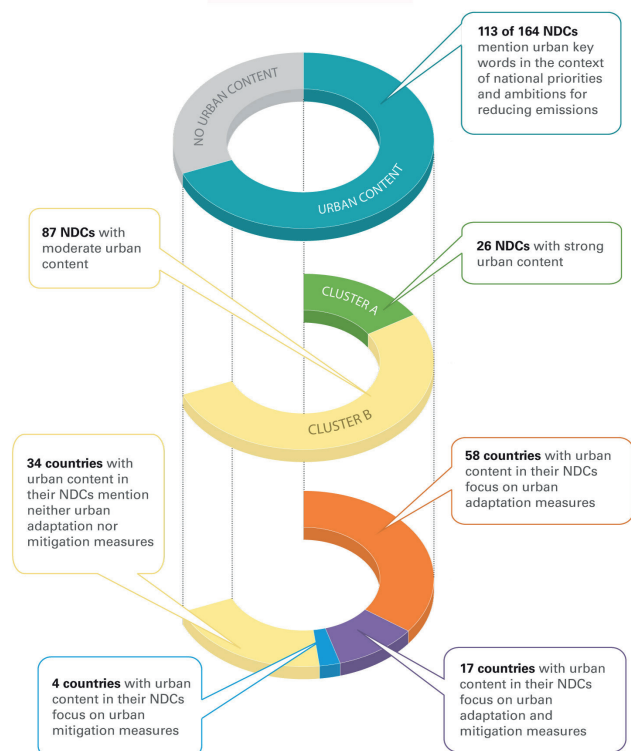
The need for enhanced multilevel governance to implement the NDCs

The Paris Agreement aims to hold the increase in global average temperatures to "*well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels… and increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.*" However, according to the UNEP 2016 Emissions Gap Report, current national pledges would lead to an increase in global mean temperatures of between 3.0 and 3.2 degrees by 2100.

National governments can find strategic and cost-effective ways to increase ambition and deliver results. A clear option is to integrate regional and local governments in NDC (re)formulation, development and implementation. Indeed, without this multilevel action it is likely that NDC implementation will fail. Why? Urban settlements contain high and increasing concentrations of people, infrastructure and capital at risk from climate change, and many high-emitting sectors can be found in urban areas (e.g. waste, transport and buildings). These urban centres are highly dependent on their rural hinterlands; hence, a coherent policy approach depends on multilevel decision-making and coordination.

Research by UN-Habitat shows that 113 out of 164 NDCs submitted by August 2016 reference the urban dimension, particularly targeting climate adaptation (see figure). Since then, all governments have committed to the New Urban Agenda (NUA) – a comprehensive agenda to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level. NDCs can now become a useful vehicle for national governments to meet their NUA commitments.

Two-thirds of all NDCs contain urban content – but how will it be addressed?

NO URBAN CONTENT

URBAN CONTENT

113 of 164 NDCs mention urban key words in the context of national priorities and ambitions for reducing emissions

87 NDCs with moderate urban content

CLUSTER A

26 NDCs with strong urban content

CLUSTER B

34 countries with urban content in their NDCs mention neither urban adaptation nor mitigation measures

58 countries with urban content in their NDCs focus on urban adaptation measures

4 countries with urban content in their NDCs focus on urban mitigation measures

17 countries with urban content in their NDCs focus on urban adaptation and mitigation measures

giz
Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

I·C·L·E·I
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

UN❂HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

The Talanoa Dialogue presents a unique opportunity to co-design an approach to multilevel NDC implementation, by openly discussing what is needed, and jointly raising the bar for inclusive and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

<div style="background:#e0e0e0;">

Why multilevel action?
Benefits for national governments

- Engendering a culture of collaborative governance that leads to success
- Increasing the ambition of the NDC by including subnational governments' targets and actions
- Improving the likelihood and success rate of policy delivery and implementation by including high-emitting urban sectors and at-risk infrastructure and capital
- Reducing the costs of meeting targets by widening the scope of possible actions to include 'low-hanging fruits' in urban areas
- Improving access to data and the flow of knowledge for effective reporting and analysis
- Enabling a coordinated effort that can be monitored

</div>

Ways to raise the ambition of NDCs through enhanced subnational involvement

National governments have options for enabling local and subnational planning and action to accelerate climate action.

Short-term target: Getting the NDC on track for implementation

Now is a critical time to set the course for ambitious commitments and for successful implementation of the NDCs - including defined contributions from the subnational level. Here are a few examples of measures that national governments can take.

Explore the role of cities and regions in NDC implementation

The Talanoa Dialogue can be used to hold a multilevel governance discussion on how to best divide tasks between local, regional and national levels of government (see also page 4 → Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogues).

Devise policies to enable action

Many NDCs identify initiatives in sectors with urban relevance (e.g. transport, buildings, and waste). National governments can appraise if appropriate governance arrangements are in place to implement NDC initiatives at the urban scale. They can address bottlenecks through institutional and regulatory improvements. Good practices can help (see further reading).

Formulate policy targets for the subnational level together with local decision makers

To engender ownership and focus climate action at the local level in all priority sectors, national governments can break down. Differentiated targets for particular cities and regions in a country, developed join tly with these levels' decision makers, are ideal (e.g. CO$_2$ emission reductions, modal share of public transport, share of renewable energy).

Example:

The Energy Efficiency Demand Side Management (EEDSM) programme of South Africa is managed by the national government. The programme supports municipalities in their efforts to reduce electricity consumption by optimising their use of energy. Selected municipalities receive grants for the planning and implementation of energy efficient technologies ranging from traffic and street lighting to energy efficiency in buildings and water service infrastructure. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) supports EEDSM on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as part of the South African-German Energy Programme (SAGEN).

---

carbonn Climate Registry

The carbon*n*® Climate Registry (cCR, http://carbonn.org/) is a global reporting platform for cities, towns and regions tackling climate change, created to support transparency, accountability and credibility.

804	1019	86	1909	7083	5.6	26.8
9% of the world population represented	Number of entities registered to the cCR	Countries	Climate Targets	Mitigation and Adaptation actions	Committed GHG emission reductions by 2020	Committed GHG emission reductions by 2050

Promote local and regional climate strategies

National governments can promote subnational governments in formulating climate strategies at municipal and regional level, which in return reinforces national climate efforts. International initiatives like the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM) can assist and guide this process with support of city networks. In any approach, national level guidance and support is crucial to also encourage smaller cities and towns to take ambitious action.

Mobilise finance for subnational implementation

Along with the mandate and responsibility to implement actions related to the NDC, cities and regions need the financial means to implement climate action. The scope for related national support includes:

- Direct financing of climate-compatible infrastructure and pilot/demonstration projects in cities
- Support for the prioritization, planning and preparation of bankable projects
- Domestic and ODA finance to leverage NDC-related private sector investments

Furthermore, the following programmes and initiatives support cities and regions to finance their climate projects:

- The Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA) is a coalition of more than 40 organisations working to accelerate investments into low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure in cities
- Project Preparation Facilities like the Transformative Actions Program (TAP), the C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF), or FELICITY

Integrate subnational action in national reporting systems

A multilevel climate strategy requires data on local level action. Using the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventories (GPC, www.iclei.org/gpc) helps ensure measurable, reportable and verifiable (MRV-able) data that can be aggregated from local to national and global level. Cities and other subnational authorities can report their emission data on global reporting platforms, such as the carbon*n* Climate Registry (see box on previous page) which upholds the enhanced transparency framework for action and support under the Paris Agreement.

Set up a competence centre for urban and regional climate action

Many cities are overburdened with responding to the simultaneous challenges of urban growth and climate change. A national competence centre can help municipalities to implement climate action, by providing guidance, good practices, advisory support, trainings, and peer-to-peer exchange.

Measures to enhance local climate action in the longer run

National governments can initiate reforms and policies that increase the potential for a deeper transformation towards low-carbon and resilient city development. This can include:

- Competence frameworks: allocating more climate-related responsibilities to lower levels of government, where appropriate
- Policy: introducing policy reforms in priority sectors to enable urban climate action (e.g. land use, transport, buildings, waste and energy)
- Finance: mainstreaming climate change considerations into financial systems (e.g. carbon pricing and accounting for climate risk in asset valuation) and public management (e.g. green budgeting and green purchasing)

Talanoa and beyond: collaboration opportunities to link NDCs with the subnational level

Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogues

The Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogues, an initiative launched by ICLEI, gathers local and regional governments or their networks for interactions with ministries of climate and urbanisation. It provides an opportunity for national governments to engage with subnational governments and other stakeholders to discuss how to successfully implement NDCs.

NDC Partnership

The NDC Partnership (NDCP), launched in November 2016, is a global coalition of countries and international institutions working together to achieve ambitious climate goals and enhance sustainable development. As of April 2018, 71 country members, 15 intergovernmental organisations and 3 associate members jointly work to ensure countries have access to the support they need to implement their NDCs.

In 2017, ICLEI became a member of the NDCP to strengthen support on multilevel governance at country level.

URBANET is a global development blog focusing on issues of sustainable urbanisation, incorporating viewpoints from science, policy and practice. Visitors of URBANET can learn about, and share their experiences with the urban and regional dimension of NDC implementation. From April to December 2018, URBANET will offer a Talanoa Dialogue series of articles focusing on ways to enhance subnational contributions to the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

www.urbanet.info

Other activities

Furthermore, GIZ, UN-Habitat and ICLEI implement numerous related initiatives and projects around the globe, ranging from knowledge and experience exchange to bilateral programmes in developing and middle-income countries, project preparation, global advocacy and policy advisory work.

The Talanoa Dialogue process presents an opportunity for intensified discussions with partners worldwide on how cities and other subnational governments can contribute more effectively to reaching national and international climate targets.

Useful References

International Initiatives:
- Global Covenant of Mayors: https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/
- NDC Partnership: http://www.ndcpartnership.org/
- Cities & Regions Talanoa Dialogues: http://www.cities-and-regions.org/talanoa/
- carbon$n$ Climate Registry (cCR): http://carbonn.org/
- Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI): www.sutp.org/en

Project Preparation & Finance:
- Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA): http://www.citiesclimatefinance.org/
- Transformative Actions Program (TAP): http://tap-potential.org/
- C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF): www.c40cff.org
- FELICITY: http://www.eib.org/products/advising/felicity/

Further Reading:
- GIZ, ICLEI and UN-Habitat (2017): Enabling subnational climate action through multilevel governance: http://e-lib.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/GIZ-ICLEI-UNHabitat_2017_EN_Enabling-subnational-climate-action.pdf
- UN-Habitat (2016) : Addressing Climate Change in National Urban Policy: https://unhabitat.org/books/addressing-climate-change-in-national-urban-policy/
- UN-Habitat (2017): Sustainable Urbanization in the Paris Agreement: https://unhabitat.org/books/sustainable-urbanization-in-the-paris-agreement/
- ICLEI (2017): Boosting subnational climate action through new climate governance: 2017 carbon$n$ Climate Registry report: http://carbonn.org/20171101_cCR%20report_final-web.pdf
- Submissions of ICLEI and GIZ on the Talanoa Dialogue Platform (2018): https://talanoadialogue.com/view-inputs