ICLEI World Congress 2015 Report

25 years of impact - one world of local action

A high-level congress of partnerships and advocacy, with a focus on new and existing themes, highlighting ICLEI’s growing presence and priorities in Asia
The ICLEI World Congress series

Every three years, ICLEI Members and partners gather at the ICLEI World Congress to showcase their actions, launch new commitments, and discuss strategies for the following years. For ICLEI World Congress 2015, we were delighted to return to Asia for the first time in 20 years, and to be hosted by one of the world’s most dynamic and sustainable cities – Seoul.

Consider hosting the ICLEI World Congress 2018

By hosting the ICLEI World Congress, an ICLEI Member will:

• Gain global exposure for their city;

• Welcome several hundreds of international visitors including mayors and other officials from cities and municipal associations, as well as representatives from international organisations;

• Share experiences with peer cities from other countries;

• Showcase their environmental and sustainable development initiatives globally;

• Generate local and international media attention for their initiatives;

• Provide strong leadership by supporting the local government movement world-wide; and

• Promote their city as a successful location for international conventions.

Contact us at world.congress@iclei.org for further details on hosting requirements.

Previous World Congress hosts

• Founding congress at the United Nations in New York City, U.S.A (1990)
• Toronto, Canada (1992)
• Saitama, Japan (1995)
• Dessau, Germany (2000)
• Athens, Greece (2003)
• Cape Town, South Africa (2006)
• Edmonton, Canada (2009)
• Belo Horizonte, Brazil (2012)
Foreword

It is my great pleasure and honor to be elected as ICLEI President on the occasion of the ICLEI World Congress 2015. At the congress, the Seoul Declaration, which includes the promise to make sustainable cities, was adopted unanimously. We celebrated ICLEI's partnerships, with 12 new global Memorandums of Understanding being signed. The contribution from over 3,000 participants and mayors from more than 300 cities including the capitals from 90 countries around the world has made all this possible. ICLEI has already established connections and cooperation, reaching beyond nations and cities, as well as beyond borders and societies. Imagination and creativity congegated from cities and local governments are setting a new trend that helps establishing sustainable world and cities. ICLEI's global projects, such as the Compact of Mayors, the carbon Climate Registry, and the Transformative Actions Program (TAP) will be the leading examples.

The ICLEI World Congress report contains the record of the connection that we developed by dreaming of change. The report shows the progress of our hard efforts to find a new road. It is also a milestone for another change. ICLEI will remember and share each step it takes towards sustainable cities, while leaving another record behind.

If we take a step together, it will become our road. I would like to encourage the cities and local governments to hold hands and move forward together. Thank you.

The ICLEI World Congress 2015 was a landmark event for the ICLEI community, coinciding with our 25 year anniversary as the world's leading membership association for local sustainability. At the time of ICLEI's creation in 1990, the concept of sustainability was still in its infancy. Today, making our cities sustainable and resilient is acknowledged as a key global issue and is seen as a political necessity worldwide.

This congress was the perfect time for ICLEI Members to come together and establish how to build on recent progress while meeting the upcoming challenges we face. I wish to thank all who played a part in demonstrating our impact, strength, and diversity, as we convened one of the largest and most high-level ICLEI gatherings to date.

Looking ahead, it is clear that ICLEI's mission calls for ever-growing interconnections with the work of partners and stakeholder groups. Events at the congress reflected this, with ICLEI advancing its relationships and joint activities with partners including other subnational government networks, business representatives, researchers and civil society. By facilitating such initiatives, the congress embodied what ICLEI will continue to be: A worldwide, inclusive, interconnected and forward-looking network of local governments, united by a commitment to global sustainability.
Key messages of the ICLEI World Congress 2015

1. ICLEI Members have the power to drive innovative and transformative sustainable urban development, shaping the policies we govern ourselves with and positively affecting the people they serve, the places we live in, and ultimately the Earth we depend on.

   • Host city Seoul has made change happen. Seoul has balanced its development into a global megacity with innovative sustainability efforts. One of its biggest successes is the “One Less Nuclear Power Plant” initiative, which reduced energy demand in the city by the equivalent of the production of one nuclear power plant six months ahead of schedule in June 2014. The second phase of the initiative was presented at the congress by ICLEI’s new President, Mayor Won Soon Park, as part of a new program called the Promise of Seoul.

   • Urban Sustainability has arrived in the Mayor’s office. Some 200 Mayors, Vice Mayors and elected local leaders made clear how highly they value sustainability commitments by attending and speaking at the Congress and adopting the Seoul Declaration.

   • A new wave of ICLEI Members is showing ambition and driving change. Many large emerging cities were present at the congress, along with smaller, dynamic cities, all showing that they have the ideas and initiatives to make a difference.

   • ICLEI Members are taking up new debates. Sustainable food systems, green and “sharing” economies, and the new notion of a (resource-) productive city were among the many topics that city representatives found relevant. ICLEI offers leadership on these interconnected themes through its Strategic Plan 2015-2021, which was adopted at the congress.

   • Partnerships flourish when cities are brought together. Three major new ICLEI networks emerged from the congress: the Urban Agriculture & Food Resilience Network (CityFood), the 100%RE Cities and Regions Network, and the Global Lead Cities Network on Sustainable Public Procurement. (See page 15 for further details.)

   • Asian cities and regions are ready to act. Strong delegations from countries including Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines echoed Seoul’s commitment and showed the desire and ability of Asian cities to work towards urban sustainability. Key representatives from Chinese cities spoke at a special session on China’s urban future. Memorandums of Understanding were signed with three key Chinese partners of ICLEI: EcoForum Global (EFG), the China Center for Urban Development (CCUD) and the Chinese Society of Urban Studies (CSUS).

2. Climate change is bridging themes. Climate change is driving debates, attracting funding, and proving a common, concrete goal, and thus uniting sustainability efforts, either through voluntary action, or through crises it excarbrates.

3. Global coalitions are emerging. The presence of many local and sub-national government networks at the Congress – including C40, UCLG, Metropolis and R20 – reflects the development of strong global coalitions that have come together to advocate for a climate agreement at the COP21 in Paris and beyond.

Download the Promise of Seoul
www.iclei.org/promiseofseoul

Download the Seoul Declaration
www.iclei.org/seouldeclaration

Download the Strategic Plan 2015-2021
www.iclei.org/seoul-strategic-plan
Cities and towns are increasingly confronted with challenges related to climate change, environmental degradation, resource consumption and social inequalities. To strengthen and accelerate responses, over 2,800 participants convened in Seoul, Republic of Korea in April 2015 at the ICLEI World Congress 2015, including representatives from 250 local governments.

4. **Progress has become tangible**, and must increasingly be reported and verified. Cities are no longer merely proposing or agreeing to act; they are measuring and reporting concrete developments. The Compact of Mayors and the UNFCCC’s NAZCA platform, both of which use data from the carbonn Climate Registry (cCR), embody this commitment to measurable, reportable and verifiable performance.

5. **ICLEI implements its goals in partnerships.** During the congress, ICLEI signed 11 Memorandums of Understanding with organizations including United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Council on City Data (WCCD).

6. **Locally and globally, we advance only when stakeholders cooperate.** In order to implement effective climate actions, wide-ranging stakeholder support is needed. Local administrations must facilitate, unite and support civil society projects in order to reach their full potential as a key ally for ambitious local action. Research institutes and local think tanks, such as the Seoul Institute, provide the required support; strengthening connections will allow them to offer more.

7. **ICLEI’s future work** will be shaped by the following consensus from the congress:

   • **Direct access to funding is critical for local action.** While local governments are developing cutting-edge initiatives, the success and replication of these projects depends on direct access to funding. Cities must continue to demonstrate their achievements: tangible results provide the leverage for even bigger sustainability projects. Local governments must also seek to embed sustainability throughout their governance structures and financial management.

   • **Local leaders expect more from national counterparts at COP21 and beyond.** Local sustainability is entering the political mainstream. However, it is clear that national government commitments will determine how quickly urban sustainability transformations can be achieved. Local governments call for faster and more target-oriented national and international frameworks in the build-up to the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in 2015 (COP21), for the preparation of the Habitat III Conference in 2016, and regarding the adoption and implementation of UN Sustainable Development Goals.

   • **An urban Sustainable Development Goal** is overdue in our urbanized world. ICLEI Members welcome the urban SDG and urge nations to agree on it unanimously. ICLEI’s work over 25 years can serve as a leading example for accelerating the implementation of the SDG’s targets.

   • **ICLEI offers numerous examples for the New Urban Agenda.** The outcome of the UN Habitat III Conference in 2016 must include a concrete implementation plan for sustainable urban development that secures the ecological basis for universal social and economic development. It must specify approaches, instruments and mechanisms to engage local and sub-national actors as governmental stakeholders to realize this vision, through integrated policies and implementation programs.
At the ICLEI World Congress 2015, ICLEI launched its 10 Urban Agendas, outlining a comprehensive vision for collective action to secure sustainability. Mayors and vice mayors highlighted the 10 Urban Agendas through their contributions to Mayors on Stage, a high level gathering of 100 local leaders, culminating in the affirmation of the Seoul Declaration.

“Cities must confront various challenges such as high population density, poor living conditions, environmental issues, and poverty. However, cities are also the land of opportunity due to the combination of information technology, energy and commercial development. The city is a place where there is active networking. Therefore cities must be at the forefront of addressing the global issues of climate change and sustainability.”
- Won Soon Park; Mayor, Seoul Metropolitan Government; ICLEI President

Sustainable City Agenda
ICLEI Members shall develop towards being sustainable cities. They will implement this vision and invest resources to make use of all comprehensive and integrated opportunities to become low-carbon, resilient, productive & resource-efficient, biodiverse, ecomobile and smart, while striving for happy, healthy and inclusive communities using sustainable economy and public procurement as key means.

Low-carbon City Agenda
ICLEI Members shall become Low-carbon Cities - regardless of size, growth trends or whether situated in the Global North or South – by making use of ICLEI’s available guidance and support.

Resource-efficient and Productive City Agenda
ICLEI Members shall strengthen a transformation process towards being productive cities and city-regions, with the aim of becoming net productive systems, thus decreasing the dependency on international resource chains and the extractive burden on peri-urban and regional hinterlands.

Resilient City Agenda
ICLEI Members shall prepare themselves to absorb and recover from any shock or stress while maintaining their essential functions, structures, and identity. They shall adjust their policies, plans and investments to ensure optimal resilience and quality of life for all.

“Together with various stakeholders from research to business as well as with our citizens, all municipal government bodies contribute to the preservation and improvement of the quality of life.”
- Dieter Salomon, Lord Mayor, City of Freiburg, Germany; Member of the ICLEI European Regional Executive Committee
ICLEI's Urban Agendas: Guiding mayors towards sustainable cities

The ICLEI Strategic Plan 2015-2021 is endorsed by ICLEI's Global Executive Committee and guides ICLEI's priorities for future action according to each of the 10 Urban Agendas. For details on activities undertaken within each Agenda, please read the ICLEI Strategic Plan 2015-2021 at the following address: www.iclei.org/seoul-strategic-plan

1. **BiodiverCity Agenda**
   - ICLEI Members shall acknowledge, respect and integrate (urban) biodiversity and ecosystem services into all land-use, development planning and associated policy decisions.
   - “We need indeed to integrate urban biodiversity and ecosystem services in our government planning and policy decisions.”
   - Troy Pickard, Mayor, City of Joondalup, Australia; Member of the ICLEI Global Executive Committee

2. **Smart City Agenda**
   - All ICLEI Members shall optimize their physical, governance and social systems by applying systems thinking with people at the center, and with the goal of promoting sustainable urban development.
   - “We must make our cities "smart" in the sense that we must better analyze, monitor and communicate the knowledge of our urban systems and capital, be these physical or social.”
   - Morten Kabell, Mayor of Technical and Environmental Affairs, City of Copenhagen, Denmark

3. **EcoMobile City (Sustainable Urban Mobility) Agenda**
   - ICLEI Members shall prioritize urban mobility that caters for the needs of the people and allows more equitable use of urban space by giving preference to walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport in an integrated and shared manner.
   - “We must provide better options to the use of the individual car. The EcoMobility World Festival 2015 will demonstrate to the world that an ecomobile future is possible and that public transport, walking and cycling can be accessible, safe and attractive.”
   - Mpho Parks Tau, Executive Mayor, City of Johannesburg, South Africa; Member of the ICLEI Africa Regional Executive Committee

4. **Happy, Healthy, and Inclusive Communities Agenda**
   - ICLEI Members shall measure their performance on becoming vibrant, clean, healthy, inclusive, peaceful and safe, while engaging civil society and directing their spending towards public spaces, active mobility, and healthy environmental conditions, among other areas.
   - “We must encourage and undertake city initiatives which emphasize happiness, quality of life, health, inclusivity, safety, education, culture, green employment, and good governance.”
   - Kinlay Dorjee, Mayor, Thimphu City Corporation, Bhutan; Member of the ICLEI Global Executive Committee

5. **Sustainable Local Economy and Procurement Agenda**
   - ICLEI Members shall mobilize their legal, planning and financial means to accelerate the transformation towards a sustainable economy. All ICLEI Members shall make sustainable procurement their standard practice and use their purchasing power to influence the market towards sustainable production and consumption.
   - “Our policies for sustainability can be more effective if they are embedded in a larger policy frame that involves other governmental actors who support, guide or complement our actions.”
   - Cathy Oke, Councillor, City of Melbourne, Australia; Member of the ICLEI Global Executive Committee

6. **Sustainable City-Region Cooperation Agenda**
   - All tiers of subnational governments as well as regional and metropolitan entities shall drive sustainability through their own policies and plans and through frameworks for greater linkages between cities and their surrounding regions.
ICLEI is an organization that drives Members towards accelerated action, while looking ahead and preparing for future challenges. This core mission was highlighted throughout the congress, and was the guiding focus of the plenary debates. High level discussions brought together Members and partners to drive debate and establish common goals.

In his Opening Ceremony address, Ulrich Sumptoh (Lord Mayor, Port Vila, Vanuatu) set the tone with a call for ambitious commitments to reduce carbon emissions. While ICLEI and partners work to elevate ambition and accelerate agreements at the international level, the very survival of many Small Island Development States (SIDS), including Vanuatu, is under threat from the worsening impacts of climate change – as most recently highlighted by the devastation of Cyclone Pam in March 2015, which affected Port Vila.

With projections for more intense storms in an uncertain changing climate, losses from future climate related disasters such as Cyclone Pam will only set back years of development progress. I call therefore for increased and serious commitments towards ambitions to significantly reduce global carbon emissions now and in the many years to come.”
- Ulrich Sumptoh, Lord Mayor, City of Port Vila, Vanuatu

Jørgen Randers (Professor of Climate Strategy, BI Norwegian Business School), in his Opening Plenary keynote presentation, gave a troubling forecast of urbanization trends towards 2052, which will exacerbate the challenges faced by local governments in tackling climate change.

In response to these trends, 100 local leaders from around the world took the stage to adopt the ICLEI Seoul Declaration. Building on the work that ICLEI Members have done in the last 25 years, the Declaration underlines the priority actions for sustainable urban development that local leaders must undertake in the next years, with reference to ICLEI's Strategic Plan 2015-2021.

“Through the Declaration, we pledge to adopt more ambitious improvement targets, to integrate our policies, to engage with local leaders and other actors, and to direct our public finances towards long-term sustainability strategies and plans”.
- James Nxumalo, Mayor, eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa; ICLEI First Vice President

The Seoul Declaration is a strong framework for action aimed at local governments committed to sustainability. It seeks to empower local government leaders, and highlights platforms such as the carbon Climate Registry and the Compact of Mayors, which ICLEI offers to support local and regional leaders ready and committed to act.

“People will embrace significant action when they see significant leadership and they have the tools to act”.
- Andrea Reimer, Deputy Mayor, City of Vancouver, Canada
The Seoul Declaration outlines ICLEI’s priorities in a defining moment for the shaping of the global climate regime towards and beyond 2020. ICLEI has been working towards influencing the nations at UNFCCC and has pushed Members to take action on climate change since 1990. Global climate negotiators, city networks and local governments were among the speakers for the Mayoral Forum and High Level Dialogue towards and beyond COP21.

Morten Kabell (Mayor of Technical and Environmental Affairs, City of Copenhagen) echoed the resounding call to parties to reach a lasting, collective agreement at COP21. H.E. Michel Rentenaar, (Climate Envoy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of the Netherlands) gave his support for the inclusion of local government actions and ambitions in a meaningful dialogue at COP21.

“COP21 is an important step to move the climate regime forwards. To make the Conference worthwhile, we need a meaningful dialogue with contents that foster exchanges and inclusion of the action and ambition of local governments.”

- H.E. Michel Rentenaar, Climate Envoy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of the Netherlands

In order to finance the urban transformations necessary to implement a global climate agreement, funding must flow from financial institutions and national governments to local governments. The “Financing for the Urban Future” plenary led a discussion on how and why international organizations make funding available for local governments, and examined where private capital can be most effective in achieving urban sustainability.

“Financing cities is critical because cities hold the key of the globe and humanity. If we can get our cities right, we can make major contribution to sustainable development. That is why GEF is launching a 100 million USD program “sustainable cities” to help local governments integrating long-term sustainability principles in their urban design and implementation.”

- Naoko Ishii, Chief Executive Officer, Global Environment Facility

The congress generated a discussion of the opportunities and challenges of anchoring sustainability in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Habitat-III. Joan Clos, Executive Director of UN-Habitat, explained the process towards an Urban Sustainable Development Goal. He explained how the Habitat-III Conference (to be held in October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador) will set guidelines for national and local governments towards the vision of the New Urban Agenda for the next two decades.

“If we want to change the current urbanization pattern, we have to develop a strategy. There is not enough money to develop projects individually; we need to develop overarching strategies. Habitat-III will take a strategic approach to urbanization called the New Urban Agenda.”

- Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat
Many local leaders known for their ambitious sustainability commitments have taken up leadership positions within the newly elected ICLEI governance bodies. Their presence at the ICLEI World Congress 2015 highlighted to participants that sustainability as an issue has arrived at the Mayor’s office.

Reflection from David Cadman, ICLEI President 2009 – 2015

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as President of ICLEI’s Global Executive Committee. During my Presidency, ICLEI has increased its membership and has helped cities, towns and regions to move towards a truly sustainable future. Whether they are using our case studies to learn about best practice, networking at our events, or reporting their greenhouse gas emissions through the carbonn Climate Registry (cCR), our Members are benefiting from ICLEI’s support on their journey to full sustainability. I urge current Members to seek out and recruit new members to mentor; perhaps starting with those with whom they are twinned.”

ICLEI’s governing bodies are responsible for defining its strategic direction. The ICLEI Global Executive Committee (GexCom), Regional Executive Committees (RexComs), and the ICLEI Council (all RexCom members) consist of local government mayors and elected officials which represent eight regions on five continents. They are elected by ICLEI Members every three years in their regions.

The latest elections concluded in early 2015 and culminated in the first meeting of the ICLEI Council and GexCom in Seoul.

New ICLEI President elected

At the Opening Ceremony on 8 April 2015, ICLEI Members welcomed Won Soon Park, Mayor of Seoul Metropolitan Government, as their new President, following his election by the GexCom. Mayor Park’s vision is to promote sustainability not only in Seoul but in other cities worldwide.

The re-elected First Vice President of the GexCom, James Nxumalo, Mayor of Durban, South Africa, has also been an active and vocal member of the ICLEI community for many years.

“I am committed to helping ICLEI and all of its Members to create a sustainable urban future. The ICLEI World Congress 2015 is a wonderful beginning, and we are looking to the future with optimism in spite of the challenges that we face.”

- James Nxumalo, Mayor, eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality (Durban), South Africa; Member of the ICLEI Global Executive Committee

Miguel Ángel Mancera (Mayor, Mexico City, Mexico) and Pekka Sauri (Deputy Mayor, City of Helsinki, Finland) have been elected as ICLEI Vice Presidents.
Broadening the debate with partners: Experts, Researchers, and Civil Society

The tradition of connecting a Researcher Symposium and Urban Nature conference to the ICLEI World Congress was continued. In addition, and as a new feature, a range of ICLEI or partner-led side events brought participants together prior to or after the core program to discuss special themes in more detail.

Urban Nature 2015: Local Action for Biodiversity

Urban Nature 2015 brought together 20 local governments, as well as representatives of academia and development institutions. Eight thematic sessions made for robust discussions around the ecosystem services of biodiversity and water. The event concluded with the Korean cities of Ansan, Gimpo, Suwon, Inje, and Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, South Africa, signing the Durban Commitment (“Local Governments for Biodiversity”), thereby adding to the growing number of local governments that recognize the need to enhance biodiversity at the local level. In doing so, these cities expressed their commitment to mainstream biodiversity through various instruments and approaches, promoting awareness, and sharing with local and international partners their experiences of developing cities that bring nature and humans together.

For the full Urban Nature 2015 report, please consult: www.cbc.iclei.org/event-reports

4th International Urban Research Symposium

The International ICLEI Urban Research Symposium is a four-day event which runs alongside every ICLEI World Congress. While previous Symposia have highlighted the divide between research and practice, the presentations during the Seoul Symposium showed that the research community is changing in order to close this gap: think tanks, private consultancies and various other actors are demonstrating that the research community is willing to adapt to the needs of local government practitioners. Symposium participants reached consensus on the belief that the next step forward is the co-creation of research, wherein city practitioners provide inputs which direct the work of research institutions. To this end, the researchers expressed hope that the 5th Symposium be organized around a theme selected by the host city. For more information, see: http://worldcongress2015.iclei.org/en/researchers-symposium

Civil Society Forum

The Civil Society Forum served as a key regional event of the ICLEI World Congress 2015 bringing the Korean civil society and local governments together. A special organizing committee was formed by the relevant Korean NGOs in cooperation with Seoul Metropolitan Government and more than 150 representatives from local governments, NGOs, and citizens group attended the Forum. Under the theme of “civil leadership for urban sustainability”, the forum explored the role of civil society in various themes of urban sustainability, such as energy transition, agriculture, biodiversity, transport, safe and healthy environment, and governance. The Forum concluded by putting forward the “Civil Society Proposal for Urban Sustainability”. The proposal sets out to strengthen the partnership among the local governments and civil society groups towards urban sustainability.

The proposal text is available at: worldcongress2015.iclei.org/en/civil-society-forum/

Side events included:

- CityNet Affordable Housing Side Event
- Dialogue with Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance
- EcoMobility and Climate Change: Expectations and Inputs for the COP21 in Paris
- Global District Energy in Cities Initiative: Regional Launch for Asia-Pacific and International Training Session
- Low-Carbon City Lab - Official Launch
- SE4ALL Building Efficiency Accelerator: Training Session
- UNEP-IIEED side-event: Toward Resilient and Resource Efficient Cities
- UNEP-WCCD side event: Indicators for Sustainable Cities
- URBIO Workshop
- WCCD: Presenting ISO 37120 and the World Council on City Data
Local and subnational governments as governmental stakeholders in an inclusive and ambitious climate regime

The Paris Climate Package expected in December 2015 must engage all actors in a new global climate regime, in order to ensure low-carbon, climate-resilient development and to prevent climate change reaching catastrophic levels.

In Seoul, 36 new cities pledged to join the Compact of Mayors, and the Seoul Action Plan was launched to support its implementation. This Plan features the carbon Climate Registry (cCR) as its central repository and data provider to NAZCA Platform.

ICLEI also launched the Transformative Actions Program (TAP) to tap the potential of local and subnational governments for ambitious, cross-cutting and inclusive action. The TAP hopes to attract additional capital flows from public and private investors for local climate projects.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

An urban Sustainable Development Goal is overdue in our urbanized world. ICLEI welcomes the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular Goal 11 on cities and human settlements (the Urban SDG). ICLEI’s work over 25 years can serve as an example for accelerating the implementation of the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda can turn into a race-to-the-top with no one left behind if everyone is inspired by ambitious pioneers. The Agenda can achieve global sustainability for all if today’s local pioneers are encouraged and enabled to become tomorrow’s norms and transformers. Local Agenda 21 in 1992, multilevel governance at Rio+20 in 2012, and SDGs by 2030 constitute the cornerstones of the transition to a sustainable urban future.
Towards UN’s Habitat III and a New Urban Agenda from 2016 onwards

ICLEI offers numerous examples for the new urban agenda. The outcome of the United Nation’s Habitat III Conference in 2016 must include a vision of sustainable urban development that secures the ecological basis for universal social and economic development. It must specify approaches, instruments and mechanisms to engage local and subnational governments as governmental stakeholders to realize this vision through integrated policies and implementation programs.


- Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

“...We have a responsibility to hand this green planet on to our children. A city’s problem is no longer the problem of one country or one city. These are global challenges that all cities must address, with Mayors taking the lead.”

- Won Soon Park, Mayor, Seoul Metropolitan Government, ICLEI President
Strengthening partnerships and understanding

Creating a sustainable world will depend on the alliances forged among mayors, local governments, councilors, the private sector, entrepreneurs, academics, individuals and non-governmental organizations. The ICLEI World Congress brought together new and existing partners to strengthen the cooperation which is key to ICLEI’s work and Members’ goals.

Partnership with other city networks

The presence of many local and sub-national government networks at the congress – including C40, UCLG, Metropolis and R20 – reflects the development of strong global coalitions that have come together to advocate for a climate agreement at the COP21 in Paris and beyond. This trend was further highlighted by the addition of 36 new cities to the Compact of Mayors – a global coalition of the most ambitious city leaders addressing climate change. Furthermore, 11 new Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between ICLEI and relevant partners around the world were signed at the congress.

Enhancing cooperation with Chinese partners

The congress was a strong demonstration of the continuing efforts to take cooperation with Chinese cities one step further. Since the inception of the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat in 2012, ICLEI has developed a growing presence in China, and has enhanced its collaboration with key Chinese partners. The partnerships with those organizations that have built strong relationships with local governments will enable ICLEI to have a stronger foundation in China, and to offer more services to Chinese cities in their sustainable development.

To drive the discussion forward, the congress welcomed experts and representatives of Chinese cities to share their insights on China’s new type of urbanization in the sub-plenary “Challenges and Opportunities of Urban China”. Speaking from local governments’ perspectives, high-level representatives of Guangzhou, Dongguan and Guiyang City explained how their cities addressed the needs of underserved populations in terms of encouraging social stability, providing basic living standards and strengthening the use of land, resource efficiency and environmental quality.

MoU signing partners

• Association for Vertical Farming (AVF)
• Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
• International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
• United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
• Urban Biodiversity Network (URBIO Network)
• World Council on City Data (WCCD)
• World Resources Institute (WRI)

MoUs with Chinese partners

• China Center for Urban Development (CCUD)
• Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS)
• Eco-Forum Global (EFG)
• Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation (GIUI)

ICLEI Secretary General Gino Van Begin signed Memorandums of Understanding with Alex Zhang, Executive Director, Eco-Forum Global; An Pan, Deputy Secretary General of Guangzhou City; and Hailong Li, Deputy Director, representing Baoxing Qiu, President, Chinese Society for Urban Studies (CSUS).
New ICLEI networks and program launches

New networks and programs were launched at the ICLEI World Congress, offering ICLEI Members new opportunities to engage in structured exchanges within thematic communities of networking and learning.

CityFood

CityFood is the new ICLEI community focusing on urban agriculture and resilient city food systems. The cities of Almada (Portugal), Linköping (Sweden), Seferihisar Municipality (Turkey) and others are founding participants of the network. All local governments are invited to join them. For more information, please contact cityfood@iclei.org.

100%RE Cities and Regions Network

ICLEI joined forces with the Global 100% Renewable Energy Campaign (Global 100% RE) to foster progress towards 100% Renewable Energy (RE) among local and subnational governments around the globe. The 100%RE Cities and Regions Network gathers ICLEI Members that are at the forefront of this field, as well as cities and regions that want to gain a better understanding of 100% RE and how to reach it, and that have the ambition to become leaders. The network was launched during a dedicated parallel session on 11 April. The cities of Vancouver (Canada), Malmö (Sweden) and Melbourne (Australia) have confirmed their lead role in the network. For more information, please visit: www.iclei.org/lowcarboncity/100RE

Global Lead Cities Network on Sustainable Public Procurement

Seoul Metropolitan Government and ICLEI joined forces to establish a Global Lead Cities Network on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP). The aim is to support leading cities that share and develop their capabilities to implement sustainable and innovation procurement, driving a transition to sustainable production and consumption. Seoul Metropolitan Government and the cities of Cape Town (South Africa), Ghent (Belgium) and Rotterdam (The Netherlands) are among the founding participants. These cities have committed to taking an exemplary, championing role globally by putting SPP into action. They will set ambitious, quantified targets for the implementation of SPP, develop a clear implementation strategy, and undertake an evaluation of performance. For more information, please visit: http://www.sustainable-procurement.org/network-exchange/global-lead-cities/

ICLEI Small Island States Program

ICLEI is preparing a Small Island States program, which would assist Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in advocating their case more strongly on the global stage, and in building capacity to achieve greater resilience to the shocks and stresses associated with climate change, resource depletion and population growth. Ulrich Sumptoh (Lord Mayor, Port Vila, Vanuatu) called for solid and constructive partnerships between those with resources and those without to act on climate change in order to mitigate the catastrophic consequences.

“CityFood is a great and much needed initiative for cities working on food systems to exchange experiences and good practices. We are in!”
- Catarina Freitas, Head of Department, Sustainable Environmental Management and Planning, City of Almada, Portugal

“It is through ICLEI’s advocacy for SIDS that we are going to build a platform toward Paris for SIDS to be not only heard but seen in terms of getting a commitment from national governments around the world to protect our island homes.”
- Ulrich Sumptoh, Lord Mayor, Port Vila, Vanuatu
Localizing ICLEI’s global strategy: Korea Initiative 2015-2018

The ICLEI World Congress 2015 left a significant legacy in localizing the global strategy. While global efforts formed the basis of the ICLEI Strategic Plan 2015-2021 (ICLEI Seoul Plan) and the ICLEI Seoul Declaration, 54 Korean ICLEI Members went one step further, translating the global strategy into their self identified local priorities by adopting the Korea Initiative 2015-2018.

ICLEI Members of the congress host country, the Republic of Korea, set an outstanding example to local governments around the world by demonstrating their localized commitment to urban sustainability.

The ICLEI Korea Initiative 2015-2018 was prepared in line with the ICLEI Strategic Plan 2015-2021, which is linked to the 10 ICLEI Agendas. After intensively reviewing the Initiative draft at their annual assembly, ICLEI Korean Members agreed to focus on the following policy priorities in their cities: sustainability assessments linked to Sustainable Development Goals; local climate action; sustainable consumption; and the improvement of the city’s environmental performance by 10% by 2018 (10% Performance-Gain Program). Each of the policy priorities has action plans to facilitate the implementation, based on which the Members plan to foster sustainable local actions in their respective regions.

The Initiative will be implemented in collaboration with local civil society, including the Local Agenda 21 Promotion Council. Korean ICLEI Members shared their specific action plans and discussed how they have translated the ICLEI Korea Initiative 2015-2018 into policy during a special session, “Measures and strategies for a collaborative implementation of the Korea Initiative 2015-2018 with the local civil sector”. Ki-hwan Park, Head of Environment Policy Division of Daegu Metropolitan Government, presented the proposal of the City to improve its environmental performance by 10% by increasing its renewable energy sources, increasing the modal share of cycling, providing incentives for e-vehicles, and expanding green space. By showcasing their action plans at the congress, Korean Members demonstrated their commitment and ambition to ensure targets and priorities set at the global level translate into tangible results in their home cities.

“The Korea Initiative 2015-2018 is an action-oriented measure that will allow Korean Members to set clear goals and evaluate how well they are carrying out their project. The progress will be monitored by ICLEI Korea to support cities in implementing the Initiative.”
- Yeonhee Park, Director, ICLEI Korea Office

Nine Korean mayors actively took part in discussion at a special session on 9 April.
Emerging themes enhance continuing debates

A broad selection of recurring and novel debates occurred in more than 70 sessions throughout the program. Many themes were discussed for the first time at an ICLEI World Congress, reflecting the evolving framework conditions, interests and needs of ICLEI Members, which call for further attention and debate.

Women leadership

A lively discussion in a session entitled “Women city leaders transforming cities” explored the challenges faced by women leaders, the role played by women in governance structures, and gender-sensitive urban planning. Councilor Cathy Oke (City of Melbourne, Australia) proposed to the Closing Plenary that ICLEI should include a portfolio for women leaders on GexCom, and review processes and governance to elect more women leaders to their leadership roles.

Fossil fuel divestment

Councilor Jinty MacTavish (Dunedin City Council, New Zealand) highlighted the issue of fossil fuel divestment in the Plenary “Financing for the Urban Future”, following Dunedin’s example. Local governments and other fund holders were called on to exclude the fossil fuel industry from their investment portfolios and keep fossil fuels in the ground. 44 cities have already adopted divestment policies, including ICLEI Members, with Dunedin being the second city outside of the United States to do so.

Sharing Cities

A session entitled “Sharing City: From Ownership to Access” explored Seoul’s internationally-acclaimed activities in the Sharing Economy field. Participants agreed that a key step forward in advancing the uptake of sharing initiatives globally will be to measure the social, environmental and economic impacts of Sharing Cities.

Urban Productivity

An interactive workshop focused on the topic of urban productivity - the ability of a city’s communities, districts, and infrastructure and services systems to become net producers of resources, social development, and wealth. Participants were led through two exploratory exercises to test the Urban Productivity framework developed by The Next Practice in collaboration with ICLEI on two case studies.

“How powerful might it be if 20% or 50% of our network took a similar position on fossil fuels?”
- Jinty MacTavish, Councilor, Dunedin City Council, New Zealand

"An all-women panel moderated by Monika Zimmermann, Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI, highlighted many of the pertinent congress outcomes in the Closing Plenary."
Seoul is inspiring the new wave of sustainable cities

Seoul serves as an inspiring role model for rapidly developing cities, as well as for the rest of the world. In the “Seoul on Stage” plenary on 10 April 2015, Seoul shared how the city has addressed its rapid growth and urbanization, transitioning from a war-torn land in the 1950s to a recognized leader in local climate action.

An unprecedented rate of urban and population growth compelled Seoul Metropolitan Government to seek out innovative policies and solutions – a challenge which has enabled Seoul to be at the forefront of a new wave of emerging cities.

As a result, Seoul Metropolitan Government was awarded the title of Global Earth Hour Capital 2015 during the Earth Hour City Challenge Award Ceremony, jointly organized by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and ICLEI. Seoul succeeded Vancouver, Canada and Cape Town, South Africa as the winner of the award. Seoul’s ambitious “One Less Nuclear Power Plant” initiative, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 10 million tons and to achieve 20 per cent electricity self-reliance by 2020, won high acclaim with the jury. The city met its first targets six months ahead of schedule in June 2014.

Committed to sharing such leadership and results, Seoul invited participants to explore over 14 on-site Mobile Workshop sessions across the city. Congress participants saw how Seoul achieved its ambitious sustainability goals and environmental targets on themes ranging from transport to community participation.

In parallel, Seoul enhanced its cooperation with 14 local governments such as Quito, Johannesburg, Amman, Freiburg and Reykjavik by signing MoUs as part of a city-to-city partnership program. Seven cities and one local government association with a strong interest in environmental infrastructure improvements are expected to benefit from the provision of policy advice and technology consultations from Seoul through the Global Cities Policy Share Program.

“There are no limits to the challenges we face in combating climate change and preserving the world’s natural systems and resources. Cities play an important role in setting the world on a sustainable development track powered by renewable energy, and Seoul is an inspiring example of a city that takes this challenge seriously.”

- Marco Lambertini, Director General, WWF International

Mayor Park of Seoul Metropolitan Government received the Global Earth Hour Capital 2015 Award for demonstrating Seoul’s drastic cut in carbon emissions

Participants visited Korea’s first and largest energy autonomous building, the Seoul Energy Dream Center, as part of the Mobile Workshop program

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On 10 April 2015, Mayor Won Soon Park and representatives of Seoul civil society and business announced the Promise of Seoul, a covenant for the megacity to take significant action against climate change.

Mayor Park was joined onstage by mayors and local government representatives, who expressed their support for the Promise of Seoul and wished the city success in achieving its goals. Mayor Park hopes that the Promise of Seoul will inspire cities throughout the world to adopt similar initiatives, and join together with Seoul to create a “Promise of the World” to trigger a wave of change across the globe.

Local Leaders’ March

Following the announcement of the Promise of Seoul, local government officials, congress delegates, and citizens of Seoul joined ICLEI President Won Soon Park and ICLEI Secretary General Gino Van Begin to march in demonstration of the power of local action initiatives, and the high commitment of local leaders and citizens.

What is the Promise of Seoul?

• The Promise of Seoul consists of 36 tasks across 10 components of the urban system, from energy to urban planning. The document also includes a resolution approved by 10 million Seoul residents.
• Each task is linked to established municipal mitigation and adaption policies to ensure consistency with the national GHG reduction strategy and to prepare for the post-2020 New Climate Regime.
• The target years for the ‘Promise of Seoul’ have been set as 2020 and 2030.
• Separate but complementary action plans have been created for citizens, the business community, and local government.
• The data collected within each task will be disclosed publicly, and performance indicators will be displayed in an interactive and intuitive format and updated annually.

“The Promise of Seoul inspires me and I am very sure that our mayors will want to replicate it in their cities and regions, within the context of our own strengths, limitations, and challenges”
- Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Municipal President of Seberang Perai, Malaysia, and Southeast Asia representative to the ICLEI Global Executive Committee

Download
the Promise
of Seoul

www.iclei.org/ promiseofseoul
Participants often report that some of the most memorable moments at an event occur in informal encounters outside of plenaries and sessions. This congress was no different, offering a multitude of opportunities for participants to get to know their colleagues and the atmosphere of the wider ICLEI community.

ICLEI Lounge

In between sessions and during coffee breaks, the ICLEI Lounge proved to be an ideal meet-up point for participants, providing a quiet, relaxed environment for small group talks and networking.

ICLEI dinner and Networking Evening

On 9 April, over 200 invited guests visited Seoul’s famed floating islands for a special dinner featuring the Earth Hour City Challenge Award Ceremony. On 10 April, a Networking Evening brought together all congress participants at New Seoul City Hall. Participants had the opportunity to meet each other and their host, Mayor Won Soon Park, and other Seoul Metropolitan Government representatives.

ICLEI Gift

For each ICLEI World Congress, participants are encouraged to bring a gift of appreciation for their host city. The chosen theme for 2015 was upcycling. The customary Gift Giving Ceremony featured 130 unique gifts ranging from repurposed clothes and jewelry to art, crafts, and ornaments. This tied in with many of the arts and craft installations on display outside around the venue.

City Poster Exhibition

A City Poster Exhibition provided more than 60 useful case studies as a source of inspiration for other municipal and sub-national government authorities. City representatives used their poster as a dedicated meeting point while also engaging in unprompted discussions with visitors. These posters are available at www.iclei.org/cityposters2015

Greening the event

Participants were encouraged to contribute to greening the ICLEI World Congress 2015. A free public transportation pass allowed every registered participant to use the metro to access the venue, while showcasing Seoul’s outstanding public transport system in the process. Participants were encouraged to lower their meat consumption with a planned meat-free day, and were encouraged to use their own reusable drink container provided by Seoul in each participant pack.
Members of the new ICLEI Global Executive Committee and Council 2015-2018 came together at the congress for the first meeting of their three year term of office. The ICLEI Council represents ICLEI’s global membership across nine world regions, and is the supreme decision-making and oversight body of the global association.
ICLEI Council 2015-2018

The ICLEI Council is composed of the following Regional Executive Committees:

**ICLEI Africa**

James Nxumalo  
Mayor  
City of Durban  
South Africa

Abel Langsi  
Mayor  
Bafut Town Council  
Cameroon

Mpho Parks Tau  
Mayor  
City of Johannesburg  
South Africa

Diriba Kuma  
Mayor  
City of Addis Ababa  
Ethiopia

Martin Kizack Moyo  
Mayor  
City of Bulawayo  
Zimbabwe

**ICLEI Latin America and Caribbean**

Antonio Carvalho Gomes  
Mayor  
City of Itu  
Brazil

Mauricio Rodas Espinel  
Mayor  
City of Quito  
Ecuador

Jose Gali Fayad  
Mayor  
Puebla City  
Mexico

Jorge Herrera  
Mayor  
City of San Rafael Heredia  
Costa Rica

**ICLEI North America**

Matthew Appelbaum  
Mayor  
City of Boulder  
USA

Frank Cownie  
Mayor  
City of Des Moines  
USA

Mark Brostrom  
Director  
City Environmental Planning  
Sustainable Development  
Edmonton, Canada

Pam O’Connor  
Vice Mayor  
Santa Monica City Council  
California, USA

Cindy Toth  
Director  
Environmental Policy  
Oakville, Canada

**ICLEI East Asia**

Hyo-sung Jung  
Vice Mayor  
Seoul Metropolitan Government  
Republic of Korea

Daisaku Kadokawa  
Mayor  
City of Kyoto  
Japan

Shyh-Fang Liu  
Municipal Advisor  
Kaohsiung City  
Chinese Taipei

Tae-young Yeom  
Mayor  
City of Suwon  
Republic of Korea

Alex Zhang  
Executive Director  
Eco-Forum Global  
China
ICLEI Southeast Asia

Pak Hugua
Mayor
Wakatobi Regency
Indonesia

Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Municipal President
Municipal Council of Seberang Perai
Malaysia

Leticia O. Clemente
City Budget Officer
City of Baguio
Philippines

ICLEI South Asia

Dora Mani Paudel
President
Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)

P. Rajkumar
Mayor
City of Coimbatore
Municipal Corporation
India

Shamim Al Razi
Mayor
Singra Municipality
Bangladesh

Hilmy Mohamed
Mayor
Matale Municipal Council
Sri Lanka

Kinlay Dorjee
Mayor
Thimphu Municipality
Bhutan

ICLEI Europe

Mercé Rius i Serra
Deputy for Environment
Barcelona Provincial Council
Spain

Dieter Salomon
Lord Mayor
City of Freiburg
Germany

Pekka Sauri
Deputy Mayor
City of Helsinki
Finland

Pex Langenberg
Deputy Mayor
Port, Sustainability, Mobility and Governance
Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Estella Marino
Deputy Mayor
City of Rome
Italy

ICLEI Oceania

Cathy Oke
Councillor
City of Melbourne
Australia

Wayne Walker
Councillor
City of Auckland
New Zealand

Caroline Knight
Councillor
City of Mandurah
Australia

Roberto Colanzi
Councillor
City of Yarra
Australia

Eddie Ngava
Deputy Mayor
Honiara City Council
Solomon Islands

Special Advisors

Debra Roberts
Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department, City of Durban, South Africa.

Ranjit S. Chavan
Director General, All India Institute of Local Self Government, India

Shri Farhad Suri
Leader of Opposition, South Delhi Municipal Corporation, India

Matirur Rahman
Chief Health officer, Barisal City Corporation, Bangladesh

Navin Ramsoondur
Mayor of Vacoas Phoenix, Mauritius

Hironori Hamanaka
Chair of IGES Board of Directors, Japan

Somjaj Suwansupana
Mayor of the Municipality of Phuket, Thailand

Stephen Yarwood
Former Mayor of Adelaide City, Australia

Advisor to the GexCom.

Advisor to South Asia RexCom.

Advisor to South Asia RexCom.

Advisor to South Asia RexCom.

Advisor to South Asia RexCom.

Advisor to Oceania RexCom.
감사합니다 ‘gamsahabnida’, Thank you!

We thank all those who contributed to the success of the ICLEI World Congress 2015.

Our program was full of strategic discussions and debates, inspiring and innovative city case studies and diverse expert opinion. We thank all participants, and in particular our speakers, whose hard work and preparation were key contributors to the successful outcomes of these exciting days.

We commend the outstanding personal leadership shown Mayor Won Soon Park, the newly elected ICLEI President, in stepping forward to host this congress with remarkable ambition, dedication and vision. Special and sincere thanks are owed to Seoul Metropolitan Government leaders, city officials and logistical partners for their tireless work to bring the congress vision to reality.

Key events ahead

- 26-27 September 2015, UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, New York, USA
- 1-31 October 2015, EcoMobility World Festival 2015, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 30 November -11 December 2015, COP21 Including Cities and Regions Pavilion – TAP 2015, Paris, France
- 2-4 March 2016, Resilient Cities Asia-Pacific 2016, Melaka, Malaysia
- 31 May-2 June 2016, Metropolitan Solutions 2015, Berlin, Germany
- 6-8 July 2016, Resilient Cities 2016, Bonn, Germany
- 17-20 October 2016, Habitat III, Quito, Ecuador

Who is ICLEI?

ICLEI is a global association of over 1,000 cities, towns and metropolises in 86 countries with a mission to promote global sustainability through local action. ICLEI has around 300 urban development professionals working in 17 secretariats and offices, supporting cities and regions to become sustainable, low-carbon, resilient, biodiverse, resource-efficient and productive, ecomobile, smart and healthy and happy. More than 20% of the world’s urban population benefit from ICLEI’s work which is global in scope and impact, and yet very local in implementation.