



Collaborative Climate Action – a prerequisite for more ambitious climate policy



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Vertically Integrated Climate Policies (VICLIM)

is a global programme that works in five partner countries: Mexico, Costa Rica, South Africa, Indonesia and Georgia. The programme's aim is to strengthen the capacities of climate policy decision-makers and institutions to maximise mitigation potential at the subnational level as a contribution to ambitious and inclusive national climate policy. The programme aims to improve the framework conditions for implementing subnational mitigation activities, promote existing municipal approaches and initiate international learning processes. The programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH as part of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). Further information is available at <https://www.giz.de>



Climate Policy Meets Urban Development (CPMUD)

is an advisory project at the intersection between international climate policy and urban development. The project focuses on Collaborative Climate Action (CCA) across government levels. Central to its work is an international exchange of knowledge and experience. The project also supports the Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action, which was launched by BMU. Further information is available at www.collaborative-climate-action.org and at <https://www.giz.de>



Introduction

Climate change is a reality. The world therefore urgently needs more ambitious and more effective measures to mitigate climate change. Current commitments to combat climate change are not enough if global warming is to be kept well below the agreed level of 2 °C or, ideally, limited to 1.5 °C. Actors at all levels of government, together with civil society, the scientific community, individuals and businesses need to significantly increase their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero by 2050.

Collaborative Climate Action (CCA) ...

... is politically intended, well-organised cooperation across different levels of government to achieve climate goals – ideally jointly defined and implemented. Effective and more ambitious implementation can only be achieved through collaboration.

Reducing GHG emissions and improving climate change adaptation in a way that considers ecological, economic and social aspects and that supports joint action are guiding principles for climate policy. As sovereign powers and shaping forces, nations play a leading role.

At the same time, cities and regions have an essential role to play in implementing measures to mitigate climate change and in advancing sustainable development: Cities are responsible for approximately 75% of global energy-related carbon emissions and approximately two thirds of resource and energy consumption. They are centres for business and innovation that generate roughly 80% of global gross domestic product (GDP).

Due to the leading role played by national governments and the fact that carbon-intensive services for society (housing, mobility, food and nutrition, etc.) are situated at the local level, all levels of governments need to work together to effectively and efficiently plan and implement climate change mitigation measures and adaptation measures. Climate policy works better when there is joint action.

Levels of government ...

... are the public actors (parliaments, governments, administrations) within a country between which tasks, competences and resources are split.

All countries have a national government and municipalities; many have other levels in between, such as territories, states, provinces and districts.

Federations assign special competences to the state level, which may result in disparities between states, for instance when they pass different legislation for their municipalities.

This publication focuses on cooperation across government levels – national governments, federal states, counties, provinces, districts, cities and municipalities. The term ‘Collaborative Climate Action’ (CCA) refers to cooperation across government levels on climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

When all levels of government utilise their competences, tasks, budgets, experts, contacts and cooperation partners in a targeted and coordinated manner, they can achieve more together than each actor alone. At the same time, joint action prevents the creation of contradictory incentives and can save significant resources, whether it be money, personnel or time – as those involved support one another.

Cooperation can be sporadic, voluntary and temporary. Its real strength as a *politically intended, well-organised and long-term approach* comes to the fore when constitutions and laws define competences, and rules for cooperation and predictable procedures determine and define how joint targets can be reached.

CCA thus contributes to coherence and consistency in climate policy, from the international to the local level (i.e. on the ground). Many refer to this as the ‘architecture of climate policy’ or climate governance.

In addition to cooperation across government levels (vertical cooperation), horizontal cooperation – in other words between ministries, sectors, thematic areas involving civil society, the private sector, researchers and the media – is also vital to successful climate policy. This can also be referred to as CCA in a broader sense.

Climate governance ...

... is a detailed description of the way that institutions, bodies and processes arrive at a solution to climate problems.

Originally developed for international cooperation between the community of states, climate governance denotes the development of mechanisms, agreements, joint instruments for management and monitoring, procedures and all direct measures to prevent climate change, mitigate GHG emissions and ensure that we adapt to a changing climate and develop offsetting measures.

Climate governance – in other words, the way that climate-related decisions are made and implemented – is described in the constitution, in laws, and in regulations for setting and meeting climate targets. Moreover, any input and contribution from third parties, including civil society and enterprises, is an element of climate governance.

Given the urgent need for more ambitious climate policy (Chapter 1), this publication outlines why urban areas are especially important for GHG mitigation and climate change adaptation efforts (Chapter 2). The following chapter illustrates why cooperation is so important in order to better harness potential for action at the subnational level and examines CCA as a basic principle of climate action (Chapter 3).

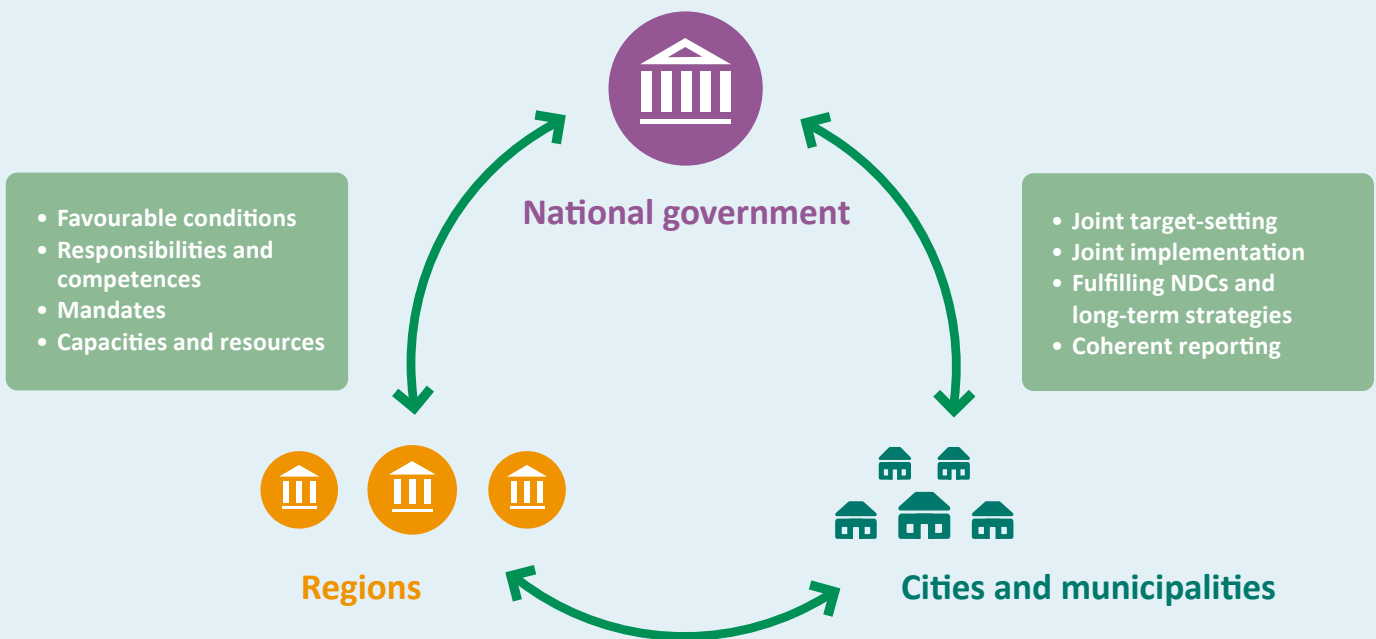
Chapter 4 looks at how a political will and a structured approach can be a shaping force and explores the positive effects for upcoming transformation processes in society and the economy that can be achieved through CCA. The report also identifies actors, initiatives and starting points that are significantly supporting and shaping CCA at present.

More information on literature and case studies can be found at:
<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



Collaborative Climate Action (CCA)

A prerequisite for more ambitious and effective climate policy



Collaborative Climate Action (CCA) ...

... is politically intended, well-organised cooperation across different levels of government to achieve climate goals – ideally jointly defined and implemented. Favourable framework conditions, fulfilment of obligations at all levels and a joint review of target achievement are important.

1.

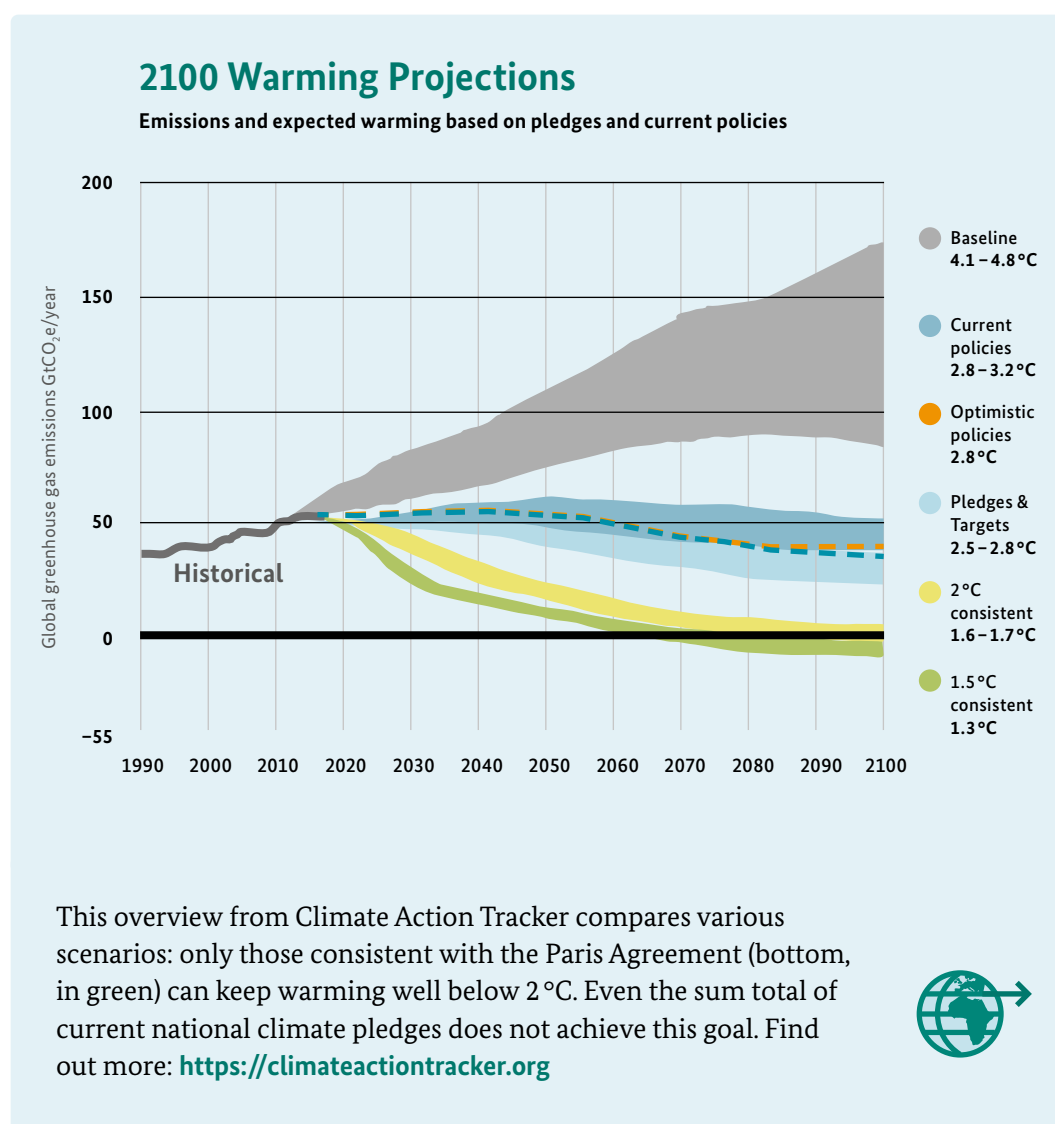
More ambitious and more effective climate action is urgently needed



A special report by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2018 found that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society.

In addition to transforming our energy system, we need to radically rethink the way we live and do business. This includes energy generation, the design and temperature of our homes, the way we travel, the production and use of goods, waste recycling and much more.

Estimates of the expected global mean temperature increase – even if the current Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are implemented in full and on schedule – range from 2.5°C to 2.8°C by the end of the century. However, global warming must be reduced to well below 2°C and, ideally, limited to 1.5°C, as agreed.



When reduction commitments are too low, this is referred to as an ambition gap, and when pledges to reduce GHG emissions are not fulfilled, this is known as an implementation gap.

The increase in the global mean temperature is linked to factors including rising sea levels, the destruction of ecosystems and biodiversity and an increase in areas that are uninhabitable. Extreme events such as heat waves, storms and flooding jeopardise human health, livelihoods and economic and social development. These impacts undermine global efforts to boost development and prosperity in the global South and global North.

According to the IPCC, the devastating impacts of climate change can only be averted through more ambitious and more effective climate change mitigation measures that reduce human (anthropogenic) GHG emissions to net zero in 2050.

Climate change and swift and intensive action to reduce GHG emissions require far-reaching societal transformation. Examples from all over the world show that this transformation is possible. However, so far very few countries, regions, cities, municipalities and companies have chosen to follow targeted transformation pathways or have even sufficiently implemented the necessary measures with which to do so.

Clear and efficient measures need to be taken by mid-century to decarbonise the economy and society. This can only happen if all state actors work together and involve the private sector, civil society, the scientific community and interest groups at all levels. This multi-level climate governance approach comprises many direct measures: adapting financial flows, improving access to information and knowledge and strengthening overall institutional capacity at all levels.

Key messages

Cities and regions (i.e. the subnational level) play an essential role in achieving the sustainability goals, mitigating GHG emissions and adapting to climate change. Without cities and regions, national governments cannot achieve their internationally set climate goals, much less raise their ambitions.

Due to growing urbanisation, which is often accompanied by increased prosperity in addition to increased consumption of energy and resources and the associated GHG emissions, the local level also plays a particularly crucial role in the Earth's climate future. Municipalities therefore have a special responsibility to act.

The more capacity to act a level has, the more it can contribute to climate action. It is therefore especially important to give subnational levels – cities, municipalities, districts, provinces and states – competences, financial and human resources and knowledge so that they can make their own contribution and be called upon to do so. Those who share and assign competences, money and power do not become weaker, but instead show strength.

Nevertheless, decisive climate policy at a local level is no substitute for action at a higher level, as national government action sets out the frameworks for everyone. When it comes to climate action, national governments need to be drivers and shapers. Whether it be levying nationwide carbon taxes, raising fuel duties, phasing out subsidies for fossil fuels, promoting renewable energy, or introducing recycling targets or sustainable water management regulations – national rules ensure that the same provisions apply to all.

Primary responsibility for implementing the Paris Agreement is therefore with national governments: they must utilise their competences, tasks, funding and other possibilities for ambitious climate measures and raise their voices on the international stage.

2.1. The significance of cities and regions for mitigation and adaptation

Cities and regions (i.e. the subnational level) play an instrumental role in achieving sustainability goals, mitigating GHG emissions and adapting to climate change.

In 2020, approximately 55% of the world's population live in cities or urban areas. This figure is growing at a steady rate: it is forecast that 70% of the world's population will live in urban areas in 2050. In some regions of the world, that is already true: North America (82%), Latin America (81%) and Europe (75%). Other regions are expected to experience rapid population growth and, as a result, urbanisation. In Africa, it is predicted that 70% of people will live in cities by 2050.

Urbanisation usually leads to a change in behaviour patterns: per capita consumption of energy and other resources increases, as does the use of public services. At the same time, environmental quality deteriorates in many places, including increased air pollution (often due to traffic), water scarcity and the destruction of green spaces and biodiversity.

While urban areas contribute significantly to GHG emissions, urban areas also recognised clearly at an early stage how they would be affected by the impacts of climate change.

Urban mitigation goals and climate action programmes have been in place since the 1990s. Since the first UN Climate Change Conference (COP1) was held in Berlin in 1995, cities and their international organisations have been urging national governments to agree on mitigation goals and work together with lower levels to implement appropriate measures.

Cities are critical because they are both the problem and the solution.

- Cities consume roughly two thirds of resources and energy and emit 75% of energy-related greenhouse gases.
- They generate around 80% of GDP.
- Their location and density make them especially vulnerable, for instance because of rising sea levels, extreme weather events, heat waves and the arrival of climate refugees.
- Their density also creates opportunities for infrastructure and services.
- Urban areas are often a driving force behind economic development and a breeding ground for innovation.
- Cities can also serve as laboratories for sustainable solutions, whether new technologies, new economic systems (e.g. shared economy) or sustainable lifestyles.

Coastal cities are especially vulnerable to climate change, for instance as a result of rising sea levels.

Two thirds of all cities with more than 5 million inhabitants – 13% of the world's urban population – are in low-lying coastal zones. These zones are at particular risk of flooding from the sea and river estuaries, salination of drinking water reservoirs, growing erosion and a loss of land suitable for habitation.

A 2018 IPCC report found that even a global temperature increase of 1.5°C could raise sea levels by 26 to 77 centimetres by 2100. Each 10-centimetre increase will require the resettlement of around 10 million people.

This call to act initially resulted from an acknowledgement of **global responsibility**. It soon became clear that the impacts of climate change threaten safety, quality of life and economic development. Those responsible in cities and regions must therefore protect their citizens, infrastructures and economic values. This means that sub-national climate goals and programmes are among the core tasks of any municipal or regional government that is mindful of its responsibility towards its citizens.

2.2. Cities and regions' potential for action

Cities and municipalities recognised at an early stage that there is significant potential for GHG emissions reduction within the scope of their remit. In 2019, the Coalition for Urban Transitions (CUT) published the Climate Emergency – Urban Opportunity report and confirmed this insight by demonstrating that 'greenhouse gas emissions in cities can be brought close to net-zero using proven technologies and practices. It identifies a bundle of technically feasible low-carbon measures that could cut emissions from key urban sectors by almost 90% by 2050.'

Climate Emergency – Urban Opportunity, Report from the Coalition for Urban Transitions (CUT)

'The world faces a climate emergency – but cities offer national governments a solution.' (page 10). The Coalition for Urban Transitions is a global initiative aiming to support national governments in fostering the economic development of cities while also counteracting the devastating impacts of climate change. Find out more:

<https://urbantransitions.global>



Tasks and areas of action at local level

Many municipal tasks relate to areas of action linked to GHG emissions, including:

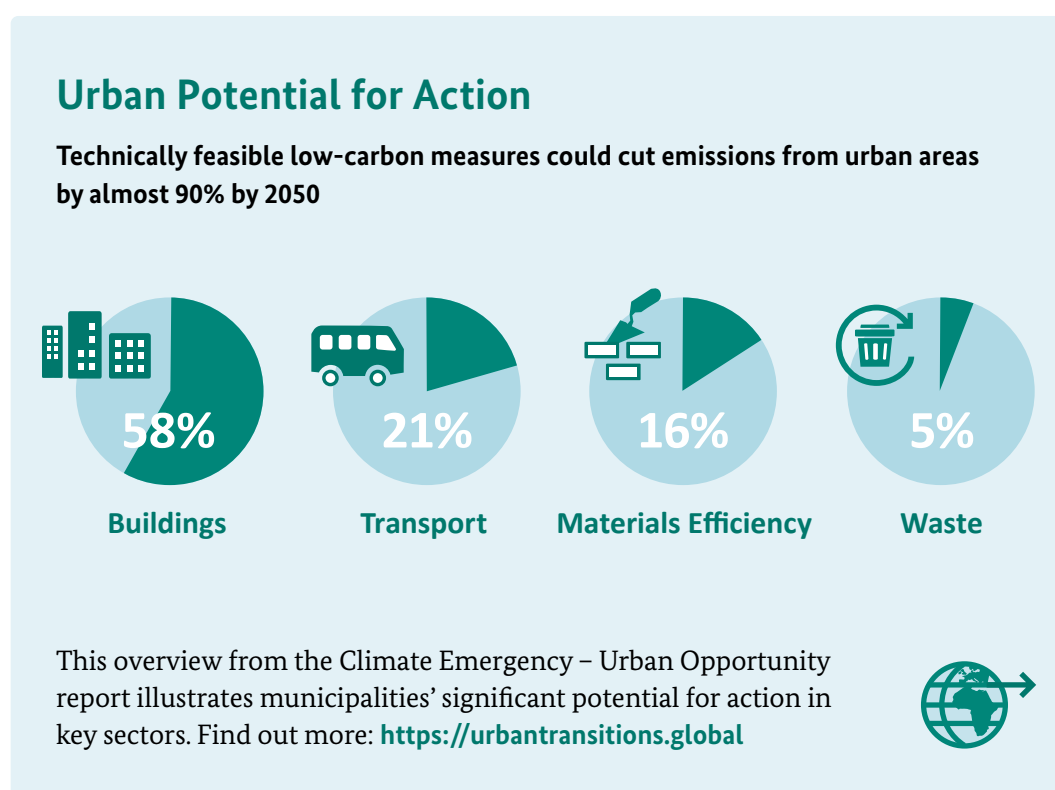
- **Land use:** planning and permits for development, zoning, green areas, climate change adaptation, etc.
- **Buildings:** building permits (the building sector is responsible for almost 40% of carbon emissions and 36% of global energy demand). For **cooling** alone, energy requirements have risen by 25% since 2010.
- **Transport:** road use, public transport, compact cities. In the EU, urban mobility accounts for 40% of carbon emissions from road transport.
- **Waste:** rapid reductions in emissions are possible in this area, especially for methane, which in the short term is a much more potent greenhouse gas than CO₂.
- **Water:** consumption, distribution and disposal. In some cities in the global South, water pumps account for the highest levels of municipal energy consumption.
- **Energy:** promoting renewable energy sources and energy efficiency at local level, connecting owners of suitable land with investors, procurement of green power.

In addition to responsibility for relevant areas of action, cities also have a high potential for action due to their economic performance, which is often particularly strong, and a concentration of companies, capital, knowledge, universities and innovation.

In addition to **responsibility** and **potential for action**, there is another reason why the subnational level is so crucial to climate change mitigation: it is closest to the many public and private actors who are vital to the success of climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. It is **at the local level** that experimentation takes place, alternative options are developed, discussions happen, attention is garnered, majorities are gained, and behaviour is changed. Other benefits of municipal action include short decision-making pathways, good knowledge of the local situation, and proximity to citizens and to visible results. These aspects are just as true in big cities as they are in small municipalities.

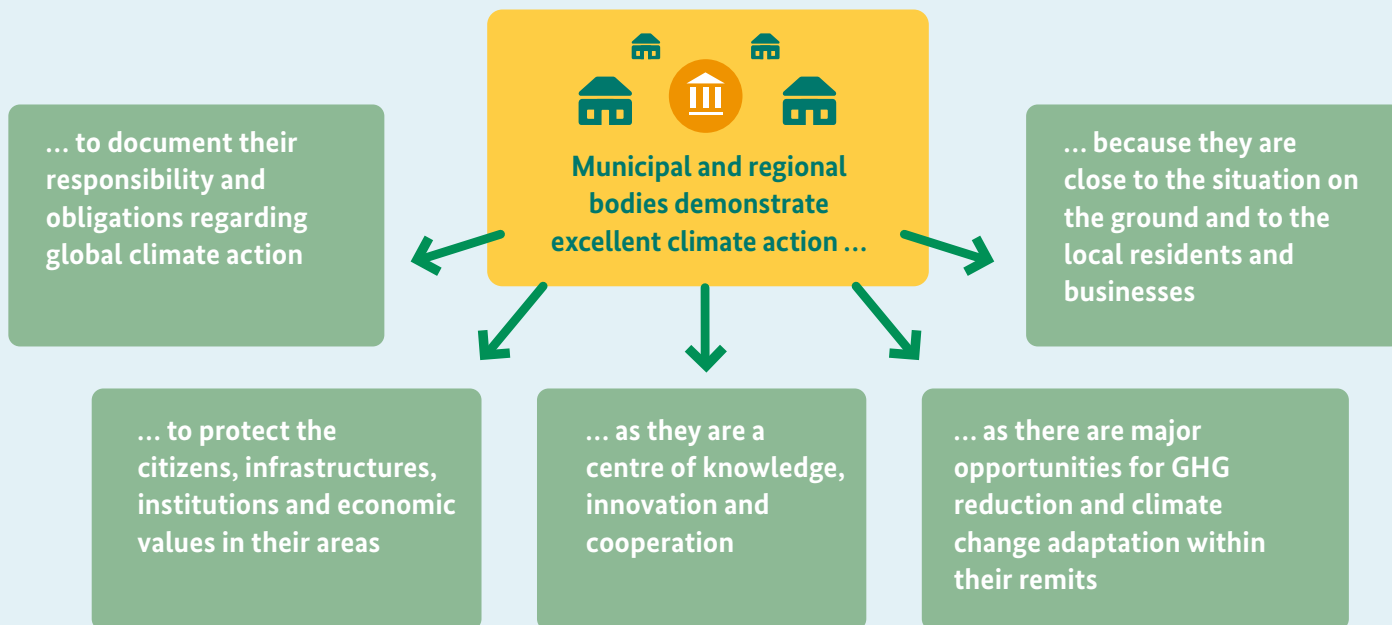
New low-carbon or even zero-carbon social practices for housing, mobility, consumption and production will develop first in urban areas. These areas therefore play a pioneering role that can benefit the entire country.

In 2019, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that ‘cities are where the climate battle will largely be won or lost.’



Across the globe, national governments will only achieve their climate goals by encouraging and demanding that the potential of cities, municipalities and regions is harnessed. There is an urgent need for mitigation and adaptation goals to become more ambitious and, throughout the world, this can only be achieved via the subnational level.

Why cities and regions lead the way on climate action



How municipalities and regions manage climate change mitigation (literature). Find out more:
<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



Climate competences at all levels

With regard to climate policy interventions and climate measures, the ICLEI European Secretariat has compiled information about which functions and possibilities for action government and administration levels normally have in a country and at the supranational level. An infographic sets out the 'rights, obligations and opportunities' of different levels of government and public authorities regarding action they can or must take. This relates to information-sharing, rule-sharing, implementation and finance, for example. One of the central conclusions is that possibilities for action at the supranational level can be defined clearly as 'rights', while national and regional governments have more of an 'obligation'. Local governments have fewer rights, some obligations and a larger number of voluntary opportunities options for action ('opportunities'). Find out more:
<https://iclei-europe.org>



The rights and competence areas enshrined in the country's constitution impact the potential for cities and regions to act. This is tied to funding made available to the subnational level for implementation.

Government spheres rather than levels

The **South African constitution** talks about three spheres of government. These spheres are viewed as different but equivalent and their basic principle is described as *'to co-operate with one another in mutual trust and good faith by fostering friendly relations; assisting and supporting one another; informing one another of, and consulting one another on matters of common interest; coordinating their actions and legislation with one another; adhering to agreed procedures; and avoiding legal proceedings against one another.'*



This stance was also reflected in the establishment of the South African Intergovernmental Climate Change Committee (IGCCC) – a body that advises all levels of government on climate issues and supports their cooperation. Find out more: <http://climateresponse.co.za>

2.3. Many cities and regions are good examples to follow

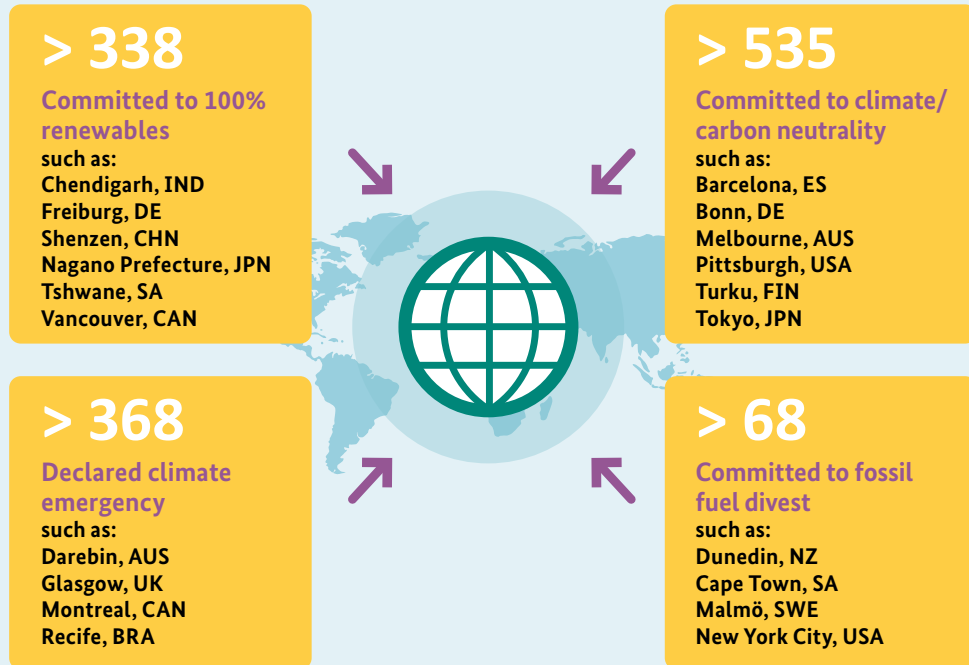
In 2020, more than 10,000 municipalities have adopted their own carbon emissions reduction targets and strategies for implementing them. The most ambitious of these targets specify deadlines for reaching climate neutrality or 100% renewable energy. These pioneering cities show what is possible and encourage many others in the process. More and more regional governments (e.g. districts, provinces, groups of municipalities and federal states) are also committing to their own carbon emissions reduction targets and working with municipalities in their area.

Networks of cities and regions focusing on climate

Municipalities and regions around the globe are supported by networks, including ICLEI, C40, UCLG, Under 2 Coalition and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. Find out more: www.iclei.org ; www.c40.org ; www.uclg.org ; www.under2coalition.org ; www.globalcovenantofmayors.org



Over 400 cities and regions around the world have committed to one or more forms of ambitious climate action, including declaring climate emergency, adopting carbon neutrality targets, divesting from fossil fuels and transforming to 100% renewable energy.



Pioneering cities with ambitious goals

This diagram from November 2020 shows the number of cities worldwide that have committed to specific climate change mitigation targets. Find out more:

<https://talkofthecities.iclei.org>



German municipality develops its own feed-in tariff

German feed-in tariffs for renewables are coming to an end, which is already causing a significant reduction in the number of new solar power systems being installed. The city of Freiburg does not want to stand by and do nothing and, in December 2019, looked at ways to introduce its own 'city power model'. Under this plan, the local energy provider would again offer private solar panel operators a guaranteed purchase price that would be financed by consumers of this green power. Find out more (in German): www.badische-zeitung.de



Successful local emissions trading schemes (ETS) in Japan inspire national action

Japan does not yet have a national ETS, but two such schemes have already been implemented at local and regional level. Japan's first ETS was launched in the Greater Tokyo Area in 2010. In 2011, Saitama Prefecture began emissions trading. In a second phase, both schemes became more ambitious, and the reduction targets were met.

Based on these subnational schemes, the Japanese Government has tasked a committee of experts with examining how carbon pricing could support Japan's transition to a decarbonised society and boost its economic growth. Find out more: www.germanwatch.org and here: <https://icapcarbonaction.com>



Seoul: a role model for climate action in South-East Asia

In 2012, the South Korean city of Seoul (10 million inhabitants, 23% of GDP) launched the One Less Nuclear Power Plant Initiative thanks to considerable efforts by the city's former mayor Park Won-soon. The initiative set a reduction target for energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Building on the success of activities linked to the initiative, the city began a second phase, which involved all the relevant areas of municipal action and brought citizens on board, particularly with planning and implementation. Seoul cut its GHG emissions by 5% between 2005 and 2017 as a result. In the same period, South Korea recorded a 26.8% increase in GHG emissions.

In addition, the *Promise of Seoul* was developed by the Citizen Committee for Green Seoul in an intensive consultation process. Residents, experts and environmental groups took part, in total around a third of Seoul's population. The initiative sets out 10 areas of action for the city.

In the second phase of the *Promise of Seoul*, the city has now formulated ambitious goals with the vision of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. These goals include zero-energy buildings, expanding car-free areas, and reducing air pollution. A detailed plan is currently being developed to help Seoul continue its sizeable efforts to fulfil the Paris Agreement.



In the *Ambitious City Promises* project and with funding from the German Environment Ministry's International Climate Initiative (IKI), Seoul is now actively working with municipalities in South-East Asia to encourage them to focus on climate action plans and intensive citizen participation. Find out more: <https://www.iclei.org>

2.4. How national governments support action by cities and regions

The Climate Emergency – Urban Opportunity report finds that national governments have a key role to play – even the biggest cities with the greatest capacity to act can only achieve a limited amount of their mitigation potential alone. Half of the urban population live in small and medium-sized towns and cities. These smaller urban areas require national frameworks and support even more than large cities. Proactive guidance from national governments and effective partnerships with other levels of government are crucial to help cities harness their potential for action. One third of climate change mitigation measures are only feasible if the national and subnational levels work together, the report finds.

Make cities the focus of ...

... the national strategy to achieve shared prosperity with net-zero emissions. This is the message of the CUT report Climate Emergency – Urban Opportunity, which identifies priority topics and approaches by national governments. Find out more:

<https://urbantransitions.global>



A study entitled *Multi-level Climate Governance – Supporting Local Action* shows how national governments can create favourable conditions for subnational climate change mitigation.

Instruments include reporting systems, systems for awarding environmental labels and climate change mitigation certificates and prizes, municipal networks and increasing municipal income that can be used for climate change mitigation measures.

How national governments can support cities and regions (from the Multi-level Climate Governance study)

- Through information and knowledge
- Through funding
- Through coordination and cooperation
- Through stronger institutional capacity

Find out more: <https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



A climate mandate from the national government can also be an effective instrument. Such a mandate requires municipalities to contribute to achieving national targets, for example through national climate legislation.

Climate protection certificates for municipalities in Costa Rica

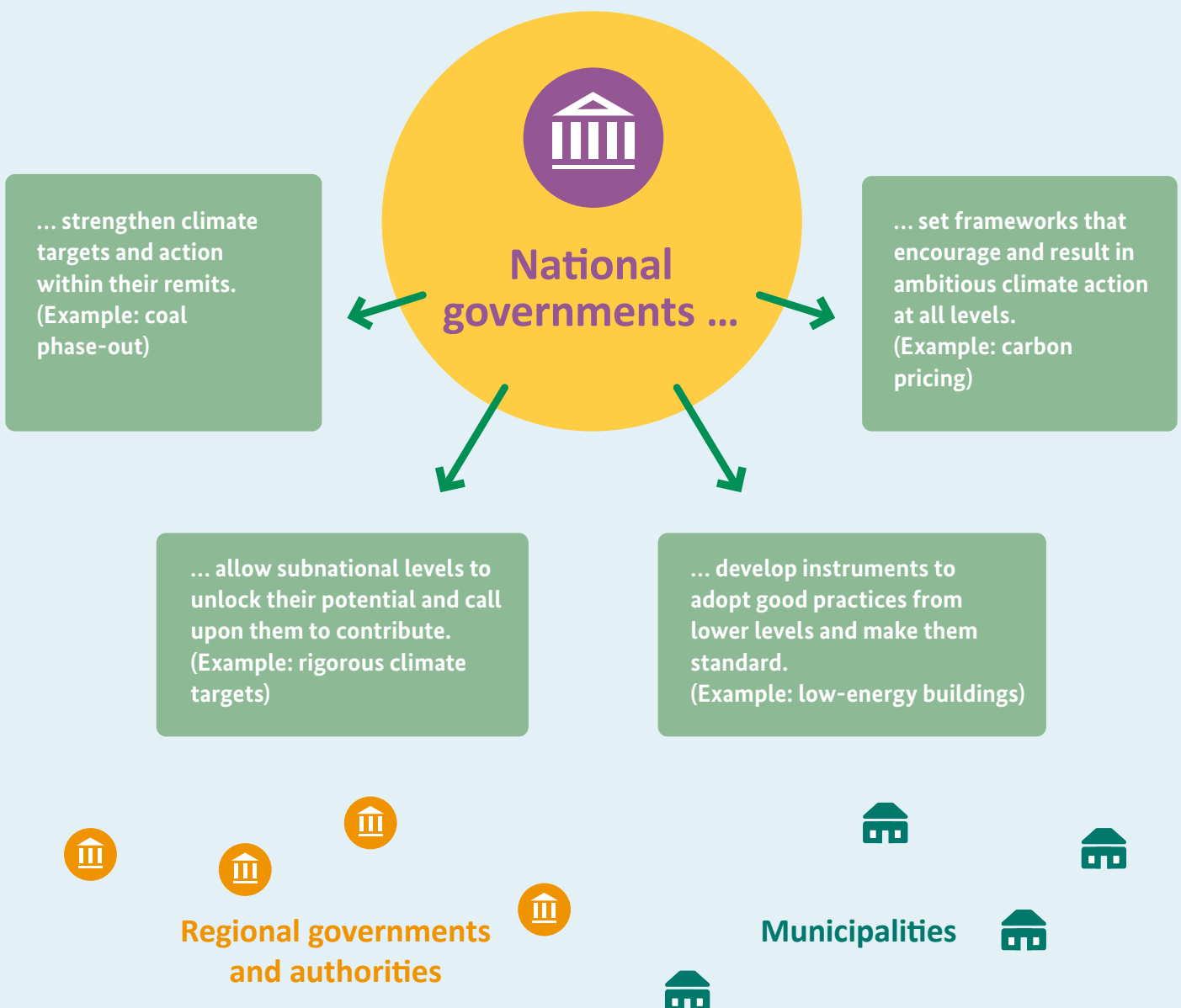
The Ministry of the Environment and Energy (MINAE) of Costa Rica awards certificates to municipalities to encourage them to measure, reduce and offset GHG emissions as part of the *Programa País de Carbono Neutralidad 2.0: Categoría Cantonal* (PPCNC, Municipal Contribution to the National Low Emission Strategy Programme)

<https://cambioclimatico.go.cr>. Cities and municipalities can take part in the programme voluntarily and receive certification for steps taken to reduce GHG emissions: from calculating their carbon footprint to developing and implementing measures to achieving climate neutrality.

More information about the programme and VICLIM's work can be found here: <https://energypedia.info>



Wise national governments allow all levels of government to act and call upon them to act





CCA – the foundation for effective climate policy – the ‘why’



Key messages

Collaborative Climate Action (CCA) is politically intended, well-organised cooperation across different levels of government to achieve defined climate targets, ideally through joint action. All levels of government are equally important in this process.

This cooperation is especially important for urgent and promising efforts to reduce GHG emissions in urban areas. National and regional governments have primary authority over around 35% of urban abatement potential, and municipalities are responsible for roughly 28%. However, the highest level of abatement potential (approx. 37%) can only be tapped through joint action by all government levels, according to the Climate Emergency – Urban Opportunity report (not taking into account decarbonisation of the power sector).

The greatest responsibility for strengthening CCA and making it the norm lies with each country's highest political leadership. Impetus and starting points can however come from everywhere: from the subnational level, from far-sighted governments and even from outside the government, including the private sector and citizen movements for climate action.

3.1. CCA as a principle for creating effective policy

CCA is not the single silver bullet for effective climate policy, nor does it mean that responsibility for action can be pushed from one level to another. Well-organised cooperation across levels of government is a **principle** for how policy should be made in order to achieve effective, visible and fair results.

Collaborative Climate Action (CCA)

- ... is a principle for policy-making and an instrument for achieving and strengthening climate goals.
- ... aims to prevent contradictory measures and thus supports coherence between policy and municipal action.
- ... allows planning processes to be shaped together and measures implemented jointly at the most expedient level.
- ... requires and promotes dialogue and cooperation among levels of government and with many other actors in society and the private sector.
- ... provides an opportunity to involve the subnational level more and thereby allows cities and regions to develop their ability to innovate.
- ... dictates that climate issues are taken into account in all political and administrative decisions.
- ... should through continuous learning improve over time.

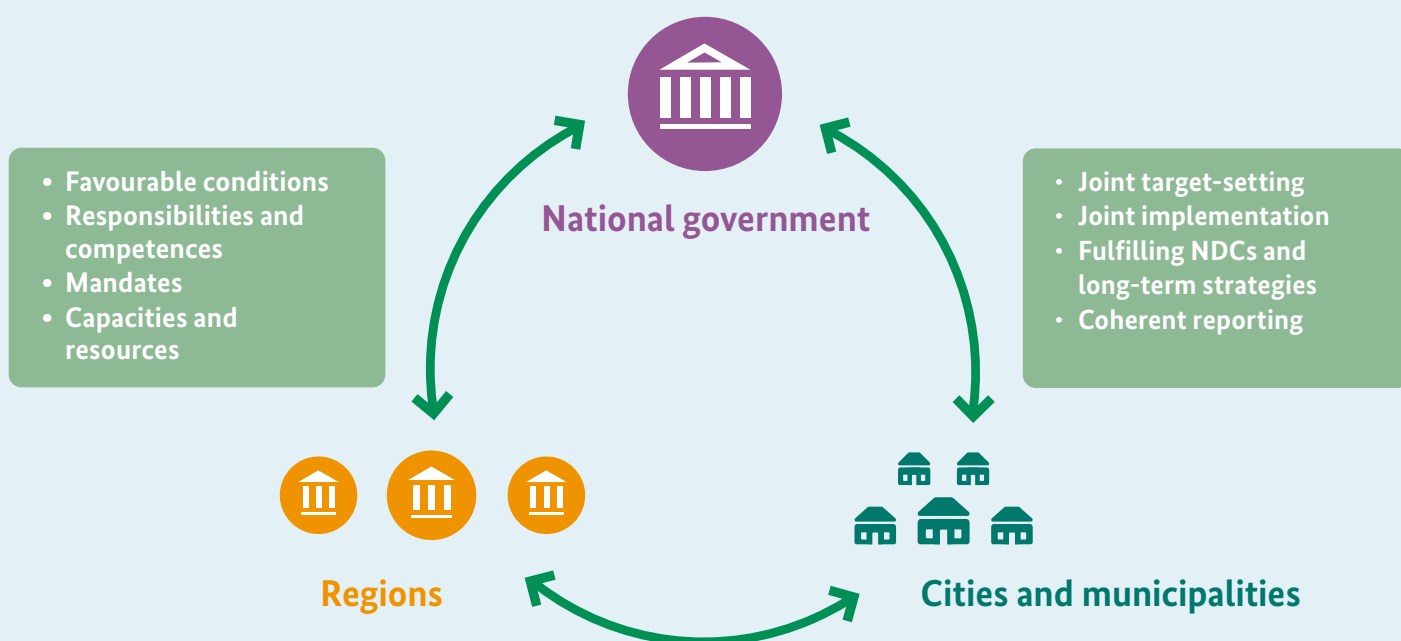
At the same time, CCA is an **instrument** to promote and accelerate the implementation of targets. Climate ambitions can thus be raised, and climate action made more effective. Both aspects make it possible to be more ambitious and really achieve climate targets.

CCA can make long-term strategies and NDCs better, more ambitious and easier to implement (see Chapter 6). Successful CCA therefore addresses both, the ambition and implementation gap.

Vertical integration and multi-level governance are different terms for a similar objective: national, regional and municipal units working together on a specific goal. CCA is an effective approach for GHG emissions reduction and climate change adaptation. The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network describes vertical integration as a process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and subnational adaptation planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Collaborative Climate Action (CCA)

A prerequisite for more ambitious and effective climate policy



In 2019, more than 50 national and regional governments as well as municipalities and international organisations came together to form the Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action. The Partners agreed on four guiding principles of cooperation in the Partnership Declaration:

- **Partnership:** Successful climate action is based on a partnership approach, coordinated across the governmental tiers, including all relevant stakeholders, reaching out to civil society and using the potential of diverse perspectives and resources.
- **Universality:** While national circumstances and governance structures differ, the climate challenge affects all of us. Commitment and innovation in cities and regions and communities need to complement national governments' efforts to establish frameworks for bold, effective climate action.
- **Coherence:** Climate policies should be coherent and take into account all relevant sectors and levels. Economic and sectoral programmes, plans and interventions must support both climate goals and Sustainable Development Goals, integrating social and ecological aspects and benefits and reflecting the realities and needs of all actors.
- **Transparency:** Communication across all levels of government and with relevant actors and stakeholders, including civil society, as well as transparent reporting on actions and progress towards our climate goals are key factors for achieving successful transformation.

Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action (PCCA)

Founded in 2019, its partners want to strengthen cooperation across different tiers of government. Find out more:

<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



3.2. Why CCA strengthens climate policy

Climate action is more successful when all levels of government are involved. There are various reasons for this.

- a) **Public actors pull together in the same direction:** common goals and compatible measures at all levels are efficient and effective. They provide positive impetus for everyone and prevent contradictory directives and incentives. After all, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The better partners work together, the more climate ambition and success they can deliver.

Subsidiarity ...

... is also a helpful basic principle for successful climate policy, since it means that regulatory authority should always be situated 'at the lowest level possible and the highest level necessary.'

- b) **Every level does what it can do best:** CCA results in effective action, as tasks are split in line with existing competences and possibilities. Multiple perspectives and an integrated approach help to mainstream climate change action in all sectors, areas of action and responsibilities.
- c) **Time well invested:** working together takes up time in terms of strategy development and planning, but it saves time, money and effort in the implementation phase. It also increases the acceptance of measures and thus reduces subsequent (time-consuming) conflicts.
- d) **Ownership:** the more an actor is involved in developing and planning goals and activities (and this also applies to government levels), the more willing it is to get involved in implementation and overcoming hurdles.
- e) **CCA increases the chances of implementation:** even if a level of government is 'absent' (e.g. political reluctance or financial constraints), other levels can continue or even step up their activities. For instance, if a national government denies that global warming and its impacts are increasing, states and municipalities with capacity to act can still boost their efforts.
- f) **Contacts at all levels:** partners in the private sector, scientific community, civil society, and the media can be contacted by the closest, most appropriate level of government. While a national government works with national associations and in an international context, states and municipalities can use their contacts with local businesses, organisations and research institutions. The lower the level of government, the closer it is to citizens. Lower government levels are also more familiar with the grassroots situation and knows how to encourage society and the private sector to take climate action.
- g) **Conflicts of interest still exist, but can be resolved better:** conflicts of interest between different remits (e.g. between agriculture and nature conservation), between the different levels (e.g. about how to distribute tax revenue) and even between different climate measures (e.g. biofuels) still exist even where there is constructive cooperation between levels of government.
- h) However, dealing with such conflicts of goals and interests can be done in a **more transparent and constructive way** when there is well-organised cooperation among the levels, and compromises are easier to reach.

Integrated planning for low-carbon development – Indonesia

In October 2017, Indonesia's Government outlined its goal of better integrating climate protection into the country's development agenda. It launched the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI), which seeks to reconcile economic growth with poverty reduction, social stability, high environmental quality, ecosystem protection, biodiversity and GHG emission reductions. A first outcome is the latest National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) (<https://www.bappenas.go.id>) for 2020 to 2024. The plan makes low-carbon development a national priority for the first time. Reducing GHG emissions is included in the country's macro development targets (based on current NDC).



Following the national level, it is up to provinces to move in this direction, too. Further information on this and on VICLIM support can be found here: (<https://energypedia.info>).

Further information on the Low Carbon Development Initiative in general can be found on the initiative's official website (<https://lcdi-indonesia.id>) and in a report entitled A Paradigm Shift Towards a Green Economy in Indonesia (<https://www.bappenas.go.id>).

- i) **Climate change action and adaptation always considered:** the better levels of government work together, the greater the likelihood that climate issues will be incorporated into all decisions. This integrated approach, also known as mainstreaming, is also the objective of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- j) **CCA represents a modern governing style:** many governments across the globe work together to pool their strengths and boost each government level's possibilities for action.
- k) **CCA makes everyone stronger:** climate cooperation makes everyone stronger; there are no losers. Climate cooperation among all levels of government helps to achieve joint climate goals and achieve success at each individual level. Everybody wins because all those involved combine their potential. Instead of a feared loss of power, each level gains recognition. Rather than worrying about having to share funding, there is a joint responsibility for future-proof, competitive and socially responsible investment in the future. Instead of limiting international contacts, additional sources of funding for municipalities and regions can be unlocked.

Incorporating climate change mitigation and adaptation into general development – Puerto Vallarta, Mexico

The Climate Action Plan for Puerto Vallarta (<https://www.puertovallarta.gob.mx>) in the state of Jalisco shows that municipal adaptation and mitigation measures are not exclusively the task of the environmental unit at city hall. Each directorate has to be aware of its role in the fight against climate change, incorporate climate change into planning processes and utilise and steer resources and efforts so that development targets are achieved and are not jeopardised in the context of the major challenges posed by climate change (e.g. flooding as an infrastructure risk).



VICLIM supported the city in drawing up its climate plan. Further information can be found here (<https://energypedia.info>) and on the International Climate Initiative (IKI) in Mexico website (<https://iki-alliance.mx>).

4.

CCA requires a clear political will and intelligent processes – the ‘how’



Key messages

CCA can succeed if there is a political will to engage in cooperation at all levels of government and if this manifests through joint targets, laws and rules, institutions, structures and processes. The subnational level is just as responsible for success as the national government.

When the national government and provinces, states and municipalities, or national and subnational government units agree that they can only achieve success by working together, a whole host of opportunities opens up: from occasionally exchanging ideas to joint, strategic implementation of climate goals.

Key elements for success.

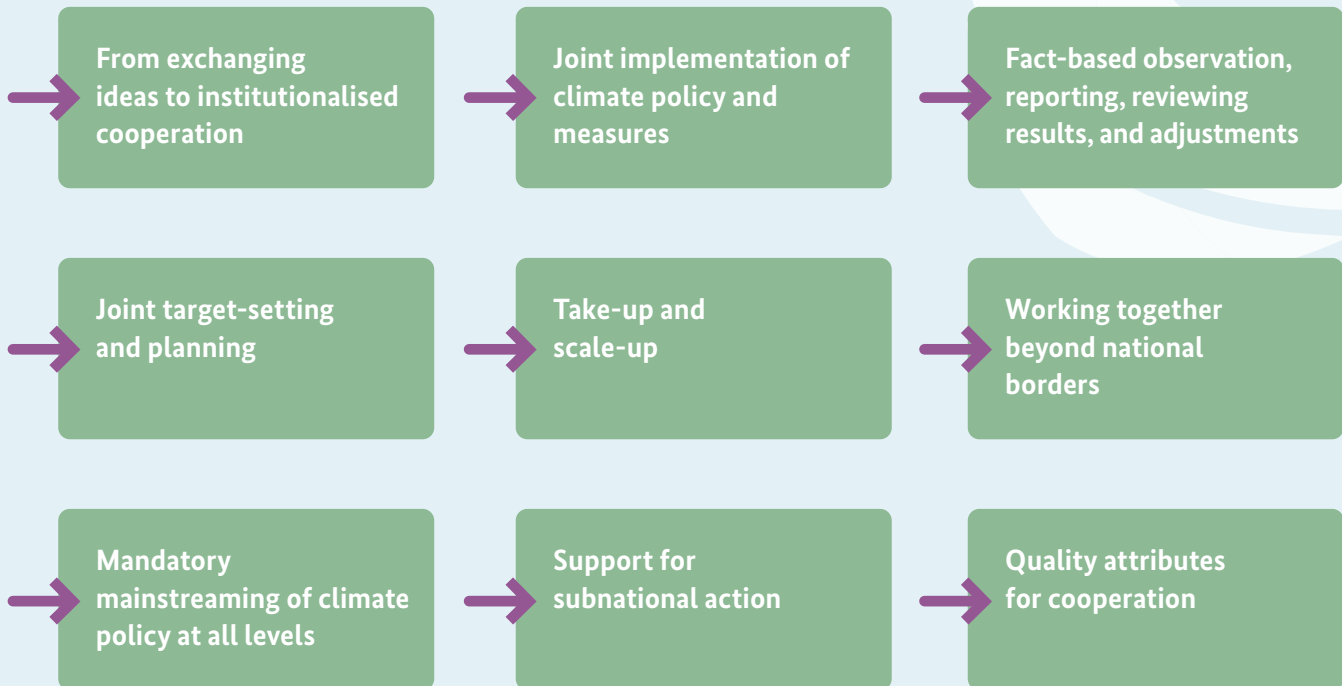
- Well-defined basic principles and shared targets
- Long-term (and institutionalized) cooperation
- Agreed upon responsibilities and mechanisms
- Process-oriented collaboration
- Fact-based decision-making
- Available resources for both individual action and collaboration
- Opportunities for engagement and participation
- Cooperation with non-state partners
- Space for experimenting and learning
- Outreach to and exchange with international partners

It is important that parliaments, ministries, subordinate authorities, departments, offices and other actors at different levels of government adhere to the principle of cooperation:

- Through institutionally safeguarded cooperation
- When setting climate targets
- When enshrining climate policy in law
- During joint implementation
- When evaluating and making improvements
- Through learning and cooperation that transcends national borders
- Through mutual support
- By incorporating factors that contribute to a good cooperation process

Collaborative Climate Action requires a political will and good processes

Collaborative Climate Action



Successful cooperation across levels of government is not contingent on money, external support or internationally set rules. A political will to engage in cooperation is crucial.

4.1. From exchanging ideas to institutionalised cooperation

Meeting and exchanging information across different levels of government can evolve from one-off meetings and temporary processes to safeguarded participatory rights and duties.

One-off meetings between different levels of government set the course and provide impetus for longer-term cooperation.

Regional NDC workshops in Mexico

In Mexico, a series of regional NDC workshops brought together actors from the federal level and from state entities (environmental ministries, environmental and climate change institutes etc.) to discuss climate challenges and success stories. Participants talked about how the states could contribute to the NDC



Find out more on IKI's website (<https://iki-alliance.mx>) in Mexico (*in English and Spanish*)

Temporary processes aim to achieve a common outcome, e.g. drafting a national climate plan or urban development strategy.

The Talanoa Dialogues to prepare for and follow up on the 2017 UN Climate Conference under the Fijian presidency began as temporary processes and were intended to be a first step towards more frequent meetings (see also 6.3).

Broad participation in drafting the German Climate Action Plan

Germany drew up its Climate Action Plan 2050 between mid-2015 and early 2017. From the outset, there was broad-based participation by many groups, including German states and municipalities. The participation process was managed by a commissioned institute and subsequently evaluated. Find out more: <https://www.bmu.de>



Long-term cooperation can take place in bodies, committees and work groups, for example for planning purposes and to reach compromises.

From a temporary to a permanent participation process

Involving interest groups is a key element of CCA. France, for example, has turned an *advisory* body into a *participation* body, which must now be consulted when any piece of environmental or sustainability legislation is drafted.

A multi-dimensional consultation process took place in preparation for a climate law adopted in France in 2015. Public debates were held, accompanied by a citizen's day, a participatory website and local discussions, including in regions of France. Furthermore, institutionalised stakeholder dialogues took place with specific groups – the state, members of parliament, municipalities, companies, trade unions and environmental associations. As a result, the National Council for the Ecological Transition (Le conseil national de la transition écologique, CNTE) was formed, made up of these various interest groups and levels of government. Find out more: <https://www.iddri.org>



Participatory rights enshrined in law are the most reliable form of cooperation. All those involved know their rights and duties with regard to decision-making and implementation. In this case, all levels of government must contribute to ambitious climate policy, and citizens can demand action.

Participation of states in federal legislation in Germany

Germany's constitution stipulates that the Bundesrat must participate in drafting federal legislation. In November 2019, the national parliament adopted the Climate Action Law. The Bundesrat criticised the government's lack of ambition and made improvements, such as imposing much higher carbon duties on fossil fuels for transport and heating.

It is important to note that cooperation can only work when no level passes up the opportunity to participate. Therefore, successful cooperation requires the subnational level (states, provinces, districts and municipalities) to proactively seize opportunities for participation offered by the national government.

4.2. Joint target setting and planning

Different levels of government can set their own climate goals, derive them (e.g. municipalities adopt their government's climate targets), aggregate them (e.g. governments present the sum total of their municipalities' climate targets) or, ideally, develop them together and coordinate with one another.

Cities adopt the climate goals of the states

The Ministry of Transport for the German state of Baden-Württemberg has set five climate targets. In order to cut carbon emissions by 40% by 2030, local public transport is to double, the number of cars in cities is to be reduced by a third and one in three cars is to be carbon neutral. Cities can now integrate these targets into their municipal climate and transportation plans and receive support for ambitious measures.

This approach ensures that the legal frameworks mesh and are harmonised at all levels, including positive and negative incentives, support programmes, and appeals.

Some countries are beginning to set climate targets for local and regional authorities, who must then incorporate these targets into their plans and legislation and achieve them. Many municipalities would like to see rules like this in place as a ‘climate mandate’.

Binding climate goals in France

France’s national climate strategy sets targets to reduce GHG emissions throughout France and requires local and regional authorities to draw up and implement appropriate action plans.

At regional level, climate and energy targets should be incorporated into regional plans for spatial development, sustainable development and equal standards of living (SPADDET). At local level, all municipalities with more than 20,000 residents must draw up Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs, as developed by the Covenant of Mayors) and thereby also observe air quality objectives and promote positive energy areas by 2050.



In France, binding energy and climate plans must therefore be derived from national targets. However, there has been criticism as there is no obligation at the national level to acknowledge or even evaluate subnational activities. Find out more:

<https://www.c-track50.eu/publications>

A **national climate plan** should always incorporate municipalities as a key level of action, urge them to take action and make improvements to the framework conditions and the necessary support available (see also 4.7).

Georgia's national climate action plan

Georgia is in the process of drawing up a national climate action plan. On the initiative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, city and municipal representatives are part of technical working groups. They contribute their knowledge, provide information about local challenges and share previous experience of implementing municipal climate projects and plans, such as Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) within the Global Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate. Find out more about VICLIM's work in Georgia here: <https://energypedia.info>



Municipal climate plans detail voluntary commitments, planned measures and their implementation, along with specifying and, if necessary, calling for further development of the required national climate targets and frameworks.

Modern decarbonisation strategies are closely tied to national climate policies

Between 2012 and 2015, eight model cities in Brazil, India and South Africa developed comprehensive urban strategies and action plans for decarbonisation using ICLEI's Green Climate Cities (GCC) method. In the current, second phase of the Urban LEDS project, which is cofinanced by the EU, additional model cities in Colombia, Bangladesh, Laos and Rwanda are developing their climate strategies. Cooperation between local and national levels of government is at the heart of these activities. Find out more: <https://urban-leds.org>



The development of NDCs and long-term strategies provides exceptional opportunities to develop joint targets and climate action plans at all levels of government (see Chapter 6).

4.3. Mandatory incorporation of climate policy at all levels

Mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation means creating predictable mechanisms that are effective in the long term, rather than making isolated decisions. Examples might include:

- Laws, municipal statutes, basic resolutions
- Taxes, incentives, subsidies, income opportunities for the different levels
- Defined competences and human resources
- Recurring processes, for example in sustainability management and links with budgetary law

Climate targets are reached much more quickly and effectively when all levels of government pull together in the same direction rather than working on their own or even against one another. The question of how best to mainstream national, regional and local climate targets varies depending on a country's structure and constitution. Institutional frameworks that require and facilitate cooperation of this kind can take many forms. They include the following:

A **national climate law**: this law can assign tasks and competences to all public actors and should set out their continuous cooperation (= CCA).

Mexico's National Climate Change Law

In 2012, Mexico defined its first targets for reducing GHG emissions and for climate adaptation efforts with the National Climate Change Law (*Ley General de Cambio Climático*). The law also specifies planning and policy tools, sets out an institutional framework and provides general guidelines for implementing climate policy. Articles 7–9 outline competences for the different levels of government (i.e. central government, states and municipalities). The National System for Climate Change (*Sistema Nacional de Cambio Climático; SNCC*) seeks to regulate coordination between these levels (Article 38 ff.). In addition to national institutions such as the Interministerial Commission for Climate Change, the Council for Climate Change, and the National Institute for Ecology and Climate Change, the Federal Congress is also part of the system together with Mexico's 32 states and three national associations of cities and municipalities. In terms of planning, the law requires states to develop their own climate change mitigation programmes. Together with the National Climate Change Strategy and the national Special Programme on Climate Change, these programmes are Mexico's central planning instruments (see Article 58). The law does not directly require municipalities to take this step. However, it gives federal states this option. For example, this directive has been included in the state of Jalisco's Law on Climate Change Action (*Ley para la Acción ante el Cambio Climático* <https://www.gob.mx>) since 2015.



National urban and regional development policy: The following policy areas should be addressed jointly across sectors and by all levels of government: spatial planning, the planning of different functions and directions of development for parts of the country, urban development policy, and the organisation and steering of urban functions. Combining policies for planning and organisation with ambitious climate policy promises the best results. The greatest level of commitment can be expected from the top levels, while the greatest innovation and implementation capacity is likely to be found at the lower levels. Modern urban development strategies have a special focus on climate change mitigation and resource conservation. Rules and standards in these areas should also be set out in overarching rules, for example for resource-efficient, energy-saving infrastructures; flood protection; sustainable mobility strategies that prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and smaller vehicles; the use of local and recycled materials; green roofs and the use of renewable energy. In Europe, the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities and its recently revised second version, the New Leipzig Charter, provide a suitable framework (see. 6.4).



Fewer than two in five countries have an explicit national strategy for cities and only a handful of these speak meaningfully to both climate action and human development.

National policy lays the groundwork for local climate activities

Colombia, Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tonga have both explicit national urban development policies and NDCs containing explicit links to urban areas in order to strengthen cities' potential while also raising the standard of living and reducing emissions. Find out more: <https://urbantransitions.global>



Thematic direction: National climate targets can have particularly quick impacts through sectoral targets. For example, the 'transport transition' requires investment to be shifted from road construction to public transport – at all levels.

Regional strategies help to implement national rules, identify additional separate measures and provide framework regulations for municipalities (e.g. for expanding renewables).

Municipalities, too, can mainstream their climate policies in resolutions. Municipal resolutions on local climate strategies, on zero-emission targets, on phasing out funding for fossil fuels and even on the proclamation of a climate emergency are examples of this approach.

German municipalities declare a climate emergency

In May 2019, the German city of Konstanz became the first municipality in Germany to declare a climate emergency in a municipal resolution. The aim was for *policy-makers and the public to combine their strengths to make immediate and determined efforts to mitigate climate change together*. The climate emergency urges actors to lessen or eliminate the threats of climate change by taking rapid action.

A climate emergency declaration is essentially a plan of action that needs to be implemented urgently by the municipal authorities and utilities, for example through climate-friendly mobility management and rehabilitation of buildings. However, such a declaration can also have an internal focus and involve a new structural (procedural) or organisational direction to cope with increased demands resulting from climate change.

This type of resolution from a city also draws the state and federal governments' attention to the fact that it is not (yet) possible to fully comply with climate targets at municipal level with the current framework conditions. Higher levels of government are thus urged to completely phase out existing subsidies for fossil fuels, introduce socially fair carbon pricing, make fundamental changes to transport policy and promote climate-friendly social housing.

Find out more: <https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/>

As of end November 2020, 1,814 governments in 30 countries around the globe, especially at the city level, have declared a climate emergency. Together, they represent 830 million people. Find out more: <https://www.theclimatemobilization.org>



New Urban Agenda

The New Urban Agenda, which was adopted by the international community in 2015, is a worldwide voluntary commitment by governments for safe, just, healthy, resilient and sustainable cities. At the same time, it defines sectoral goals (transport, buildings, energy and waste) and highlights the urgency of cross-sectoral action. Find out more: <https://undocs.org>



4.4. Joint implementation of climate policy and measures

National governments, states, regional authorities and municipalities have various competences and opportunities to deliver better results together with regard to climate action. It is important not only to make climate targets themselves binding, but also the way the targets are achieved jointly by all levels of government. Like countries, subnational governments also have a range of opportunities to take action on climate change, including:

- Regulatory law
- Planning law
- Economic steering
- High-profile measures and voluntary activities

Municipalities utilise their capacities, for example in planning and construction law, when procuring goods and services, and implement legislation from the higher level. If they want to promote energy-efficient construction, they can do so through land use planning and building permits, for example, which falls within a municipality's competence in many countries, or they can do so under private law by specifying conditions when selling municipally owned land.

All over the world, municipalities and regions have developed a host of climate policy approaches, including:

- Integrated climate change mitigation strategies and action plans
- GHG inventories
- Environmental and energy management systems
- Climate-friendly procurement guidelines
- Integrating climate change mitigation and climate adaptation into land use plans and building permits
- Promoting renewable energy

Energy Efficiency in Public Buildings and Infrastructure Programme (EEPBIP) – South Africa

EEPBIP is a comprehensive, vertically integrated multi-actor programme led by the South African Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE). It promotes the integration of the three spheres of the country's government by ensuring cooperation and coordination between different actors from national, provincial and municipal administrations and the private sector. By lowering investment risks and providing expert support, the programme fosters energy efficiency in the public sector and thus contributes to reducing the country's GHG emissions.

Initiatives to increase energy efficiency in the public sector face major challenges: access to capital, institutional structures that can only provide limited support, inadequate capacities and a lack of experience and knowledge. EEPBIP offers support that aims to mitigate technical, institutional and financial risks.

The direct target group includes actors from three spheres of government (municipal, provincial and national) that own and manage buildings and infrastructure and implement energy-efficiency measures, for example in public buildings, for street lighting and at sewage treatment plants.

- The programme uses energy performance contracts between public and private companies. It promotes the private sector, supports the market for energy service providers, leverages public and private resources, while also managing training and continuing education, creating jobs and providing support for corporate development.
- An Energy Efficiency Project Support Unit (EEPSU) is being established at national level. This supports national and subnational institutions in identifying and developing projects, by expanding building capacities, performing monitoring and evaluation and developing policies and strategies. The EEPSU's core objective is to ensure that these institutions prepare, tender and successfully award energy efficiency projects that are eligible for financing.
- Investment risks are reduced thanks to the creation of a guarantee fund, which is managed by the Industrial Development Cooperation (IDC) on behalf of DMRE. Partial loan guarantees will offer additional security for IDC loans to energy service providers.

EEPBIP is part of the national Energy Efficiency and Demand Management Flagship Programme. South Africa has created a series of similar sector-specific flagship programmes on climate change action. EEPBIP was set up using a combination of national and local funding with additional funds from the NAMA facility (<https://www.nama-facility.org>). VICLIM supports EEPBIP by purposefully building municipal capacities in the areas of energy data collection and management, developing business cases together with municipalities and promoting structures for monitoring and evaluation processes that are coordinated across administrative spheres.



You can find further information about VICLIM's work here: <https://energypedia.info>; find out more about support for EEPBIP from the NAMA facility here: <https://www.nama-facility.org>

4.5. Take-up and scaling up

National governments have a special role to play in disseminating effective examples. They can highlight specific projects and pioneering approaches by cities (lighthouse projects) to encourage broad take-up or make them the general standard by enacting rules and procedures. This scaling-up approach is also a good starting point for stronger cooperation between the municipal, regional and national levels. In addition to individual projects, such as a zero-energy city hall, drawing on experience gained at the subnational level of government can foster or even launch long-term transformation processes.

One province's early initiative becomes the national standard

British Columbia, Canada's westernmost province, introduced a carbon tax with offsetting mechanisms back in 2008 to make the transition to a low-carbon society revenue neutral. British Columbia's policy imposes a carbon tax on combustion processes (transport, heating, power generation), which affects around 70% of total regional carbon emissions. At the same time, income taxes paid by individuals and companies are reduced roughly by the same amount of tax revenue. The carbon tax is collected at the point of sale, for example when buying petrol. The policy has proven successful: British Columbia's GDP rose by 19% between 2007 and 2016, while carbon emissions fell by 3.7% in the same period.



This example from one province has been taken up at the national level: The national government of Canada has now introduced a national carbon price. It started at 20 Canadian dollar per tonne of carbon equivalent emissions in 2019 and is set to increase to 50 Canadian dollar by 2022. In 2019, more than 70 local bodies, which together account for roughly 20% of the country's GHG emissions, had already introduced a carbon price.

Further information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca> ; <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org>

A locally developed app is to become the national standard

The Indian city of Bhubaneswar is frequently affected by flooding. This led the city to develop the 'Mu Saviour' app, which residents can use to report vulnerable locations. The app won a national award and is now included as an example to follow in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' National Manual for Storm Water Drainage.

4.6. Fact-based observation, reporting, verifying, and adjusting

To make both success and potential for improvement visible, target implementation and achievement need to be underpinned by fact-based monitoring and evaluation. Data gathered also indicates which actors need to become more active and at which levels. Therefore, CCA should ideally go hand in hand with data transparency, fact-based insights and learning processes that build on existing knowledge.

It is very useful to set up climate inventories. These inventories are already required in the international climate process and, at the same time, can provide countries with essential insights to help set priorities for action.

National governments are still using reporting systems that are different to those used by their municipalities, especially at the international level. However, the more they combine their data, the more everyone can learn and improve. This approach also allows financial incentives and cash flows to be linked to achieving climate targets.

Here, too, joint systems are the most effective way to record climate targets and their implementation and thus make a country attractive for external funding.

International climate inventories also allow for comparisons between regions and municipalities, including beyond national borders. This means that monetary incentives and conditions for access to funding can be created and any such support can be linked to the actual achievement of climate targets.

It is important that data is broken down by specific location as much as possible, so that it can be used as a basis for decision-making. It is also important to share data that reflects international findings with regional and municipalities or to make it available to them.

The Carbons Cities Climate Registry (cCCR), the reporting platform of CDP and ICLEI

Developed by ICLEI and now run in partnership with the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), cCCR supports the climate actions of cities, municipalities and regions by documenting voluntary commitments, activities and results. This creates transparency, accountability and credibility. The reporting system also allows users to compile and analyse data at all levels of government. It is a way to share experiences and thus offers guidance for action for everybody. Find out more: <https://carbons.org/>



Indonesia's web-based reporting system

In Indonesia, figures on potential GHG emission savings for all climate change action projects (whether carried out by the central government or provincial governments) are gathered in a single, web-based system – the PEP Online platform. This allows the Secretariat for Climate Change Mitigation (RAN-GRK Secretariat) based within the Ministry of National Development Planning) to regularly collate information from projects throughout the country, monitor the quality of this information and inform decision-makers about progress made. Provinces use the system to learn about measures in other provinces. The system thus helps individual measures to have a broader impact, as the measures are replicated elsewhere. The Indonesian Government also increases transparency and accountability with this platform. The general public now has easy access to a lot of information about the climate change projects. In 2019, PEP Online was refined and is now part of AKSARA, an application geared towards Indonesia's new Low Carbon Development Initiative.



Find out more about PEP Online here: <https://collaborative-climate-action.org>

4.7. Learning and cooperation beyond national borders

Being inspired by colleagues is the best way to start acting yourself. CCA allows this learning to take place across levels of government and, indeed, requires it in order to make continuous improvements to complex processes.

National networks of municipalities, working groups, joint research institutions and connecting to the expertise of local universities or consulting firms strengthen subnational action.

International learning is central to solving climate problems. Many cities have developed their climate action plans together with partners from other countries and can share insights within their country.

The UN climate processes provide a host of opportunities for national and subnational decision-makers to learn together and transfer examples to their own situations.

Learning within the Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action

The latest information and practical reports can be found on the online platform of the Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action. Find out more: <https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



GreenClimateCities

International cooperation and networking on climate change mitigation between cities began in the early 1990s when ICLEI launched its Local Climate Action project, which has since evolved into Green Climate Cities. Further information:

<https://iclei.org/en>

International organisations and municipal associations now connect, train and strengthen ambitious cities for the purpose of planning and implementing climate action.



4.8. Support for subnational action

A prerequisite for climate measures at all levels is that the institutions and organisations responsible are capable of taking action. Not only do these institutions and organisations need mandates and competences, they also require human resources, knowledge, infrastructures and funding. Higher levels of government have a special responsibility to delegate, share and build capacities here. This process includes:

- Defining duties, time and resource planning and expectations clearly and by consensus
- Creating a calculable financial framework, permitting and offering incentives for innovative solutions, making funding available
- Providing civil servants with good training, making professional development mandatory, creating incentives for ambitious and creative people, awarding prizes
- Ensuring that data, projections, trend analyses, success criteria and information from international processes is shared with subnational levels
- Building trust by making foreseeable decisions
- Permitting citizens, institutions and the private sector to be jointly responsible for implementation at the local level

Advisory services for municipalities

Funded by the German Federal Government, the Service and Competence Centre for Municipal Climate Action (SK:KK) is especially helpful for German cities. Cities receive technical and financial support for their climate activities. In addition, they benefit from general advice and networking. This also helps to incorporate their experiences into the national policy-making process. Further information: www.klimaschutz.de/en



Information, knowledge and training campaigns: Rapid urbanisation cannot be steered in the right direction without well-trained urban planners, administrative experts, specialists in financial support, etc. It is therefore important to have the best minds on board to work on sustainable urban development, and it is unsatisfactory that even big cities in many countries still lack the relevant expertise and are unable to hire urban development experts. Educational institutions, training standards, financial aid and hiring conditions in this area are essential.

Access to funding: It is critical that subnational levels have their own tax revenues and therefore budgets with which to steer their own climate policies. As a complementary measure, funding from the national government can help them to strengthen climate-friendly infrastructure. National governments should provide municipalities with systematic support in accessing international investment funds, particularly when only limited funds from the national budget are steered towards lower levels. They should also draft national laws in such a way that municipal infrastructure become a good investment for local funding, for example to generate green energy.

National governments that provide financial support for their municipalities' climate actions ...

... have developed a wide range of options, including:

- Providing direct funding for the local level
- Requiring ambitious climate targets or proven climate results as a prerequisite for using national funding instruments
- Developing new, and in some cases, shared funding instruments for climate projects
- Securing investment
- Unlocking access to special loan programmes



Find out more: <http://www.oecd.org>

National funding programmes can help municipalities and regions to plan and achieve their climate targets and measures.

Germany's National Climate Initiative (NKI)

The German Federal Environment Ministry's National Climate Initiative (NKI) awards national funding directly to municipal climate measures. Founded in 2007, NKI funded more than 32,000 projects with a total volume of EUR 1.07 billion between 2008 and 2019. These projects have unlocked total investment worth more than EUR 3.5 billion. This means that one euro of funding mobilises more than triple this amount for climate change mitigation. Support for investment projects has mitigated and continues to mitigate GHG emissions by a total of around 13.8 million tonnes of carbon equivalent (net over the duration covered). NKI also supports municipal climate strategies and funding for local climate managers. This fosters longer-term capacities and competences. Find out more: <https://www.klimaschutz.de/en>



4.9. Factors that contribute to successful cooperation

Stronger, institutionalised cooperation across levels of government places demands on all actors: old routines must be adjusted, and new behaviour must be adopted. As a continuous process, cooperation is easier if everybody focuses on specific factors that contribute to success and quality.

- **A common understanding of basic principles:** Good cooperation requires a common understanding of the need to take action, with climate policy as a central task for the future and derived principles for action. Guidance can be found in the principles of the Partnership for Collaborative Climate Action described in Chapter 3.1, which were defined jointly at the national, regional and local levels.
- **Long-term and well-organized collaboration between two or more levels of government:** The higher level ensures climate-friendly, reliable, predictable and action-guiding frameworks for all sectors and supports the lower levels in their actions. The sub-national level has mechanisms at its disposal to influence climate policy and to help shape both its own and the superordinate climate strategy. Regular and long-term cooperation mechanisms (e.g. participation and coordination committees, support programs) are preferred to selective instruments.
- **Managing and steering CCA in accordance with rules:** Steering systems that specify competences for success, clearly define roles and establish mechanisms for areas where their remits overlap ensure that there is interplay between the national and subnational level. It is also important to consider the role of CCA in order to document and continuously improve the impact of cooperation.
- **Process-oriented approach and process management:** CCA's success is rooted in clearly defined processes for decision-making, planning, implementation, review and intervention. Due to the complex nature of these processes, agile approaches that seek steady and gradual improvement are more promising than static implementation models.

- **Fact-based decision-making:** Facts and (scientific) insights are the starting point for decision-making. Their results should be made visible and verifiable in order to demonstrate successes and, if necessary, make specific adjustments.
- **Available resources for independent climate action and cooperation between levels:** The levels of government have resources (data, financial resources, appropriately qualified personnel) at their disposal that enable independent climate action as well as cooperation between the levels. Resources can be made available in the form of advisory or training services, research funding or financing initiatives.
- **Opportunities for commitment and participation:** Politicians and administrators become experts on climate issues and on the organization of cooperation processes. Forums and formats for the exchange of experience and the joint shaping of climate policies have been created at various levels, in which actors are proactively involved.
- **Opportunities for cooperation with non-governmental partners:** Appropriate partners from business, science, civil society and citizens' groups are involved in order to use their knowledge and potential for climate protection and adaptation. The broad acceptance that can be achieved in this way means that decisions and activities are supported by a broader base and implementation is ensured.
- **Capacity to learn:** CCA requires and facilitates experimentation and the opportunity to learn from experience. Trying things out constantly improving results is crucial to successful climate policy, as is building trust and courage through cooperation.
- **Dissemination and exchange with actors in other countries:** the exchange enables mutual learning. It encourages the dissemination and use of good mechanisms and practices, while avoiding less successful ones. The multiplier effect increases the impact of cooperation.

A public-private partnership seeks to use more roof space to generate power from solar panels

A national legislator (*public*) must create a legal foundation for green power to be fed into the public grid under economically viable terms. Municipalities (*public*) are encouraging citizens (*private*) and businesses (*private*) with suitable roof space to capitalise on this option. Municipalities are developing support programmes and earmarking space on their own municipal buildings.

Local tradespeople (*private businesses*) are providing training and capacity so that these solar panels can then be installed and maintained. An association (*non-governmental organisation, private*) is connecting people with capital and people who have suitable space but no funding. They are also providing sample contracts so that the two sides can work together on a sound legal footing. Research projects are developing new forms of contracts and new technologies, funded by the national government (*public*).

5.

Starting points and initiatives for CCA



Key messages

There are many role models, drivers, initiatives and starting points that provide motivation and offer concrete examples for strengthening CCA. The current UN climate policy processes, the NDCs and long-term strategies (LTS), are creating a special dynamic. Various UN processes are recognising the subnational level more and more and involving it in different ways.

Networks of cities, international organisations, international development cooperation work, research institutions and foundations are also identifying ways to improve climate policy through CCA.

Cities in UN processes

Cities and regions are becoming partners in UN climate and biodiversity processes more and more. Their involvement in national action plans is welcomed or required in decisions made by the parties (COP decisions). Find out more:

<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



5.1. CCA for nationally determined contributions (NDCs)

A decision in the Paris Climate Agreement urges all signatories (parties) to submit nationally determined contributions (NDCs): 'Each party shall communicate a nationally determined contribution every five years ...' (Article 4.9). The NDCs document each country's self-defined climate commitments.

Current commitments are not enough if we are to achieve the goal of keeping global warming well below 2 °C and, ideally, limiting it to 1.5 °C. To raise ambition in GHG reduction and climate change adaptation, the NDCs should be updated and resubmitted in a five-year cycle. As 2020 is the year for a review, almost all countries are now working on new NDCs or on updating them. This process is an important moment for CCA and cooperation with interest groups.

NDCs present a major opportunity

The GIZ discussion paper 'Recover green: Higher NDC ambition through Collaborative Climate Action' (July 2020) presents the main arguments and examples of ways regarding how CCA can improve the NDC process and its outcome. Find out more:

<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



The NDC Partnership has described a host of ways in which national governments can involve their subnational governments, including:

- Conducting multi-stakeholder consultations at the local level and/or involving subnational actors;
- Establishing local climate plans; and
- Supporting local implementation and finance.



Find out more: Insight Brief: Engaging Subnational Governments in Climate Action, NDC Partnership, March 2020, <https://ndcpartnership.org>

While two thirds of NDCs refer to the potential of urban climate activities, most still fail to adequately involve subnational actors in the development process. In their NDCs, countries like Costa Rica, Georgia and Peru touch upon reduction potential via municipal actions or topics such as waste, where the subnational level has specific competences.

There are several reasons why subnational levels of government should be actively involved in drafting and updating NDCs:

- National governments need all levels of government to achieve their country's climate targets. Cities, in particular, which are home to a large proportion of the overall population and have economic strength, can contribute significantly to achieving national climate targets.
- NDCs are stronger when they incorporate cities' and regions' targets, measures and results, which are often particularly ambitious and wide-ranging.
- Jointly developed climate targets and widely accepted NDCs are essential for implementation at all levels.
- The NDC process can also serve as an opportunity to practice and improve cooperation between levels of government.

CCA in NDC processes offers significant opportunities

Find more literature on developing climate activities at all levels of government here:

<https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



The NDC Partnership launched its Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) in 2016 to support interested countries in revising, implementing and re-developing their NDCs. CCA plays an important role in this. By mid-2020, more than 65 countries had already received support from this programme. Some countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Peru, Uganda and Zimbabwe, have started to get their subnational levels of government heavily involved in these efforts, and Rwanda is considered a particularly successful example.

5.2. CCA for long-term strategies (LTS)

Article 4.19 of the Paris Climate Agreement urges the Parties to the Agreement to develop long-term strategies in addition to the NDCs. These strategies should demonstrate how each country aims to make its national economy as GHG neutral as possible by mid-century.

The process of developing these national long-term strategies also provides excellent opportunities to harness the benefits of cooperation across all levels of government because:

- Drafting a long-term strategy requires taking stock across all levels of government and sectors.
- Discussions over targets and pathways to achieve them must take place with the whole of society, with the private sector and within all the institutions of a country.
- The knowledge and practical orientation of lower levels of government improve the quality of long-term strategies.
- Common targets are the best prerequisite for joint implementation of measures in order to reach climate targets.

Participatory processes for LTS

Germany has submitted its 2050 Climate Action Plan to UNFCCC as a long-term strategy. <https://unfccc.int>

This plan was developed in an intensive participatory process. <https://www.bmu.de>



5.3. Initiatives of cities and regions

Cooperation in the UN climate process

Cities and regions have been seeking targeted cooperation with ‘their’ governments at the national and international level for many years now. This becomes especially clear around the time of the UN climate conferences at which some countries, including Brazil, France, South Korea, Norway and Rwanda, are represented by a delegation made up of responsible actors from all levels of government. When mayors and regional presidents represent their country together with the government, joint achievements can also be presented together.

The Paris Climate Agreement (2015) addresses all levels of government.

The Paris Agreement incorporates the importance of cities and regions. The preamble (section 15) states:

‘... recognising the importance of the engagements of all levels of government and various actors, in accordance with respective national legislations of Parties, in addressing climate change ...’

This is a helpful point of reference for CCA all over the world.

LGMA

The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency, managed by ICLEI on behalf of the international city networks, coordinates cities and regions in the international climate process and provides new impetus for cooperation between the international, national and municipal level. Find out more:

<https://www.cities-and-regions.org/>



LGMA was established as a link between the UN and subnational actors back in 1995 when the UN climate conferences began.

Municipalities and regions have been supporting the UN climate process intensively through their networks and associations since 1995. They do not see themselves as NGOs, and instead explain that they are part of the government system (but not negotiating partners).

At COP16 in 2010, this was expressed and defined using the term ‘governmental stakeholder’. Since then, municipalities and regions have been consulted in the UN climate process, mostly on an informal basis, and called upon as implementation partners.

Climate diplomacy by cities

Cities, regions and their international networks have been actively involved in the international climate process since the first UN Climate Conference in 1995. Find out more: <https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



Municipalities and regions are also actively involved in other international government associations and initiatives that aim to boost GHG reduction and climate change adaptation efforts. The UN Secretary-General's biennial UN Climate Change Summit is part of this process. In 2019, this included a track entitled Infrastructure, Cities and Local Action (ICLA) for the first time.

UN Climate Action Summit 2019

The UN Secretary-General invited more than 60 heads of state and government to New York on 23 September 2019 to present their plans for effective climate change mitigation.

The five most important results of consultations on options for local action also included highlighting the importance of CCA and partnerships as the 'new normal'.

The initiatives announced at the Climate Action Summit also include Leadership for Urban Climate Investment (LUCI). LUCI increases financial resources for climate-related urban infrastructure projects in developing countries, bringing together national governments, networks of cities, financial institutions, international organisations and think tanks. Germany is planning to provide up to EUR 63 million.

A key element of LUCI is the Cities Climate Finance Gap Fund (Gap Fund). The Gap Fund is the first global fund dedicated to support cities in the very early stages of project development. With an envisaged budget of at least 100 million Euro, the Gap Fund will unlock 4 billion Euro of investments to implement cities' climate plans. Initiated by the Global Covenant of Mayors and Germany, it was launched under the lead of the World Bank and the European Investment Bank in September 2020. Core donors are Germany (45 million Euro) and Luxembourg (10 million Euro). Find out more:

<https://www.citygapfund.org/>



The UN Climate Conference in 2019 (COP25) also recognised cities and regions as actors. National governments and subnational units participate equally in the new Climate Ambition Alliance, a group of actors especially committed to taking action. By mid-2020, 120 cities and 12 regions had pledged to achieve climate neutrality (the term has varying definitions) by 2050.

The COP25 Climate Ambition Alliance is open to all levels of government and other actors across all segments of society.

The group includes regions, cities, businesses, and investors all uniting behind the same target because the deep transformation towards net zero CO₂ emissions requires the mobilization of all actors involved.

Find out more: <https://cop25.mma.gob.cl>



Together with Chile, which held the presidency of COP25, organised cities and regions have put forward the theme of 'Multilevel Action COP' in order to make the 2021 UN Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow a success.

Preparations for COP26 (2021)

The roadmap to a COP for *all levels of government* is supported by the Chilean COP presidency and a growing number of organisations.

Find out more: <https://www.cities-and-regions.org>



Talanoa Dialogues with cities and regions

A host of Talanoa Dialogues examining the questions *Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?* took place in preparation for and as a follow-up to the 2017 UN Climate Conference held under the presidency of Fiji. As their own contribution, cities and regions launched the Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogues for governments and municipalities to come together.

The Talanoa principle ...

... fosters collaboration and joint action by building mutual trust in an informal, open and truthful dialogue. Find out more:

<https://www.urbanet.info>



Established by ICLEI, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and UN-Habitat, these dialogues focused on creating a favourable environment for continuous climate cooperation across levels of government. Many Talanoa Dialogues of this kind have taken place, especially in the global South, leading to diverse results. South Africa, Finland and South Korea have invited municipalities to take part in their national Talanoa Dialogues, as did the EU and small island nations. A 2019 COP decision encourages parties to use Talanoa Dialogues for their NDCs.

Friends of Multilevel Climate Action

Some governments came together on an informal basis as the Friends of Cities to signal their support for boosting municipalities in the international climate process. Founded in 2013, pioneers of the group include Germany, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Peru, Poland, Senegal and South Africa. Since 2019, municipalities have proposed developing this group into Friends of Multilevel Action. Find out more: <https://www.icca2019.org> Friends of Cities. Find out more: <http://old.iclei.org>



5.4. International cooperation, initiatives and projects

More and more, international and intergovernmental agreements contain references to involving the subnational level.

International organisations, including those under the auspices of the UN, development and financing programmes, and international research mechanisms are emphasizing the issue of cooperation across all levels and even making it a prerequisite for support.

Climate action pathways for human settlements

Climate Action Pathways set out longer-term visions for climate resilience and a world where global warming is limited to 1.5°C, and outline the steps needed to make these visions a reality. These pathways were developed by the Marrakesh Partnership for Global Climate Action as part of the UN climate process.

The Climate Action Pathway for human settlements was published in November 2019. Find out more: <https://unfccc.int>



Recent examples of supraregional initiatives include IKI and the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities. The European Green Deal does not include and call upon municipalities to the extent necessary for them to contribute towards low-carbon living and business, but there are references to buildings, transportation and air quality as relevant urban areas of action.

The International Climate Initiative (IKI) ...

... for the German Ministry of Environment has strengthened cities as important climate actors and as a centre for climate innovation in its conditions for support. Find out more: <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com>



The Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities

The Leipzig Charter laid the groundwork for a shared urban policy in Europe. EU member states adopted a new version of the Leipzig Charter on 30 November 2020. The New Leipzig Charter is intended to create a legally non-binding framework for the implementation of new European and global agendas (e.g. the Paris Agreement, Agenda 2030, EU Green Deal) in cities and thus provide an answer to the consequences of global challenges, above all climate change, resource scarcity, digitization and migration, that are being increasingly felt on the local level. Its principles include close cooperation across different levels of government. Find out more:

<https://www.bmi.bund.de>



A significant issue for the future will be the extent to which many governments' COVID recovery programmes consider sustainability issues (green recovery) and the importance of CCA. Only thereby they can effectively leverage the transformative potential through climate change mitigation and adaptation measures that lies in cities.

Selected CCA and vertical integration projects

Find out more: <https://collaborative-climate-action.org>



“Recognizing the importance of the engagements of all levels of government”

Paris Agreement, 2015

Collaborative Climate Action (CCA) is politically intended, well-organised cooperation across different levels of government to achieve climate goals – ideally jointly defined and implemented. Effective and more ambitious implementation can only be achieved through collaboration.

This publication is geared towards decision-makers and climate professionals in national, regional and municipal governments, with the aim of encouraging them to plan ambitious policies for GHG emissions reduction and climate change adaptation together and implement these policies in line with their competences and strengths.

