



ICLEI Seoul Declaration

“BUILDING A WORLD OF LOCAL ACTION”

FOR A SUSTAINABLE URBAN FUTURE

(DRAFT for adoption at the ICLEI World Congress 2015 Opening Plenary on 9 April 2015, including comments received until 6 April 2015)

On this day 9 April 2015, in Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea, on the occasion of the ICLEI World Congress 2015, ICLEI Members and representatives of local, subnational governments and our partners worldwide, proclaim the ICLEI Seoul Declaration as below:

1- Our World

Deficiencies in social, economic, cultural, political, and institutional systems over the past decades have created an ecological crisis that our world and our communities are facing today. We recognize the fact that this wide-ranging crisis has brought us close to a point-of-no-return and has the potential to nullify the social and economic progress achieved so far, posing a threat to the future existence of humankind on this planet.

2- Our Vision

As urbanization continues, the contribution of cities has become critical in addressing this crisis. Through innovative and transformative sustainable urban development, the urban world has the power to create positive impacts for the Earth we depend on and care for, the People we serve, for the Places we live in, and for the Policies we implement to govern ourselves. The transformation we aim for emphasizes conscientiousness, and pursues harmony between the needs of humankind and the natural world.

3- Our Solutions

We will build sustainable cities by adopting ambitious improvement targets, integrating policies, engaging with local leaders and other actors, and directing our public finances towards long-term sustainability strategies and plans. To achieve sustainability locally and globally, we will pursue cities that are low-carbon, resilient, productive & resource-efficient, biodiverse, ecomobile, economically sustainable, smart, happy, healthy, and inclusive.



4- Our Actions

4.1 Low-carbon City and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Local and subnational governments attending the ICLEI World Congress 2015 strongly hope that an ambitious, global Post 2020 climate regime that will keep global warming under 2°C will be adopted at the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris. As cities account for global CO₂ emissions significantly, we can effectively contribute to the implementation of the global agreement and are therefore fully committed to implement local greenhouse gas emission reduction goals as well as action plans in accordance to our individual circumstances. Together with C40, UCLG and UN partners, we enhance the implementation of the Compact of Mayors and affirm it as the most ambitious global initiative on local transparent climate action. We will continue to lead our global climate advocacy through the Local Government Climate Roadmap and will support the new UN climate regime with a new Transformative Actions Program (TAP) which will offer the potential of local and regional government action on the global stage.

4.2 Resilient City

We promote commitment to local and subnational resiliency; we will mobilize global resilience and adaptation actions; and we will seek to enhance integrated reporting through the carbonn Climate Registry and the Compact of Mayors. We aim to set up a “city-to-small islands states cooperation” adaptation and resiliency initiative, within which we will actively engage and make recommendations on planned “retreat or relocation” of local populations as a result of global climate change impacts. We will develop and use urban resilience indicators, and support the implementation of the post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai Framework).

4.3 Resource-efficient and Productive City

We aspire to the efficient use of our available environmental, social and financial resources, and to decrease our extractive burden and dependency on our hinterlands. We commit to researching, testing, and collaborating on how to transform our urban areas into net resource productive systems. To support these commitments, we will engage with international organizations such as UNEP on implementing City-level Resource Efficiency in model cities, encourage sustainable urban food production projects and resilient city-region food systems programs, and promote a 10% Efficiency-Gain Program, targeted at reducing a cities’ consumption of a particular resource (Energy, Water, Materials. Food etc) by 10% within a time span of three years.

4.4 EcoMobile City

We will prioritize sustainable urban mobility solutions which cater for the needs of all citizens and advocate for the more equitable use of urban space by promoting urban design which integrates human powered, environmentally friendly, and public or shared means of mobility and transportation. We will enlarge and enhance the activities under the EcoMobility Alliance.



4.5 Smart City

To achieve Smart Cities, we will analyze and monitor communication and knowledge production on urban systems and capital, be they physical, (e.g. energy, water, waste, transportation emissions) or social (e.g. social and economic inclusion, governance, citizen participation). We encourage investment in smart urban infrastructure, smart governance, information and communication technologies (ICT), performance measurements, indicators and standardization, sustainable construction and planning, and promoting local renewables. We promote city-to-business cooperation platforms, and will partner with the WBCSD to institutionalize new local government-business cooperation models.

4.6 Biodiverse City

We acknowledge the urgent need to address global biodiversity loss, and will integrate urban biodiversity and ecosystem services accordingly in our government planning and policy decisions. We encourage, within the next three years, to develop local Biodiversity Action Plans that will directly benefit our citizens. We encourage the roll out of the “Cities in Biodiversity Hotspots”, which focuses on biodiversity in regions that have been recognized as being under specific threat.

4.7 Happy, Healthy, and Inclusive City

We will look to measure performance beyond GDP and will encourage initiatives which emphasize happiness, quality of life, health, inclusivity and multicultural diversity, safety, education, culture, green employment, and good governance. We will provide opportunities for increasing community engagement in decision making. We will try to expand the understanding between generations, and in particular, establish measures such as adjustments to infrastructure in cities to cope with aging populations.

4.8 Sustainable Local Economy and Public Procurement

We will make sustainable procurement our standard practice, using our purchasing power to influence the market towards sustainable production and consumption. To this end, we will factor environmental and social costs into our procurement practice, promote innovative, clean technologies, ecodesign and social entrepreneurship, and encourage investment in sustainable economic concepts and models. We will aim for an economic growth through a circular economy, decoupled from resource consumption. We will establish a global cities network on sustainable public procurement for sustainable production and consumption of cities and enhance city-to-city cooperation.

4.9 Sustainable City-Region Cooperation

We will encourage the implementation of participatory/integrated mechanisms within local governments, respect and guarantee the urban-rural continuum, foster enhanced vertical integration of policies, and commitments at the subnational and national level.



5- Our Commitment

We will deliver innovative solutions for urban sustainability, support their rapid upscaling and implementation, and share them with local and subnational governments worldwide. We will strengthen our political commitments and advocate for improved living standards through our civil society movements. We will act in accordance with the highest governance and sustainability standards and ensure the transparency and accountability of progress by reporting achievements to the local, national, and international communities.

6- Our Partnerships

We acknowledge that no Mayor or Minister, no CEO or citizen, can overcome the ecological crisis alone. We therefore strive to accelerate the spread of our achievements through effective partnerships, including the World Urban Campaign and the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments in Post-2015 Development Agenda Towards HABITATIII and coalitions with ambitious and progressive stakeholders worldwide, including business and citizens.

7- Our Principles

In undertaking these actions, we will be guided by the Earth Charter, the World Charter of the Right to the City, the Urban NEXUS approach, as well as the global Sustainable Development Goals - in particular the Urban Sustainable Development Goal - to try to build sustainable cities. In doing so, we will continue to:

1. Raise awareness on sustainable development, and develop appropriate awareness-raising programs for various stakeholders, in particular our citizens, and share the achievements;
2. Share our experiences and visions for sustainable cities, and actively engage in personal exchange program between cities to foster human resources;
3. Be responsible to enhance vitality, health, peace, security, education, culture and rightful governance of the local community regardless of the economic development stage, and to establish and implement sustainable plans through participatory governance; and
4. Demonstrate our solidarity through East-west, North-North, North-South and South-South partnerships, keeping in mind that harmony in economic, social, cultural and environmental development is an essential priority for all local and regional governments and communities worldwide.