ONE PLANET
CITY CHALLENGE

6 SECRETS OF SUCCESSFUL CITIES

HOW TO IMPLEMENT AMBITIOUS CLIMATE POLICIES – SIX LESSONS FROM WWF'S OPCC

With the ever-increasing urgency to curb the global climate and biodiversity crises, while simultaneously dealing with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the central role of local governments is clearer than ever. Local governments are where the rubber hits the road when it comes to enabling sustainable economies and lifestyles that provide all residents with a high quality of life.

We know what needs to be done: reports such as the Exponential Climate Action Roadmap and C40's Deadline 2020 show which sectors cause most emissions and set out clearly the technology and policies that are needed to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Other studies such as Climate Emergency, Urban Opportunity demonstrate the enormous benefits and economic opportunities from establishing zero-emission cities and building climate-resilient communities. However, significant barriers remain. Local governments often face systemic financial constraints due to limited fundraising possibilities, dependence on central governments, borrowing restrictions and jurisdictional constraints. And local governments are also subject to democratic processes meaning that popular mandates must be obtained and maintained. This is not an easy task considering the massive transformations that are required and their potential impacts on vested interests.

But local governments are acting. As of early October 2020, the UNFCCC's Race to Zero campaign has 452 cities signed-up to show they are committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest. And in the latest round of WWF's One Planet City Challenge (OPCC), over 250 cities from 53 countries participated by reporting their emissions and climate plans on the CDP-ICLEI unified reporting system. Participants then received feedback and guidance from WWF on how to align their plans and actions with a pathway consistent with the 1.5°C target of the United Nations 2015 Paris Agreement.

We at WWF Cities have reviewed the best performing cities in the OPCC 2020 to identify what they are doing that enables them to successfully meet the climate crisis facing cities around the globe. Through analysis of their reported data and interviews with local contacts, we have gone behind the scenes to discover their secrets of success.

WWF Cities is excited to share with you the six secrets of successful cities!

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THE SIX SECRETS

1 MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

2 SHOW POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

3 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

4 UTILIZE INSPIRING NETWORKS

5 FORM UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

6 HIGHLIGHT THE CO-BENEFITS

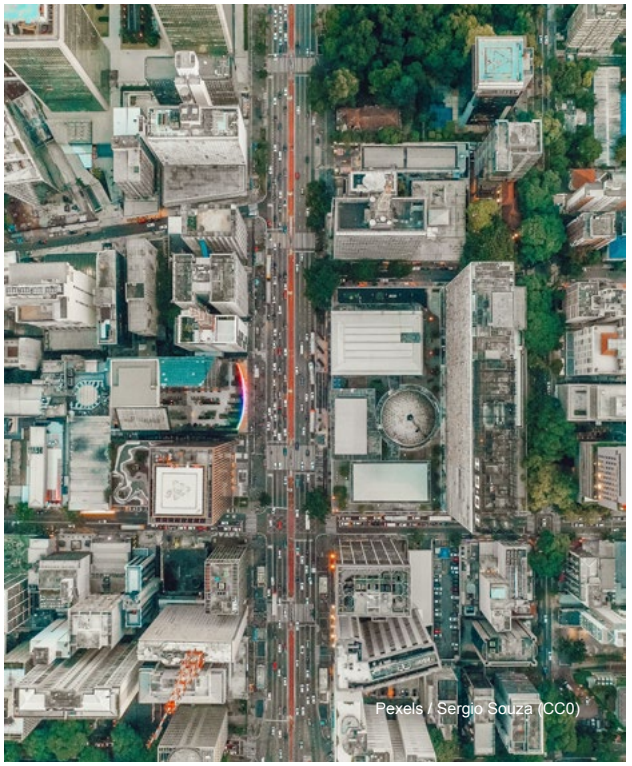
1 MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

Calculating emissions data is an essential step in formulating a climate action plan, regardless of a city's level of emissions.

Recording and reporting emissions is central to setting aggressive targets as it ensures that cities know where their emissions are coming from. And this goes for climate risk assessment as well. Knowing the sources of emissions and risks enables prioritization and more effective strategy development. But not only this: a quantified understanding of emissions sources and climate vulnerabilities allows for more effective budgeting and can support financing efforts by quantifying the potential results – something external funders prioritize.

Measurement and monitoring also plays an important role for a range of indicators that have a closer connection with citizens' lives. Factors such as air quality, temperature and green cover can also be measured on a real-time basis providing feedback about the success of policies and the need for fine-tuning or special efforts in specific areas.

> "Recording and reporting emissions is central to setting aggressive targets as it ensures that cities know where their emissions are coming from."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CASE STUDY: LONDON, UK

In assessing the **Greater London Authority** (GLA) for the One Planet City Challenge, the OPCC jury was impressed by their submission on climate action planning which was backed by a strong evidence base, meticulous monitoring and compelling communications. These measures include: recognising the value of London's green spaces by identifying their true economic value and establishing a Natural Capital Account, and monitoring pollution levels with real-time alerts during high pollution episodes with an extra focus on the most vulnerable, such as schools. To help target future green infrastructure investment, GLA has established a greenness index, based on measurement of blue and green areas using near infrared analysis of aerial imagery.

To encourage investment in local heating networks as a way of reducing heating emissions, the city created the London Heat Map as a public resource showing heat demand intensity over the London region. The London Data Store assembles this information and makes it easily accessible for everyone.

> "…[London's] climate action planning…was underpinned by a strong evidence base, meticulous monitoring, and compelling communications."

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2 SHOW POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

All leading OPCC cities demonstrated a high level of political commitment and leadership.

Successful mayors and other elected officials placed climate action at the forefront of their election campaigns. Climate action is also included in post-election agendas paired with identified funding sources for these plans. Many cities also ensured climate measures and impacts remain top-of-mind in local governance deliberations by creating influential climate policy teams in the mayor's office or elsewhere in the local governance structure – ensuring that climate expertise is readily accessible and factored in to all elements of city actions.

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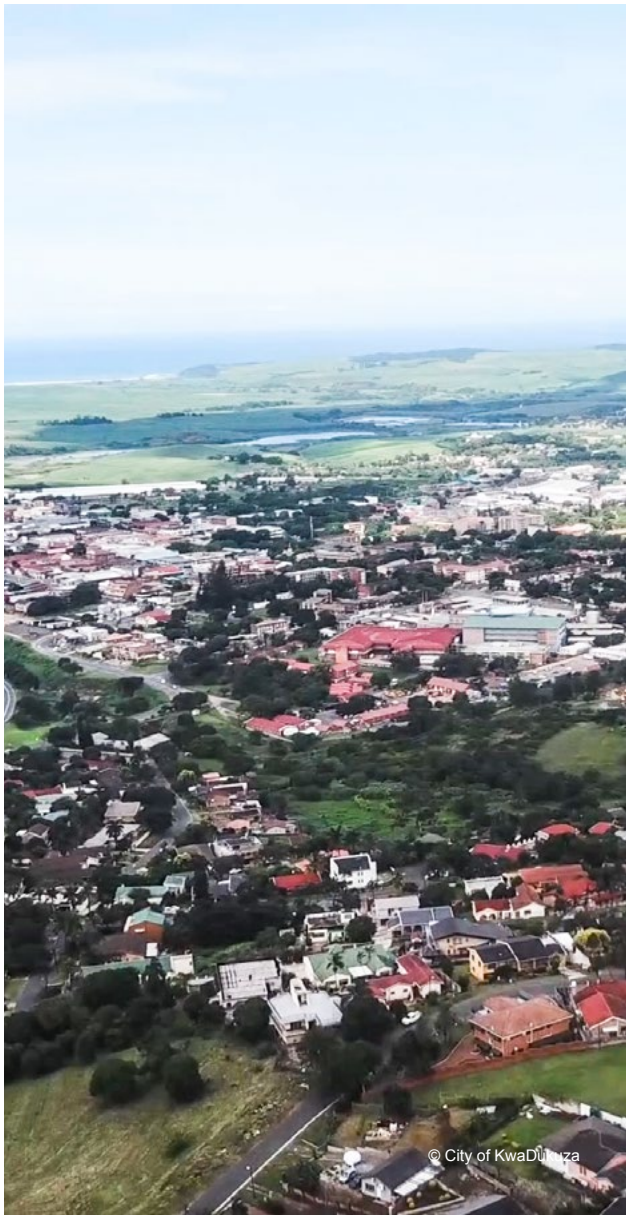
CASE STUDY: KWADUKUZA, SOUTH AFRICA

The South African city of **KwaDukuza** in the province of KwaZulu-Natal on the country's east coast was regarded as one of the top performers in the One Planet City Challenge. It has an ambitious vision to become a low-carbon, job-rich, green manufacturing and logistics hub, and to be a model for integrated resource management and climate change adaptation. The OPCC jury found it particularly inspiring that a smaller city with a relatively narrow resource base can demonstrate higher vision and impact than many bigger cities.

Key to KwaDukuza's success has been the strong political engagement by the mayor and local assembly through a powerful Municipal Sustainability Committee that's responsible for developing climate action initiatives.

Broad stakeholder engagement was supported by detailed analysis of climate vulnerability which was followed-up with a holistic plan that identifies funding sources for specific climate actions. This approach has strongly permeated the local administration where managers and technical staff are empowered to develop locally appropriate solutions.

> "Key to KwaDukuza's success has been the strong political engagement by the mayor and local assembly"



3 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

All leading cities are taking strong action to reduce emissions and have set strong targets in those areas where they have the most control – their own operations.

In most cases leading cities are implementing actions across several fronts. Common approaches include: solar energy production, retrofitting public buildings, decarbonizing transport fleets and educating employees. Cities cited several different motivations for this focus: to inspire further work by local businesses and residents, to achieve fast-acting results, to learn best practices before expanding efforts, and to encourage the markets for environmentally friendly technologies and services. While motivations may vary, it's clear that leading by example offers a multitude of benefits for cities.

CASE STUDY: UPPSALA, SWEDEN

Uppsala, Swedish national OPCC winner in 2018 and 2020 and global OPCC winner in 2018 has developed "10 milestones for a better climate" to guide its ambitious work to be fossil-free by 2030 and climate positive by 2050. Eight of these milestones relate directly to its own operations, including:

- The city's own light duty vehicles to be fossil-free by 2020.
- Municipal heating to be climate neutral by 2020.
- Heavy-duty fleet, off-road machinery and procured transportation to be fossil free or climate neutral by 2023. Overall, by 2020 the energy efficiency of city operations is to be 25% below 2014 levels.
- Total direct energy use is to be at 2014 levels.

To expand its influence it has initiated the Uppsala Climate Protocol which currently engages 40 local organizations in a network to develop more ideas on how to reach the city's long-term energy and climate goals. All participants set their own climate and energy goals and support each other in their achievement. Now in its fourth three-year period, the group has beat its greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions goals every time, sometimes performing twice as well as stated targets.

> "[Uppsala] has developed '10 milestones for a better climate' to guide its ambitious work to be fossil-free by 2030 and climate positive by 2050"

4 UTILIZE INSPIRING NETWORKS

Leading cities consistently pointed to the importance of networks in helping them achieve their goals – whether it be national, regional and global networks of like-minded cities or local networks of local organizations.

Climate and mayoral networks offer a range of benefits to cities and boost their capacity to adopt and implement ambitious climate policies. These groups facilitate knowledge and experience sharing between members and provide external expertise and resources – an important capacity boost to smaller cities which find it hard to maintain specific expertise on staff. The networks also provide motivation through promoting ambitious commitments and support continuity in climate agendas through multiple political cycles.

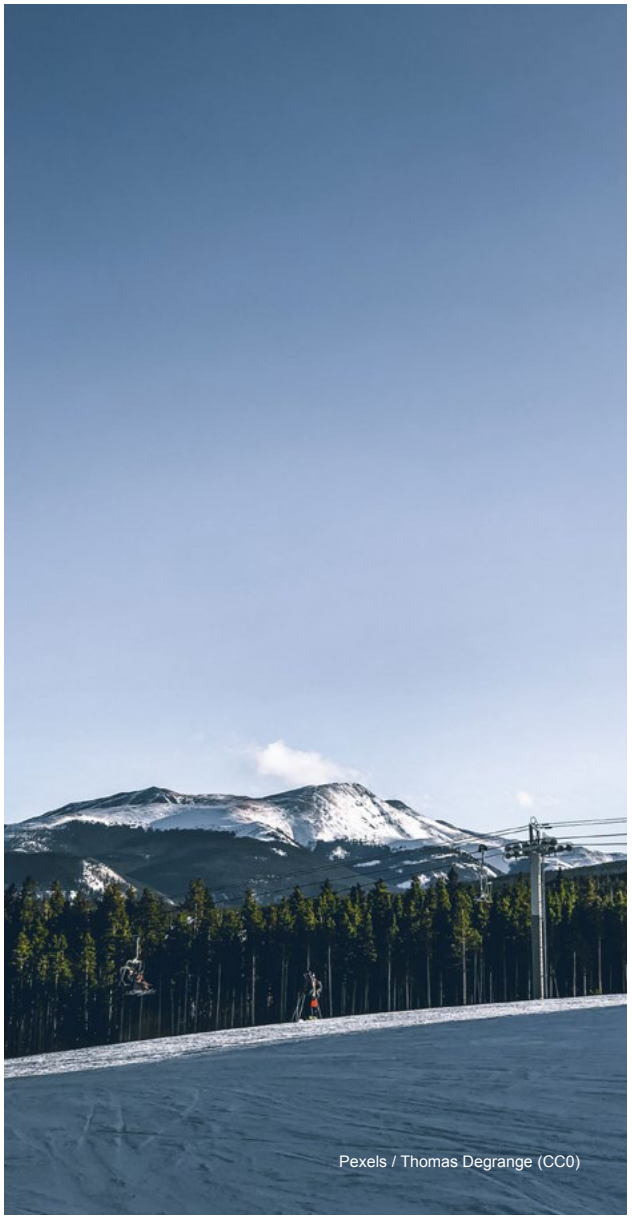
ICLEI América do Sul (CC BY 2.0)

CASE STUDY: NETWORKS

C40 has a system of City Advisors which provides staff dedicated to supporting specific cities in the "development and implementation of priority policies, programmes and projects to reduce GHG emissions and/or climate risks." Cities which have benefited from City Advisers include Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City and Vancouver. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability has an unmatched global network, including active regional centres supporting cities on a range of sustainability pathways. Both organizations also coordinate special groups and networks where cities can cooperate on specific issues. Individual cities may also create their own informal networks: as an early actor on climate change in its region, Park City, Utah has initiated collaboration with other Rocky Mountain ski resort towns to support each other in dealing with an uncertain economic future as the snowline recedes.

Examples of local collaboration also abound – such as Uppsala's Climate Protocol (above). Others include multiple actors at the national level such as the Alliances for Climate Action which operate in several countries and aim to bring multiple actors together to support each other, demonstrate broad support for bold climate action and advocate for policies to bring about a low carbon transition.

> "Park City, Utah has initiated collaboration with other Rocky Mountain ski resort towns to support each other in dealing with an uncertain economic future as the snowline recedes."



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5 FORM UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Universities and similar centres of research and learning can be valuable resources for cities. Many OPCC cities have developed strong partnerships with local universities and have utilized their expertise for many different purposes.

These partnerships have expanded the municipalities' capacities in many ways: supporting their emissions accounting, their climate risk assessments, and their mitigation and adaptation strategies. Such partnerships offer an opportunity for cities with limited internal capacity to conduct foundational emissions data gathering and reporting, and extensive risk assessment research and analysis to support the development of well-grounded fact-based climate action plans.

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CASE STUDY: SANTA ROSA CITY, PHILIPPINES

Santa Rosa City, Laguna is at the forefront of climate action in the Philippines. Obtaining a reliable picture of its emissions is central to the city's plans. To achieve this goal it has entered an agreement with the local campus of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. 100 senior students from the university have gathered data from households in three barangays (communities) in order to establish a picture of domestic emission patterns. The city also cooperates with Clean Air Asia and ICLEI Southeast Asia, the former having existing cooperation with the National Center for Transportation Studies at the University of the Philippines Diliman which provided transport engineering students to conduct vehicle counting and sampling, and data processing. The outcomes from this cooperation will feed into the formulation of the city's Clean Air Action Plan.

> "Obtaining a reliable picture of its emissions is central to the city's plans. To achieve this goal it has entered an agreement with the local campus of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines."

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6 HIGHLIGHT THE CO-BENEFITS

Ambitious climate action provides a wide range of additional benefits, whether it be from mitigation of GHG emissions or the identification and mitigation of climate risks and economic vulnerabilities.

According to recent analysis by CDP and partners, cities citing the co-benefits of their climate action reported 2.5 times more climate actions than cities that did not. Despite the work done in leading OPCC cities on building support for climate action, this was usually not the sole selling point for any particular activity – and co-benefits have invariably played a strong role in gaining support.

Local politicians often emphasized the many additional advantages their climate plans could bring about, such as job creation, traffic reduction, savings on energy bills, improved air quality and the creation of more green spaces. Air pollution was the issue that arose most frequently – with the promise of clean air often driving climate mitigation work.

> "…cities citing the co-benefits of their climate action reported 2.5 times more climate actions than cities that did not."


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CASE STUDY: LOS ANGELES, USA

Los Angeles, California has enacted ambitious climate targets: electricity grid, transportation and buildings are to be zero carbon and zero waste by 2050. Its 2019 Green New Deal (GND) is the delivery method and epitomizes the co-benefit approach. The GND is structured to revitalize the economy while simultaneously benefiting people and addressing long-standing environmental challenges. Los Angeles describes its GND as a core component of an economic policy aimed at creating local jobs in sustainable industries and at addressing the concerns of the most vulnerable communities to deliver an "equitable and abundant economy".

Two of the GND's four key principles focus on its deliverables for people in the form of bringing about "environmental justice and equity" through community-based economic development and the creation of sustainable jobs in a green economy. Together with community leaders, the city has developed a GND community toolkit that brings these benefits to the local level by providing guidance for communities to work together in order to achieve a "greener, more livable LA". The city is also banking on its GND investments to boost the broader economy and provide jobs by attracting outside investors as it develops as a global centre of innovation and job creation in the green mobility and clean building sectors.

> "...an economic policy aimed at creating local jobs in sustainable industries and at addressing the concerns of the most vulnerable communities to deliver an 'equitable and abundant economy'."

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SHARED CHALLENGES, SHARED SOLUTIONS

Despite their many successes, there remain many challenges to the implementation of strong climate ambitions.

A common challenge that the cities face is their jurisdictional limitations. For many cities, it is not possible to achieve their targets without working closely with adjacent local authorities or regional and national agencies. While cities can, and must, do much more to bring about the social and economic changes necessary to prevent catastrophic climate change, they cannot do it all. By acting now, they can show what is possible, but they must also work in concert with other ambitious actors to ensure that national and international systems also align with and support their goals.

WWF invites all cities to join the One Planet City Challenge and demonstrate your city's commitment to tackle the climate crisis. The challenges are great, but as our motto states, "Together Possible." We are eager to work with you and other ambitious cities to achieve a climate-safe future.

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OUR MISSION IS TO CONSERVE NATURE AND REDUCE THE MOST PRESSING THREATS TO THE DIVERSITY OF LIFE ON EARTH.
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