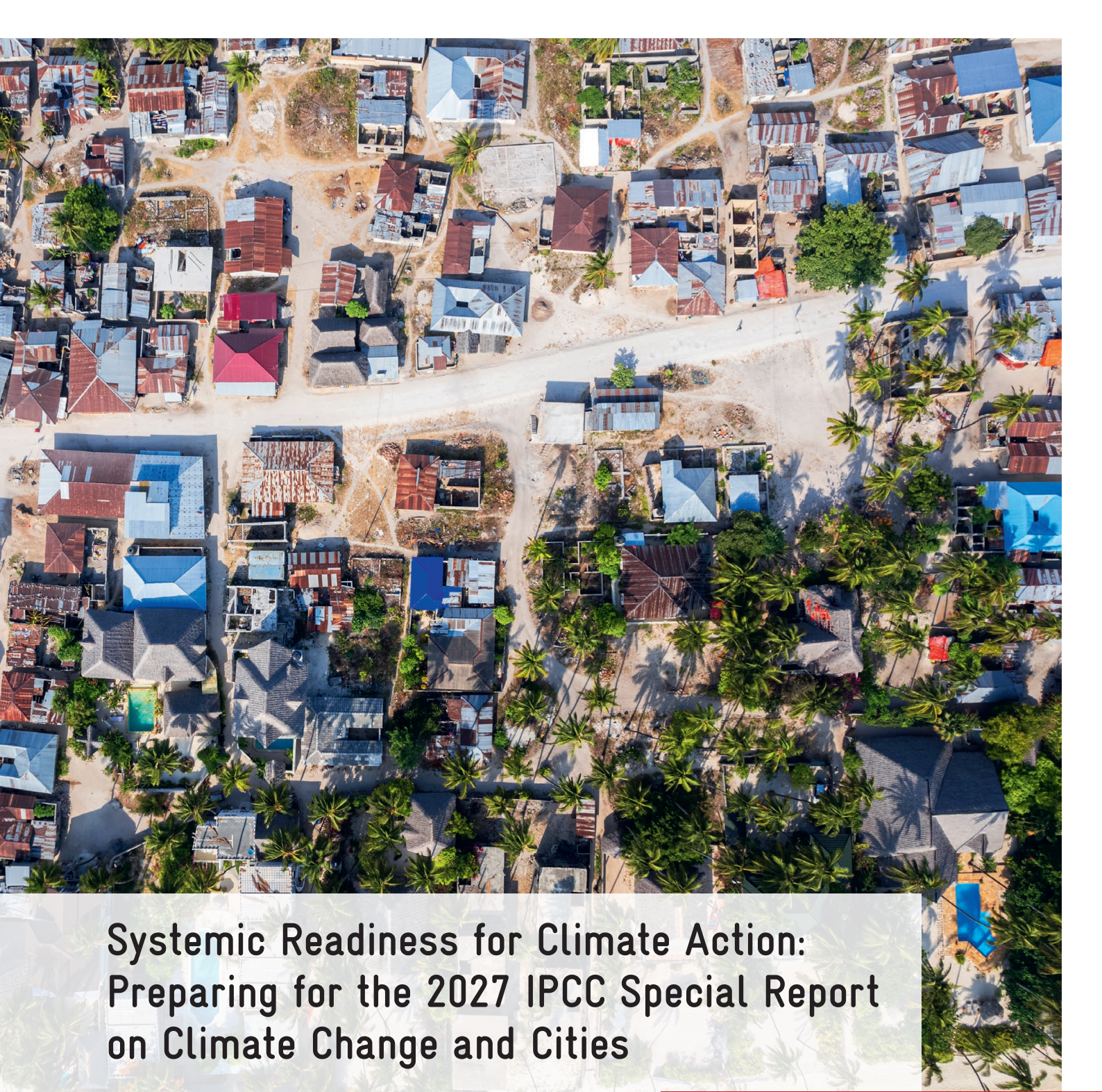




Systemic Readiness for Climate Action: Preparing for the 2027 IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities

Imprint

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Registered offices:

Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36

53113 Bonn, Germany

T +49 228 44 60-0

F +49 228 44 60-17 66

I www.giz.de

Authors:

Aikaterini Karapantsiou (GIZ), Jan Korte (GIZ), Raghav Anand (UN-Habitat), Lea Ranalder (UN-Habitat), Davide Cassanmagnago (GCoM)

Contributors:

Michael Lindfield (Triple Line Consulting), Bernhard Barth (UN-Habitat)

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Bonn, May 2026

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full form/ meaning		
AR	Assessment Report	LGMA	Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)	LVC	Land Value Capture
CAP	Climate Action Planning	MDBs	Multilateral Development Banks
CCFLA	City Climate Finance Leadership Alliance	MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
CDP	Carbon Disclosure Project	NAP	National Adaptation Plans
CFF	C40 Cities Finance Facility	NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	NKI	Nationale Klimaschutzinitiative (National Climate Initiative)
CHAMP	Coalition of High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships for Climate Action	NUA	New Urban Agenda
CIF	Climate Investment Funds	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
COP	Conference of the Parties	PAS	Plan to Accelerate Solutions
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom	PPFs	Project Preparation Facilities
GEF	Global Environment Facility	PPPs	Public-Private-Partnerships
GCF	Green Climate Fund	RISE-UP	Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor
GCoM	Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GHG	Greenhouse Gases	SIDS	Small Island Developing States
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	SR1.5	IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C
GRAA	Global Research and Action Agenda	SRCities	IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities
I4C	Innovate 4 Cities Conference	SUP	Summary for Urban Policymakers
ICLEI	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability	UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
IFI	International Financial Institutions	UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
IKI	Internationale Klimaschutzinitiative (International Climate Initiative)	UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change	USD	United States Dollar
LDCs	Least Developed Countries	WRI	World Resources Institute
		WUF	World Urban Forum

Forewords

“The forthcoming IPCC SR Cities will mark a turning point at the nexus of development and climate action. For us at GIZ and for other development agencies, it is a call to reflect on whether our projects and policies truly empower cities as drivers of sustainable development. For partner countries in the Global South, it can elevate financing, data, and governance for cities – and help mobilise efforts to close the climate finance gap. Let’s join forces and use the momentum this report will bring to advance urban and multilevel climate action!”

Ingrid-Gabriela Hoven, Managing Director, GIZ



“Cities are where the housing and climate crises converge. The IPCC SR Cities provides a timely opportunity to demonstrate how urban areas can confront these challenges while building safe and resilient communities. At UN-Habitat, we are committed to bridging science and practice to accelerate urban climate action, and to amplifying voices worldwide through platforms such as Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change, World Urban Fora and Innovate4Cities. This report is central to that mission. I invite all partners to join us in making SRCities a catalyst for scaling up urban climate action and forging stronger partnerships on the ground.”

Anacláudia Rossbach, Executive Director, UN-Habitat





Cities are the front lines of the climate crisis, yet they remain systematically sidelined. As we look toward the 2027 IPCC SR Cities, we must bridge the gap between scientific evidence and urban implementation. This paper identifies the systemic levers needed to turn global reports into local action. With 14,000+ GCoM cities already leading this charge, we must establish institutional readiness—aligning data and governance to ensure findings flow into bankable projects. We must act ahead of this milestone, empowering cities to move from evidence to impact.

Andy Deacon, GCoM Co-Managing Director

Executive Summary

Urban areas sit at the heart of the climate challenge, and its solution. Cities account for around 70% of global CO₂ emissions and are home to a rapidly growing population, projected to increase by 2.5 billion people by 2050, largely in the Global South. At the same time, they face acute and compounding climate risks, including extreme heat, flooding, and water stress, often exacerbated by inequality and informality.

The forthcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities (SRCities) represents a critical opportunity to reposition cities as central actors in global climate action. However, evidence from past IPCC cycles shows that scientific consensus alone does not drive change. Impact depends on whether governance systems, finance structures, and institutional capacities are prepared to translate knowledge into action.

Systemic preparation will be critical to ensure institutions are ready to operationalise SRCities findings, uptake them and turn them into policy processes at the scale necessary This will be the decisive factor determining whether SRCities catalyses transformative urban climate

action, and influences UNFCCC processes and supports achieving national climate plans, SDGs or whether it remains underutilised.

Despite increasing recognition of cities in climate discourse, structural barriers continue to limit progress:

- **Fragmented governance** across national and local levels constrains implementation, with weak vertical integration and limited city participation in decision-making.
- **A massive urban climate finance gap**, with annual needs of USD 4.3 trillion compared to only USD 831 billion in flows, reflects both limited city capacity and systemic constraints in financial markets.
- **Insufficient recognition of cities** in global climate frameworks such as the UNFCCC and NDC processes.
- **Political and fiscal pressures** divert attention and resources away from climate priorities.
- **Persistent gaps between science and policy**, including weak data systems, communication barriers, and lack of decision-relevant knowledge.

There are five systematic levers for action that could help advance transformative urban climate action:

- **Multilevel Governance:** Strengthening coordination between national and subnational governments, aligning mandates with resources, and institutionalising cities' roles in climate planning and implementation.
- **Urban Climate Finance Transformation:** Bridging both demand- and supply-side barriers by scaling project preparation, reforming borrowing and guarantee frameworks, expanding concessional finance for adaptation, and enabling private investment.
- **Stronger Role for Cities in Global Frameworks:** Moving cities from implementation agents to strategic partners in NDCs and embedding urban priorities across development frameworks and climate finance systems.
- **Resilience to Political and Economic Headwinds:** Reframing urban climate action as delivering co-benefits – such as improved health, housing, and economic resilience – and securing sustained funding for city networks.
- **Bridging the Science - Policy Divide:** Developing decision-oriented communication products, interoperable urban climate data systems, and sustained science-policy interfaces tied to key decision cycles.

There is a strategic window for action leading up to 2027. The period leading up to SRCities presents a unique window to prepare enabling systems. Without proactive action, countries risk repeating past patterns where ambitious commitments fail to translate into implementation. Conversely, early preparation, through governance reforms, finance mechanisms, and project pipelines, can allow stakeholders to rapidly operationalise SRCities findings when published.

National governments must establish urban climate coordination platforms, reform enabling legislation, integrate cities into NDC co-design, and create financing pathways including concessional adaptation funding.

Development partners and MDBs should shift from project-based approaches to systemic support, scale sub-national finance, and provide long-term funding to city networks and implementation platforms.

Cities and city networks should build investment-ready project pipelines, strengthen institutional capacity, and form coalitions to accelerate uptake and implementation.

SRCities has the potential to be a turning point for urban climate action, but only if supported by intentional preparation. Achieving meaningful impact requires moving beyond commitments and communication toward institutionalised systems that connect science to policy, finance, and delivery at scale. The central message is clear: the success of SRCities will not be determined in 2027 – but by the actions taken before it.

1 | Context and Anticipated Relevance

Climate change is already shaping the daily realities of billions of people in cities, where rising temperatures, extreme heat, flooding, and water stress intersect with dense populations and deeply historical inequalities (UN-Habitat, 2024). Additionally, urban areas account for approximately 70% of global CO₂ emissions and a similar share

of global energy and resource consumption (Seto et al., 2022). Our cities are therefore where the most consequential decisions about how to respond are made, and where short decision lines and institutional flexibility give local governments a distinctive capacity for action.

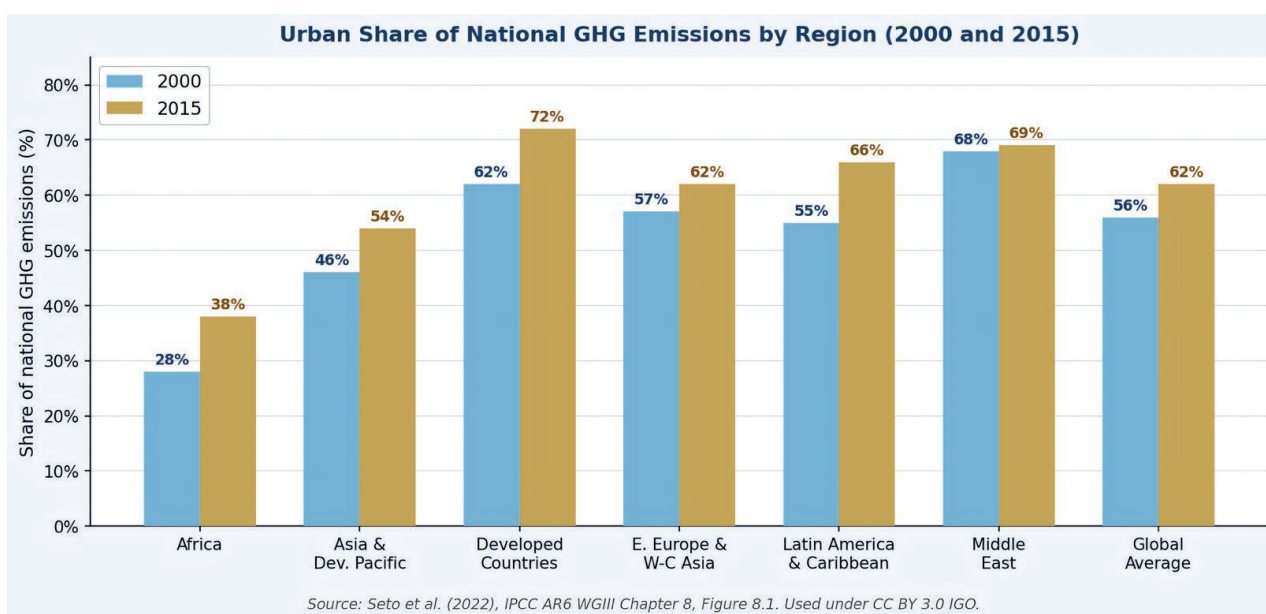


Figure 1. Urban share of national GHG emissions by region, 2000 and 2015. Source: Seto et al. (2022), IPCC AR6 WGIII Chapter 8 (CC BY 3.0 IGO).

The urgency of those decisions is compounded by the pace of urbanisation. More than 4.2 billion people currently live in cities, and an additional 2.5 billion are expected to do so by 2050, with most growth occurring in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (UN DESA, 2022). A significant proportion of this growth will be absorbed by informal settlements or slums which are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, where around 1.1 billion people live today (UN-Habitat, 2023). Global building floor area is anticipated to double by 2060 compared to 2020 (IEA,

2019), meaning that decisions taken in the coming years regarding housing, land use, infrastructure, transport systems, and energy provision will lock in emissions pathways and climate risks well beyond mid-century. Cities and urban policy are therefore central to the climate challenge. Without early and deliberate action, current development trajectories risk entrenching carbon-intensive systems and compounding climate vulnerability at a time when global mitigation and resilience efforts urgently need to accelerate.

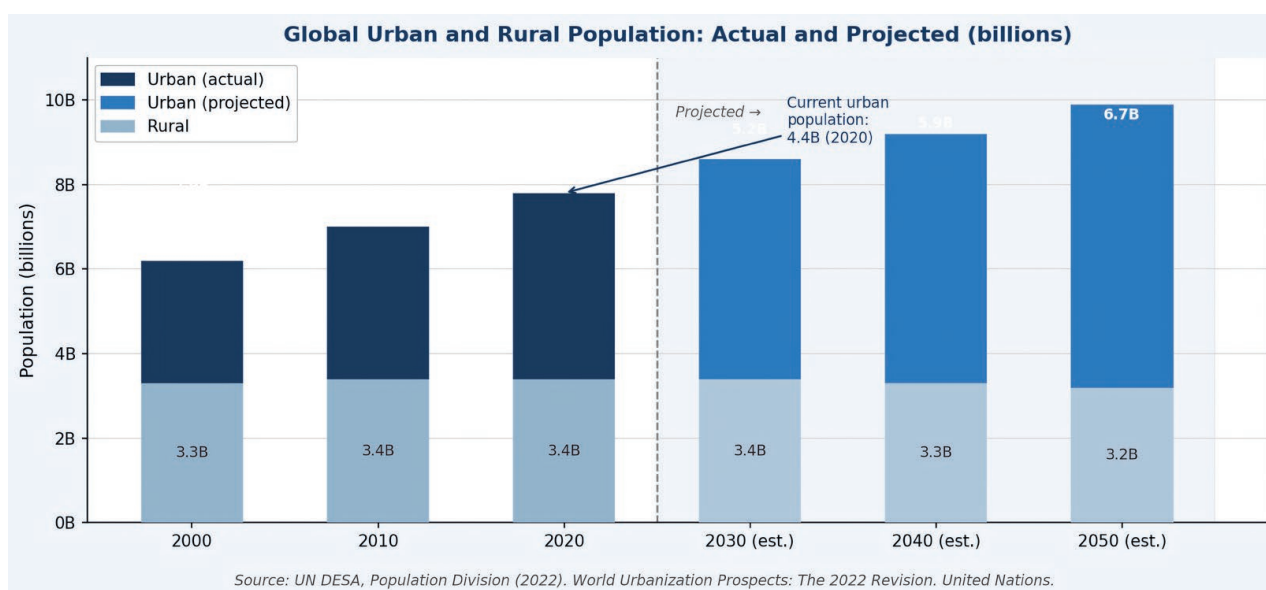


Figure 2. Global urban and rural population, actual (2000–2020) and projected (2030–2050). Source: UN DESA, Population Division (2022). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2022 Revision

It is against this backdrop that the forthcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities (SRCities) takes on strategic importance. Scheduled for publication in early 2027, it will be the first IPCC report focused entirely on urban systems, bringing together evidence across climate mitigation, adaptation, risk, and vulnerability in cities. The report will assess how urban form, infrastructure, housing, informal settlements transformation, financing, governance, and socio-economic dynamics interact with climate change, synthesising policy-relevant insights on pathways for reducing emissions and strengthening resilience in diverse urban contexts.

The SRCities builds on decades of work across successive IPCC assessment cycles in which cities have featured prominently but often in a fragmented manner. The report's findings are likely to carry significant potential in shaping global narratives, informing national climate strategies, and influencing the priorities of development partners and climate finance institutions. **Ensuring its relevance, planning for its uptake, and making sure its findings and recommendations can be put into action can significantly contribute to sustainable and resilient urban lives, both now and in the future.**

However, the report is being developed at a time when momentum around urban climate action faces considerable headwinds. Tightening public budgets, increasing pressure on development cooperation, and growing competition between climate, security, economic, and social priorities are all constraining factors (UN-Habitat, 2024). While the role of cities for achieving global climate goals is widely acknowledged in principle, this recognition has not consistently translated into sustained political prioritisation or scaled investment. Urban climate action continues to be treated as secondary, and support for cities remains limited.

The SRCities therefore represents a rare and timely opportunity to rethink and re-evaluate the role and relevance of cities within global and national climate policy debates. By consolidating the latest scientific evidence into a dedicated report, it has the potential to strengthen the case for integrated mitigation and resilience strategies in urban areas and to reposition cities as central actors within national and international climate efforts. The extent to which SRCities influences global frameworks such as the UNFCCC process, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and international development priorities such as the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, will depend largely on whether governments, cities, and development partners are prepared to translate its findings into actionable pathways.

Lessons from previous IPCC landmarks, including the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5) and the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), demonstrate that policy uptake is not automatic; rather it is a product of institutional and systemic readiness (Solecki et al., 2024). Following SR1.5, proactive stakeholders leveraged the report's carbon budget framing to catalyse net-zero commitments across more than 1,000 cities via the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns (Solecki et al., 2024). Regions lacking anticipatory preparation, by contrast, found themselves unable to translate scientific warnings into actionable projects or legislative reforms. Anticipatory preparation that aligns city-level data platforms with IPCC methodologies, establishes vertical governance dialogues, and builds the institutional architecture for policy uptake ensures that when the report is published in 2027, the global community is ready to pivot from scientific

consensus to systemic investment and decisive legislative action.

The timing of SRCities also coincides with several critical policy windows. The coming years will see continued implementation and revision of NDCs, ongoing COP negotiations, the review of the New Urban Agenda, efforts to accelerate SDG achievement by leveraging NDC commitments and the shaping of new multilateral and bilateral climate finance cycles. Early engagement can therefore help ensure that urban priorities are reflected in these processes. This policy brief aims to support that transition by identifying pathways through which cities and their partners can move from the "what" of SRCities's scientific findings to the "how" of implementation, considering the varied institutional, financial, and governance realities that shape urban contexts.

2 | Systemic Levers for Urban Climate Action

Cities occupy a paradoxical position: they are recognised as crucial actors in forwarding climate action (a status that has been further cemented through the latest NDCs that make more explicit reference to the role of local governments), yet the current governance structures designed to address the climate crisis are not able to keep emissions below 1.5°C, and local governments are still being sidelined. This gap between rhetorical acknowledgment and institutional reality constrain urban climate action at a time when ambitious, coordinated responses are most urgently needed. With cities being more recognised in the NDCs 3.0, this offers an opportunity to discuss how to scale up implementation in and with cities.

Evidence from previous IPCC cycles shows that scientific consensus alone does not produce structural change, rather impact depends on the readiness of governance systems, financing architectures, and institutional arrangements to operationalise findings in real policy and budget processes (Solecki et al., 2024). Preparing the enabling environment is therefore a strategic policy task requiring coordinated reforms across governance, finance, and knowledge systems between now and 2027.

A Readiness Framework: From Evidence to Uptake to Scale

Systemic preparation involves an institutional strengthening agenda across the full chain from knowledge to implementation. Three mutually reinforcing functions are decisive:

- **Readiness** refers to whether institutions can understand and operationalise SRCities findings through a joint understanding and vision, clear mandates, institutional capacity, shared methods, interoperable data systems, and dedicated resources.
- **Uptake** refers to whether SRCities evidence can enter binding policy, planning, and budgeting processes such as NDC and NAP implementation, national urban policies, sector strategies, fiscal frameworks, and development finance pipelines.
- **Scale** refers to whether proven urban solutions can move beyond pilots into broad and substantial implementation through finance structures, standards, delivery systems, and replication platforms.

Table 1. Overview of Systemic Levers

Section	Lever	Key sub-levers	Readiness framework function
2.1	Governance: Embedding Multilevel Climate Delivery	Institutionalising multilevel planning; aligning legal authority with implementation responsibility; reducing inter-ministerial fragmentation.	Readiness + Uptake
2.2	Enabling Systemic Urban Investment	Scaling project preparation; aligning financing structures with infrastructure realities; diversifying and formalising routes to climate finance. Addresses both demand side (city capacity) and supply side (financial system).	Uptake + Scale
2.3	Strengthening Cities' Role in Global Frameworks	Formalising urban participation in UNFCCC and NDC processes; embedding urban priorities in international development frameworks and MDB strategies.	Uptake + Recognition
2.4	Building Resilience Against Political Headwinds in an Era of Global Polycrisis	Reframing climate investment as polycrisis-response co-benefit; securing sustained multi-year funding for city networks; using scenario analysis and foresight to maintain continuity.	Readiness + Scale
2.5	Bridging the Science-Policy Divide	Developing differentiated, decision-aligned communication outputs; building interoperable city-level climate data architecture; institutionalising knowledge diversity and equity; sustaining science-policy dialogue tied to decision points.	Readiness + Uptake

2.1 Governance: Embedding Multilevel Climate Delivery

The fragmentation of climate governance across national, regional, and local levels represents one of the most significant structural barriers limiting urban climate action. Cities operate within multi-level governance architectures that, while theoretically designed to enable collaboration across scales, frequently create obstacles rather than bridges between national and local climate priorities (UN DESA, 2024).

Fragmented governance is the load-bearing structural constraint that determines whether any other lever can function. Where national mandates do not connect to subnational implementation, where fiscal authority is not

matched by implementation responsibility, and where coordination mechanisms across ministries are absent, climate finance and scientific evidence cannot be converted into policy or action regardless of their quality.

Fransen et al. (2023) identify two distinct components of this implementation gap: a policy adoption gap, where emissions pledges exceed what domestic policies actually address; and a policy outcome gap, where adopted policies fail to achieve projected results due to weak state capacity, interest group opposition, policy design failures, and misaligned incentives.

2.1.1 WEAK VERTICAL INTEGRATION AND UNFAVOURABLE ENABLING CONDITIONS

Vertical integration is commonly understood as the creation of strategic linkages between national and subnational government levels for effective climate planning and implementation. Unfortunately, such systems remain critically underdeveloped in most countries. NDCs and National Adaptation Plans are typically developed in isolation by environment ministries, with limited integration into sectoral and local planning processes (OECD & UNDP, 2025). This siloed approach relegates cities to the periphery of national climate planning even as they bear primary responsibility for implementation.

This disconnect also exists between National Urban Policies and NDCs: The majority of National Urban Policies (88%) included ecological and climate resilience (UN-Habitat & OECD, 2024: Global State of National Urban Policy 2024); priority areas include the integration of disaster risk reduction into planning regulations (73%) and climate resilient urban infrastructure (63%). Additionally, 80% of National Urban Policies indicate mechanisms for policy coherence with national resilience policies. However, such mechanisms focus on capacity building and cross-sectoral exchanges. NDCs conversely do not emphasise alignment with National Urban Policies and often there are different government agencies responsible for their preparation. In many jurisdictions, cities cannot mandate renewable energy in new construction, establish local carbon pricing, regulate vehicle emissions, or invest in mass transit without national or state-level approval (de Mello & Ter-Minassian, 2024; Song et al., 2024). Where formal mandates lag, cities increasingly leverage vertical partnerships to expand functional authority, but the absence of climate-specific enabling legislation remains a fundamental constraint, compounded by fragmented ministerial responsibilities across environment, planning, finance, infrastructure, and agriculture portfolios (OECD & UNDP, 2025).

The consequences of this political disconnect are stark. A 2024 analysis of NDCs finds that countries with high urban content in their climate commitments have paradoxically committed to an average emissions increase of 6%, while those with low urban content committed to an 11%

reduction (WRI, 2024). Only 48% of countries report integrating NDC targets into national legislative, regulatory, and planning processes (OECD & UNDP, 2025). Merely acknowledging cities in NDCs is clearly insufficient; what matters is the quality of integration and the mechanisms that translate national commitments into implementation at the local level.

Fewer than half of countries have integrated NDC targets into national legislative, regulatory, and planning frameworks, and coordination mechanisms that do exist tend to be informal and episodic (OECD & UNDP, 2025). The Global Research and Action Agenda for Cities and Climate Change Science (GRAA) identifies weak enforcement capacity and siloed governance as primary obstacles: “Governance structures often lack cohesion and remain slow in unlocking finance flows between national and subnational governments” (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024).

Yet, there is an emerging opportunity: NDCs 3.0 are increasingly putting cities at the centre: of the 142 NDCs 3.0 submitted by mid-April 2026, 80% include well-developed urban content and refer to specific urban measures across mitigation and adaptation. They are also increasingly referencing local governments to support delivery, with mentions of multilevel governance and vertical coordination.

These positive developments are also mirrored in emerging UNFCCC COP initiatives. SURGe, launched at the first Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at the margins COP27 provided a framework for translating global climate commitments to local action. In 2026 over 20 countries are being supported in the development of national and local Urban NDCs implementation plans. CHAMP, launched at COP28 – and now encompassing 78 endorsers representing 40% of global emissions – represents an important structural advance. At COP30, CHAMP entered its implementation phase, with Brazil and Germany named co-chairs, and the Plan to Accelerate Solutions (PAS) launched as the first global effort to institutionalise multilevel climate delivery as a permanent feature of Paris Agreement implementation (GCoM, 2025). These are important precedents, but they remain politically contingent. The critical step is translating commitments

into legally grounded coordination mechanisms, formal interfaces between ministries and cities, and integrated climate-fiscal frameworks.

Integrating climate targets into ongoing planning processes such as master plan revisions and transport planning can help embed climate action into core urban governance

systems rather than treating it as a standalone agenda. At the national level, governments could support the establishment of climate risk assessments and GHG baselines together with structured city climate planning processes such as Climate Action Planning (CAP), which defines the investment programme enabling a city to deliver on its

Colombia and Rwanda: Integrating Subnational Governments into NDC Development

Colombia and Rwanda offer the most thoroughly documented examples of structured subnational consultation integrated into national NDC development, implemented with GIZ and WRI support under the CHAMP initiative in 2024–2025.

In Colombia, WRI and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development designed a multi-stage participation strategy following the country's CHAMP endorsement at COP28. Between August and November 2024, five regional workshops were organised by GIZ and WRI and held across the country, in Medellín, Bogotá, Barranquilla, Yopal, and Cali, attended by approximately 350 subnational participants including governors, mayors, environmental authorities, youth, women, and representatives from Indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups. The workshops were designed not only for consultation but for co-development: participants identified 34 potential mitigation and adaptation measures and co-developed implementation plans, roles, responsibilities, and financing pathways for local integration. A parallel Strategic Committee on Cities and Climate Change in Colombia (a biannual forum co-hosted with WRI) institutionalised multilevel dialogue beyond the NDC process itself. Colombia's NDC 3.0, submitted in September 2025, formally acknowledges the role of subnational governments in planning and implementing mitigation and adaptation measures and promotes governance integrating national and subnational perspectives.

In Rwanda, REMA and the Ministry of Environment held a five-day in-person workshop in November 2024 bringing together 130 participants representing all 30 districts to consolidate local priorities for the national NDC update. A subsequent validation workshop ensured adequate capture of district-level priorities. Further policy dialogue with district vice mayors in March 2025 strengthened political support for a whole-of-government approach to implementation. Rwanda's NDC 3.0, published in November 2024, commits to a 53% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 and formally calls for institutionalising climate focal points in all 30 districts and investing in local capacity.

Both cases illustrate a pattern directly relevant to SRCities preparation strategy: genuine participatory engagement can close the policy adoption gap while simultaneously revealing the policy outcome gap. In Colombia, workshops surfaced that subnational governments lack the technical support, financing mechanisms, and integration with local planning instruments to implement the actions they co-developed. The consultation produced ambitious commitments but left unresolved the enabling conditions required for actual outcomes. SRCities uptake design must go beyond engaging cities in the scientific conversation to building the governance and financing systems that convert participation into measurable implementation.

Sources: WRI (2025); IKI Colombia (2024); TheCityFix (2025). World Resources Institute. (2025). CHAMP initiative advances subnational content in NDCs 3.0. <https://www.wri.org/update/champ-initiative-ndcs-3.0-subnational-content>

fair share of NDC commitments. Additionally, local governments could undertake a systematic audit and reform of enabling legislation in climate-relevant domains such as building codes, land use planning, transport authority, and energy procurement to remove legal barriers that prevent cities from acting on national climate commitments.

2.1.2 LIMITED REPRESENTATION IN CLIMATE DECISION-MAKING

Within national frameworks, the development of NDCs typically occurs through processes that treat cities as

implementation agents rather than strategic partners (WRI, 2024). Subnational governments are rarely involved in technical analysis, stakeholder consultation, or political negotiation that shape national climate commitments.

This exclusion means that national targets may be planned in a vacuum, making them technically infeasible at the urban scale and ultimately unmet at national level; climate finance flows are not aligned with local priorities; and cities lack the political mandate to pursue transformative interventions that national plans nominally require. As a

Germany's National Climate Initiative: Federal Enabling Support at Scale

Germany's Nationale Klimaschutzinitiative (NKI), launched in 2008 by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, represents the most sustained and largest-scale national programme designed to build municipal climate implementation capacity. Since its inception, the NKI has financed over 50,000 projects in cooperation with municipalities, educational institutions, and non-profit organisations, deploying more than EUR 1.6 billion in support across all 16 German federal states.

A distinctive feature of the NKI model is the Climate Action Manager (Klimaschutzmanager) programme, which places dedicated staff within municipalities to support the planning and implementation of climate measures thereby directly addressing the institutional capacity gap that Fransen et al. (2023) identify as a primary driver of the policy outcome gap.

The NKI model is relevant to the SRCities preparation agenda in three ways. First, it demonstrates that federal enabling support (not only devolution) is a prerequisite for cities to implement what national climate strategies require. Simply granting cities legal authority without providing the accompanying financial and human resources produces hollow decentralisation. Second, the programme's scale and duration demonstrate that sustained political commitment across electoral cycles is achievable when climate programmes are embedded in institutional frameworks rather than dependent on project-by-project funding. Third, the model's co-financing structure that requires municipalities to contribute to project costs builds local ownership and financial management capacity that persists after external support ends.

The NKI's limitations are equally instructive. The programme primarily reaches municipalities with sufficient existing institutional capacity to apply for and manage grants, reflecting a structural bias toward cities that need support least. Smaller and financially constrained municipalities face higher barriers to participation. For the SRCities preparation context, this points to the need for tiered support architectures that provide more intensive assistance to lower-capacity cities rather than assuming that uniform grant programmes will reach the full urban diversity relevant to global climate outcomes. The CHAMP Finance Working Groups emerging in Brazil, Morocco, and Kenya represent an attempt to adapt this enabling support model to lower-income country contexts; documenting what institutional adaptations are required would generate valuable guidance for SRCities uptake planning.

Sources: CHAMP Summary Report (2024); German Federal Ministry for the Environment

result, cities are often expected to deliver climate outcomes without the legal authority or financial resources to do so effectively. Strengthening structured participation mechanisms between national and subnational governments is therefore a practical prerequisite for translating climate commitments into implementation.

2.1.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAGMENTATION ACROSS MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES

There is also an important institutional dimension that is often overlooked: agencies acting within a city are not solely under the mandate of a single local government. Important investing/governing entities are frequently state-owned enterprises, provincial agencies, or semi-autonomous regional bodies serving multiple local governments. One urban agglomeration often contains multiple local governments that must coordinate across fragmented mandates. The institutional structures that should facilitate this coordination have major implications for financing and implementing urban climate investments.

Even where national-subnational linkages are strengthened, effective urban climate delivery requires coordination across central and sectoral ministries that control climate-relevant portfolios. In most countries, these ministries produce policy signals that actively contradict one another (OECD & UNDP, 2025; GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024).

A concrete lever is the establishment of permanent cross-ministerial coordination platforms with a mandate to align sectoral policies with urban implementation realities, reduce duplicative city reporting requirements, and provide transparent climate finance access pathways (UN-Habitat, 2024). Kukulskyte et al. (2026) identify an analogous need for a “minimum viable platform” at national level: a standing pipeline forum with a regular decision cadence, an up-to-date flow-of-funds map, and a small navigator team that provides a practical institutional model adaptable for national urban climate coordination.

Leveraging existing MDB and climate finance coordination systems may also provide an additional institutional

pathway. Existing mechanisms such as national Adaptation Fund (AF), Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF) focal points often housed within Ministries of Environment but also increasingly with Ministries of Finance or Prime Minister’s Departments could potentially serve as national-level conveners and advocates for developing investable urban climate project pipelines and strengthening coordination between cities and financing institutions. Strengthened coordination mechanisms between the different focal points can be an opportunity to advance local climate action with a country-specific entry point.

2.1.4 REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

The challenges of governance fragmentation manifest differently across regions, shaped by constitutional frameworks, fiscal federalism arrangements, and sociopolitical cultures (UN DESA, 2024). In federal systems such as Germany, Brazil, the United States, and Australia, cities theoretically enjoy substantial autonomy yet often require state or national approval for major climate initiatives, creating veto points that delay or derail ambitious action (Song et al., 2024).

In centralised governance models, decision-making can enable rapid policy diffusion but often fails to account for local contexts and capacities. In many jurisdictions, weak institutional capacity at local levels combines with limited devolution of authority to create “hollow decentralisation” through formal transfer of responsibilities without corresponding transfers of resources, expertise, or decision-making power (UN DESA, 2024).

Latin American cities face distinct challenges at the intersection of rapid urbanisation, high inequality, and informality. East Asian cities, particularly in China, face tensions between competing ministerial mandates and economic growth imperatives. These regional variations underscore that there is no universal model for vertical integration; effective multi-level governance must be country- and context-specific.

2.2 Enabling Systemic Urban Investment

The most acute manifestation of cities' marginalisation in global climate action is their systematic difficulty in accessing climate finance. These access barriers are best understood by examining both the demand side (shortfalls in city capacity and circumstances) and the supply side (constraints in the financial system itself). The inability to address barriers on both sides results in an urban climate finance gap that is universally alarming given the scale of investment required.

2.2.1 THE URBAN CLIMATE FINANCE GAP

Cities require approximately USD 4.3 trillion annually to transform urban infrastructure into climate-resilient systems

aligned with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C pathway (Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance [CCFLA], 2024). In comparison, urban climate finance flows reached USD 831 billion in 2022 which was a substantial increase from previous years, yet still representing less than 20% of identified needs (CCFLA, 2024). In every region except East Asia and the Pacific, the funding gap as a proportion of estimated needs exceeds 90%, concentrated precisely in the regions experiencing the most rapid urbanisation and facing the most severe climate vulnerabilities (CCFLA, 2024).

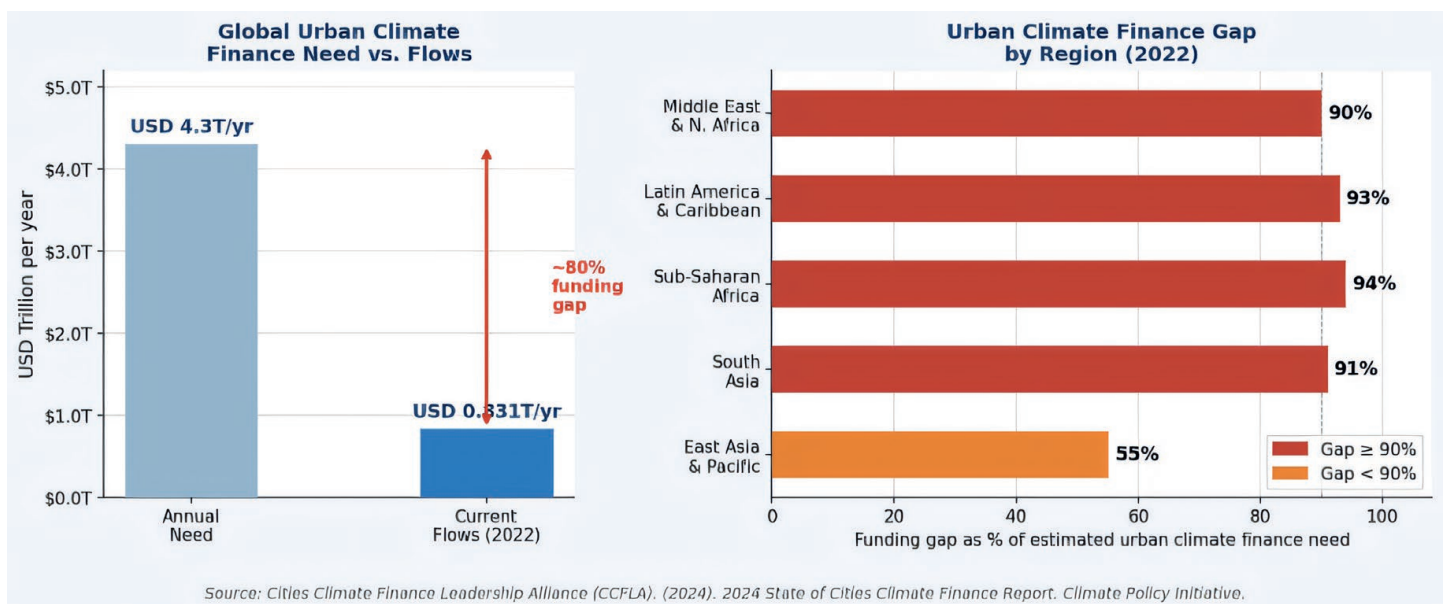


Figure 3. Urban climate finance: annual need vs. current flows (left), and funding gap as % of estimated need by region (right), 2022. Source: CCFLA (2024). 2024 State of Cities Climate Finance Report.

2.2.2 SUPPLY-SIDE CONSTRAINTS: STRUCTURAL BARRIERS IN CLIMATE FINANCE

On the supply side, significant structural barriers prevent available capital from reaching urban climate projects. Legal and regulatory barriers make direct access difficult: 56% of countries prohibit cities from borrowing directly, and even where international finance access is permitted, cities must typically obtain sovereign guarantees that can be withheld for political or fiscal reasons (de Mello & Ter-Minassian, 2024). Second, capital markets in many

developing countries offer only short-term financing. Loan terms of 5–7 years are wholly mismatched against the 30–50-year lifespans of urban climate infrastructure (Penn IUR, 2024). Third, financial institutions and investors lack experience with urban investment and even more so urban climate investment, raising their perceived risk. Many multilateral development banks (MDBs) and international financial institutions (IFIs) are not well positioned to provide sub-sovereign lending at the scale required. Fourth, the lack of appropriate aggregation instruments, such as

green bonds, limits the ability to pool smaller city investments into larger-ticket financeable packages. Finally, regulatory barriers constrain investors themselves: "mark-to-market" rules, asset-class restrictions, and credit-rating requirements often impact climate investments hardest.

The financing gap is further exacerbated by short funding cycles misaligned with the long-term nature of infrastructure investments. Cities face narrow revenue bases constrained by national tax policies and short budget cycles, typically annual or biennial, that make long-term infrastructure investments exceptionally difficult to finance and implement. Infrastructure built or under construction in non-OECD countries in 2011 has already locked in 360 gigatons of CO₂ emissions through 2035 (International Growth Centre [IGC], 2022). Every infrastructure decision made today will shape emissions and climate risk trajectories well beyond mid-century.

For adaptation investments specifically, the challenge is structural: adaptation infrastructure generates public good benefits that are often not currently monetisable by private investors, making the case for dedicated concessional finance windows at national and multilateral level and for innovative revenue mechanisms. Private finance contributes just 3% of urban adaptation investment globally despite accounting for 49% of total urban climate finance, demonstrating that market mechanisms alone cannot close the adaptation gap and that structural public finance reform is the only viable path to adaptation at scale (CCFLA, 2024).

Other critical levers for national governments include:

- **Localising NDCs & developing (national and local) urban NDC implementation strategies and linking them with resource allocations.** Processes can be designed for designating responsibilities to subnational governments for making the required investments under the NDCs and for matching these with resources.
- **Establishing adequate structure and incentives for climate-positive intergovernmental fiscal transfers.** Transfers are likely to have a substantial role, especially for intermediary cities. These transfers need to make up for local resource shortfalls, as determined by local revenue-raising capacity versus needed investment levels. They should be structured to maximise the incentives

for local revenue mobilisation and be both flexible and encouraging of innovation in using and leveraging them (Martínez-Vázquez, 2021).

- **Creating market incentives in NDC sectors and green government finance.** Important actions include rationalising subsidies to allow for entry of new suppliers using lower-carbon processes; instituting green procurement processes; enabling the creation of flexible partnership structures for investment through regional utilities and area-based development corporations with their own sustainable funding sources; enabling PPPs; and mandating green/climate budgeting. Climate budgeting has already been piloted in cities including London, New York, Mumbai, and Rio de Janeiro and it offers a tested mechanism for making climate priorities structurally visible in annual expenditure decisions and for demonstrating to investors the long-term commitment that backs individual project proposals (C40 Cities, 2024). The Innovate4Cities 2024 (I4C24) GRAA identifies this as a primary action priority: "Embed climate mitigation and adaptation priorities in city planning, budgeting and governance frameworks" (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024).
- **Greening the financial system.** National governments need to put in place a regulatory and reporting framework for green instruments (green bonds, green insurance, etc.) that are accessible to all types of urban agencies, with incentives to maximise their deployment. These systems need to provide city access to private capital and private financial institutions. Climate and transition risks need to be incorporated in macro-prudential regulation (to avoid stranded assets, etc.). Regulations and processes must not inadvertently exclude urban agencies in smaller cities (for example by setting minimum revenue levels).
- **Greening government finance.** Government financing needs to refocus revenue mobilisation by taxing climate exacerbating factors such as GHG emissions, pollution and congestion with green taxes and fees. National and state-level governments could ensure that transition assistance is available to smaller cities, which may be more reliant on relatively smaller ticket investment sizes that are classically not attractive to traditional

investors. Generalised debt limits and restrictions on PPPs for green investment should be reviewed to ensure intermediary cities are not disadvantaged.

- **Capital market regulation.** National governments can maximise potential financing for climate investments by, for example, including NDC-sector infrastructure in permitted investments in pension funds and insurance. They should track NDC-sector expenditure by capital market participants and ensure that access to finance by cities of all sizes is maintained by enabling the use of support aggregation structures, whereby several smaller investments can be bundled into a financing instrument such as a general obligation bond.
- **Development of green taxonomies.** Taxonomies define what is "green," and it is important that the definition be clear and consistent. A lead agency (Central Bank, Ministry of Finance, etc.) should be nominated to coordinate and oversee the development and use of MRV systems, with finance ministries playing a key role in disseminating systems to financial institutions and their clients.
- **Technical support for green instruments.** Finance ministries and associations of financial institutions will have a key role in fostering the dissemination of appropriate structures and the capacity to assess and structure green investments, including through instruments such as green infrastructure debt/equity funds and green bond systems.
- **Establishing catalyst facilities and risk mitigation mechanisms.** To catalyse financing of urban NDC-linked investments, special-purpose financing facilities may be needed such as the proposed Green Cities Guarantee Fund (GCGF), which addresses creditworthiness barriers that prevent well-managed developing-country cities from accessing capital markets (Penn IUR, 2024). Such facilities can be standalone or housed within a public or private financial institution (typically a national development bank), and may include project development capacity, blended finance to leverage private capital, and aggregation instruments. Risk mitigation mechanisms such as guarantees or first-loss structures should also be considered and facilitated.

It is a welcome development that MDB commitments in November 2024 to accelerate urban climate finance through concessional funds and subnational lending instruments have accelerated, representing a structural shift that the SRCities preparation process should consolidate (C40 Cities, 2024).

At the **city level**, important levers addressing supply-side bottlenecks include:

- **Setting up corporate structures and local area development.** Cities and networks of small and medium-sized cities should assess the most efficient spatial unit of investment for localised NDCs and design appropriate organisational structures to finance and implement required NDC investments, including interjurisdictional structures such as metropolitan authorities, development corporations, and regional utilities. Consideration should be given to enabling such entities to provide planning and other incentives for green development.
- **Promoting green financial management.** Local governments and other urban agencies need to maximise their own-source revenue using green taxes and fees where possible. They should adopt green procurement processes, maximise the use and leverage of their assets in green investment (including land), and structure to maximise the leverage of private finance.
- **Implement green financing systems.** Subnational governments (or groups of local governments) can establish local green funds and develop mechanisms such as PPPs to leverage their own resources or those of established funds. They should prioritise lowest-cost funds for non-revenue-earning projects and use higher-cost financing for more financially viable projects. Local funds should also consider instruments that enable the aggregation of small projects.
- **Implement green funding systems.** Subnational governments could implement new green taxes and fees, including land value capture (LVC)-type taxes and fees on pollution such as congestion charges. Where funding structures are developed in partnership with other stakeholders or governments, mechanisms of cost-sharing and co-investment should be clearly established.

2.2.3 DEMAND-SIDE CONSTRAINTS: CITY CAPACITY AND PROJECT PREPARATION

On the demand side, Kukulskyte et al. (2026) identify three structural "valleys of death" where urban climate projects consistently stall: the planning-to-project gap, where climate strategies fail to translate into financeable concepts; the pre-feasibility-to-feasibility gap, where initial studies do not meet requirements for detailed preparation; and the matchmaking-with-investors gap, where prepared projects fail to connect with appropriate financing. Fewer than one-third of proposed urban climate projects reach the construction stage. An essential distinction applies:

commercially viable projects with revenue streams (renewable energy, energy efficiency retrofits) can attract private investment when properly prepared, while public goods projects (flood defences, nature-based solutions, adaptation measures) require concessional or grant finance because traditional private capital will not self-organise around social returns.

At the project design level, there are a few options available to bolster the investment attractiveness of urban climate interventions. First, **outcome-based funding**: paying PPFs for projects reaching financial close or successfully completing handovers, not merely for studies produced.

Jambi City's Green Sustainable Transportation: Full Lifecycle from Concept to Operation

Jambi City in Sumatra, Indonesia, presents a case of urban climate transport investment that progressed from pre-feasibility through to operational deployment between 2024 and 2025, with two electric buses launched in May 2025. The project was supported through GIZ-linked urban climate programme partnerships as part of broader low-carbon mobility programming in Indonesian secondary cities.

The Jambi case is particularly relevant to the SRCities preparation agenda because it involves a secondary city in a middle-income country context with limited existing institutional capacity for climate infrastructure. Secondary cities are where the majority of future urban population growth is occurring globally, but they are also the cities least served by existing project preparation facilities, most of which are designed around large project sizes (over USD 10 million) that secondary cities cannot typically generate (Kukulskyte et al., 2026).

Applying the 'valleys of death' framework from Kukulskyte et al. (2026), the Jambi case illustrates a characteristic preparation pathway for smaller city transport projects in emerging markets. The transition from planning to financeable concept required translating a general city interest in cleaner transit into a specific project with defined infrastructure, procurement pathway, and operational model where many projects stall due to the absence of technical specialists who understand both city priorities and investor requirements. The pre-feasibility to feasibility transition required alignment with national transport regulations and the approval frameworks governing municipal fleet procurement in Indonesia. The matchmaking stage required identifying a financing route that was realistic for Jambi's limited creditworthiness; in practice relying on concessional public finance rather than commercial investment.

The May 2025 bus launch demonstrates that full-lifecycle completion is achievable for secondary city climate transport projects, but the preparation timeline spanning multiple years and requiring dedicated external support reinforces Kukulskyte et al.'s (2026) finding that the ecosystem needs longer-horizon, outcome-based funding frameworks rather than one-to-three-year project grants. It also illustrates the importance of establishing the financing flightpath from project inception rather than retrofitting to funder requirements at a late stage.

Sources: CDP (2025); Kukulskyte et al. (2026)

Second, **early financier engagement**: building the specific requirements of likely financing institutions into project preparation from the concept stage to establish the "financing flightpath" that identifies candidate instruments, likely financiers, eligibility conditions, and national approval pathways from the outset, revisited at each stage-gate.

Beyond the shortcomings of individual projects, certain structural issues with city-level capacities act as additional hurdles (CCFLA, 2015): lack of climate-integrated planning and project development capacity; limited technical knowledge of climate financing instruments and how to access them; insufficient capacity to manage the financial aspects of complex projects; lack of funding flexibility and partnership frameworks to blend multiple sources; and insufficient resources to develop and monitor Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems required by most climate financiers. These shortfalls particularly affect intermediary cities where the majority of future global urban population growth will occur.

Addressing operational and implementation challenges in project development requires action at both national and local levels. At the **national level**, governments could provide:

- **Project development support.** Local agencies, particularly those in intermediary cities, may need support to develop projects suitable for climate finance. National support for local governments and other urban agencies in establishing climate risk assessments and GHG baselines is important, together with advice on options for project financial structuring. This support should also foster structured city climate planning processes such as the C40 Climate Action Planning (CAP) process, which defines the investment programme enabling a city to deliver on its fair share of NDC commitments. Such support can be provided via a dedicated facility or sectoral ministries.
- **Technical support.** Many urban agencies may not know which technical options exist for NDC-related investments applicable to their circumstances. International sources of support for technical assessment are

available, for example through the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) and multilateral development banks. Such support can be provided via a dedicated facility or sectoral ministries.

- **Capacity development institutions.** National governments should establish and disseminate best practices in climate technologies, green budgeting, and technical and financial assessment through local government academies and professional development mechanisms, ensuring no barriers to participation by city officials. International agencies can support the development of appropriate enabling environments and operational measures, including with finance. IFIs, the EU, GCF, and GEF have supported blended finance facilities. The NDC Partnership, UN-Habitat, the Green Bank Network, GEF, development agencies such as GIZ, and the OECD have all supported more effective enabling environments. Development banks in some countries offer project development assistance for cities and specific sectors such as low-carbon transport.
- **Multistakeholder platforms.** National governments should facilitate dialogue between policymakers from cities and CFOs with financial institutions to build databases of city financial data and performance in NDC-sector investment. They should open pathways for NDC investment by developing systems for assessing, monitoring, and evaluating climate investments, which will provide data to support investment risk assessment and project design.
- **International support facilitation.** There are multiple avenues of international support for project development (C40 Cities Finance Facility, City Climate Finance Gap Fund, etc.), NDC implementation (NDC Partnership, UN-Habitat, etc.), and policy development (IFIs, GEF, OECD, etc.). Special facilities are available to LDCs and SIDS, often at a regional level. National governments should encourage cities to band together and merge their potential project pipelines to achieve the critical mass of investment needed to justify engagement with these agencies and facilities.

At the **local government level**, cities and urban agencies could:

- **Establish urban investment agencies.** Whether state/provincial, regional, or at local government level, these agencies need to be mandated to develop green investment programmes, aggregate projects for efficient financing, assess projects using investment appraisal systems, and build climate project development and structuring capacity.
- **Implement investment appraisal systems.** Such systems need to assess the viability of a programme of

investment, considering the scale of resources needed; the fiscal context of the specific urban agency; the financial risk associated with the investment; the operational risk including availability of service and reliability of performance; the cost and affordability to consumers; and the complexity of proposed implementation structures relative to the agency's technical capacity. They should also assess the mitigation and adaptation benefits of a project, its eligibility for required licences, its financial viability, other co-benefits, and compliance with safeguards.

Medellín's Parques del Río Norte: From Project Preparation to Delivered Community Infrastructure

Medellín's Parques del Río Norte project represents one of the most thoroughly documented examples of urban climate infrastructure progressing from project preparation through to community delivery with support from the C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF), jointly implemented by C40 Cities and GIZ on behalf of Germany's BMZ and the UK's FCDO. The project transformed a 30,000 m² stretch of previously degraded land around the Medellín River into public green space, integrating climate adaptation, biodiversity restoration, urban cooling, and community use objectives. The first phase was completed and delivered to the community in 2023. The project combined multiple climate and social co-benefits: flood risk reduction, heat island mitigation, biodiversity corridors, and access to quality public space for low-income neighbourhoods adjacent to the river.

From the perspective of Kukulskyte et al.'s (2026) project preparation analysis, the case illustrates structural features that enable projects to progress through the 'valleys of death.' The CFF's support spanned the full feasibility-to-structuring stage of the financing value chain, with explicit responsibility for connecting the project to financing sources. The multi-benefit framing that combines climate adaptation outcomes with social infrastructure and economic development arguments was essential for assembling the blended financing package, since no single funder's mandate covered all dimensions. This points to a broader lesson: urban climate projects that can articulate multiple co-benefits across funder mandates have structurally better access to blended finance but require preparation support that understands how to structure this complexity.

The case also illustrates a persistent challenge. The project's intersectional lens and related complexity required navigating multiple national approval pathways and coordinating across municipal departments with fragmented mandates. As Kukulskyte et al. (2026) document from practitioner interviews, without the Ministry of Finance and relevant line ministries aligned to a shared pipeline, even technically sound and financially structured projects stall at the national gateway. The Medellín case succeeded in navigating these gateways but required sustained navigator support over multiple years thus reinforcing the case for long-horizon, outcome-based funding for project preparation facilities.

Sources: C40 Cities (2024); CDP (2025)

2.3 Strengthening Cities' Role in Global Frameworks

Despite rhetorical acknowledgment, cities lack substantive recognition in the institutional architecture of global climate governance. The Paris Agreement recognises subnational actors as "key stakeholders" but provides no formal mechanisms for cities to participate as decision-makers in treaty negotiations, implementation reviews, or finance allocation decisions (UN DESA, 2024). This lever addresses that structural exclusion directly.

2.3.1 FORMALISING URBAN PARTICIPATION IN UNFCCC AND NDC PROCESSES

The most direct lever is reforming formal participation mechanisms within UNFCCC processes and NDC architecture. Since the first COP in 1995, the official Local Government and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) constituency has been giving the voice to cities and other subnational governments in climate diplomacy. Since COP27,

CHAMP at COP30: From Declaration to Operational Architecture

The COP30 summit in Belém, Brazil in November 2025 marked a structural turning point for CHAMP's evolution from political declaration to operational architecture. By the time of COP30, CHAMP had grown to 78 endorsing national governments collectively representing over 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions. At the summit, Brazil and Germany were named the coalition's first co-chairs, and the Plan to Accelerate Solutions (PAS) on multilevel governance was launched, described by the Global Covenant of Mayors (2025) as the first global effort to institutionalise multilevel climate delivery as a permanent feature of Paris Agreement implementation.

By the end of 2025, four in five submitted NDC 3.0 plans referenced subnational governments (a 19% increase over prior cycles) and nearly two-thirds formally recognised cities and regions as partners in planning, implementation, and monitoring. These numbers mark a genuine advance in the policy adoption dimension of the implementation gap.

CHAMP has demonstrably reduced the adoption gap: more NDCs now include urban content and subnational participation language than in any previous cycle. But the outcome gap is determined by a different set of factors: legally grounded coordination mechanisms that survive electoral cycles, devolved legal authority in climate-relevant domains, integrated fiscal frameworks that make subnational delivery of national targets a funded responsibility, and bureaucratic capacity at municipal level to implement transformative policies. These institutional conditions require domestic legal, fiscal, and institutional reform and are not delivered by an NDC commitment alone.

The COP30 PAS represents an important step in this direction: it moves beyond commitment to establishing a political platform for operational coordination. But the SRCities preparation task is to use the period between now and 2027 to convert the PAS's political commitments into the legally grounded coordination architecture that connects national targets to subnational implementation at scale.

Sources: GCoM (2025); Fransen et al. (2023)

four Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change were held providing a platform for multilevel climate action, including through strong engagement of cities and subnational actors. The Action Agenda's Plan to Accelerate Solutions (PAS) on Multilevel Governance, launched at COP30, provides a further opportunity for a structural shift (GCoM, 2025). Within national frameworks, cities need to be repositioned from implementation agents to strategic partners in NDC development and implementation. When cities are excluded from the technical analysis and political negotiation shaping national climate

commitments, national targets may be technically infeasible at the urban scale, misaligned with local fiscal realities, and lacking the subnational political mandate for implementation (WRI, 2024). The GRAA identifies this as a primary knowledge gap: better research is needed on "how national government policy can be developed to fit the needs of local governments to maximise the potential for implementation" (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024). Structural inclusion of cities in NDC development is not only a governance principle, but also a practical prerequisite for closing the commitment-to-outcomes gap (UN DESA, 2024).

Race to Zero and Race to Resilience: How SR1.5 Generated Global Commitments

The IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5), published in October 2018, generated the most significant global mobilisation of city-level climate commitments in the history of the Paris Agreement era. Within 18 months of its publication, over 1,000 cities had joined the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns, committing to net-zero emissions targets and resilience frameworks explicitly aligned with the SR1.5's carbon budget analysis. This response was not spontaneous – it was the product of deliberate preparation by city networks, civil society organisations, and development partners who had anticipated the report's key findings and built the political frameworks, communication strategies, and institutional platforms needed to absorb and amplify them.

The SR1.5 case is the essential context for SRCities preparation strategy because it provides a direct empirical precedent for how a major IPCC report can catalyse systemic change — and because it also reveals the limits of what that process achieved. Cities that joined Race to Zero or Race to Resilience made credible, specific commitments with short-term milestones and reporting frameworks. The campaigns created positive political feedback – using Fransen et al.'s concept – by building peer networks that generated social pressure for follow-through, and by creating reputational benefits for climate leadership that city politicians valued.

However, the policy outcome gap remains substantial for many of the cities involved. Having a net-zero commitment does not automatically produce net-zero policies, and net-zero policies do not automatically produce net-zero emissions. As Fransen et al. (2023) document at the national level, the gap between adopted policies and actual emissions outcomes is driven by factors – state capacity, interest group opposition, policy design quality, and innovation – that are not addressed by campaign commitments.

For SRCities, this means preparation strategy should not replicate the SR1.5 approach alone. Building coalitions of cities willing to commit to SRCities-aligned action is necessary but not sufficient. The preparation task also requires building the institutional architecture that enables those commitments to deliver outcomes: the multilevel governance mechanisms, project preparation systems, and data infrastructure that determine whether pledges translate into financed, implemented climate projects.

Sources: Solecki et al. (2024); IPCC (2018); Fransen et al. (2023)

2.3.2 EMBEDDING URBAN PRIORITIES IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

Beyond the UNFCCC process, cities' limited recognition extends across the full architecture of international development frameworks. SRCities provides an opportunity to reactivate these frameworks. By providing authoritative scientific evidence that cities are the primary arena for both climate risk and climate solution, it strengthens the case for embedding urban priorities in the next generation of multilateral development commitments, COP decisions, and bilateral country strategies.

It is imperative to make most of the period leading up to the report launch to ensure that SRCities partners (namely GIZ, UN-Habitat, GCoM, CCFLA) systematically engage globally, including the implementation of the Financing

for Development process, in particular the localisation of development finance, in line with the Compromiso de Sevilla and the Sevilla Platform for Action and the review of the New Urban Agenda and its financing commitments. The partners should also support national processes as appropriate including the promotion of a strong alignment between SDG localisation and NDC implementation, in particular in contexts where NDCs are embraced as SDG accelerators. Development Partner and MDB country platforms, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and bilateral development strategy reviews, also lend themselves for positioning urban climate investment as a core programming priority. Building pre-publication partnerships with financial institutions ensures that SRCities findings are integrated into investment decision frameworks rather than treated as policy communications.

2.4 Building Resilience Against Political Headwinds in an Era of Global Polycrisis

Cities' capacity to pursue climate action is increasingly constrained by converging political and economic pressures: pandemic recovery debts, housing affordability

crises, inflation, migration pressures, aging infrastructure, and rising security concerns all compete for limited municipal budgets and political attention (UN-Habitat, 2024).

Sahab City, Jordan — RISE-UP Programme: Climate Resilience as Polycrisis-response Co-Benefit

The RISE-UP programme in Sahab City, Jordan, provides a concrete example of how integrated, intersectoral approaches can translate climate priorities into implementable urban action in complex, polycrisis environments. Home to Jordan's largest industrial estate, Sahab faces overlapping pressures from rapid urbanisation, industrial activity, and acute environmental risks (air pollution, urban heat, flooding, and water scarcity), compounded by extremely limited green space estimated at just 0.275 m² per capita.

The programme centres on a city-wide Green Public Space Plan that embeds climate resilience within broader urban development systems rather than treating it as a standalone objective. Interventions integrate nature-based solutions with public health, livelihoods, and social inclusion priorities, combining urban greening with greywater reuse, urban agriculture, and climate-responsive design. Critically, these interventions are co-developed with municipal authorities, industrial stakeholders, and local communities.

This integrated approach delivers multiple reinforcing outcomes: reduced urban heat and flood risks, improved air quality, strengthened social cohesion, and the creation of local employment. It directly reframes climate investment from a competing priority into a response to pressing urban development challenges, strengthening political support for implementation.

Sources: UN-Habitat (2025); IATI (2024). Activity 41120-166676.

Rising nationalist politics creates additional institutional headwinds that compound fiscal pressures on urban climate investment (Terzi, 2024). The I4C24 conference emphasised the need to "incentivize city officials to explore climate innovation and to take transformative action that could encourage and inform political and public support for climate investments" (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024). This lever is designed to build the political, narrative, and institutional resilience that enables sustained urban climate action in this environment.

2.4.1 REFRAMING URBAN CLIMATE ACTION AS POLY-CRISIS-RESPONSE CO-BENEFIT

The most effective political strategy for sustaining climate action through a polycrisis environment is to reframe urban climate investment as a direct response to the competing priorities that threaten it. Climate-resilient urban infrastructure simultaneously reduces flood damage to housing stock, improves public health outcomes by reducing heat stress and air pollution, lowers household energy costs through building retrofit, creates local employment, and strengthens the economic productivity of cities (Penn IUR, 2024; UN-Habitat, 2024). When residents, businesses, and local economies experience concrete benefits from urban climate investment, political support for continued implementation strengthens. Preparing SRCities communication materials that quantify these co-benefits across the domains that command durable political attention is therefore a strategic preparatory task.

2.4.2 SECURING SUSTAINED, POLITICALLY INSULATED FUNDING FOR CITY NETWORKS

City networks are essential carriers of SRCities uptake, translating scientific synthesis into peer-relevant implementation guidance, creating political peer pressure among city leaders, and aggregating demand for finance and technical assistance in ways that make individual city needs legible to national governments and development partners. Yet these networks face significant resource constraints (C40 Cities, 2025). The structural problem mirrors what Kukulskyte et al. (2026) document in the project preparation ecosystem: organisations funded on

short-term, project-based models systematically undermine the relationship-building, handover, and partnership functions essential for systemic impact.

The recommendation applies equally to city networks: shift from one-to-three-year grants to five-to-seven-year outcome-based frameworks, making collaborative behaviours such as coalition-building, implementation support, knowledge translation, a contractual deliverable rather than an unfunded overhead. This means bilateral donors and multilateral institutions securing multi-year commitments to city network core functions before 2027. SRCities will be published once, but its impact on NDC revisions, national urban policies, and development finance programming will play out over five to seven years. City networks are the institutional infrastructure that connects a one-time scientific publication to a sustained programme of policy dialogue, implementation support, and accountability.

2.4.3 USING SCENARIO ANALYSIS AND FORESIGHT TO MAINTAIN CONTINUITY

Fiscal constraints, geopolitical volatility, and shifting political priorities are likely to shape the policy environment leading up to and following SRCities. The period from 2025 to 2030 involves multiple electoral cycles across major CHAMP-endorsing countries and geopolitical pressures that may periodically crowd out climate as a policy priority (UN-Habitat, 2024; Terzi, 2024). Scenario analysis and structured foresight approaches allow institutions to stress-test policy and financing pathways against plausible alternative futures. The GRAA identifies uncertainty management as a critical gap: "how short-term uncertainty can be better incorporated into long-term planning" requires both technical tools and institutional designs robust to changing conditions (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024). The UNU-EHS open-source catalogue, developed in cooperation with KfW, provides a starting architecture for integrating foresight into urban climate governance (United Nations University [UNU-EHS], 2025). Foresight capacity should be built into the institutional frameworks being developed for SRCities uptake now rather than being added as a reactive measure when disruption occurs.

2.5 Bridging the Science–Policy Divide

Scientific evidence clearly demonstrates the need for urban climate action, yet multiple hurdles prevent its translation into effective policy decisions. The linear model of evidence-based policy where research findings directly inform decisions rarely reflects the messy reality of urban climate governance. Policymakers must balance scientific evidence against political feasibility, economic constraints, institutional path dependencies, and competing stakeholder interests (Solecki et al., 2024). Three persistent challenges recur: temporal mismatches (research operates on year-long

timescales while policy windows open and close rapidly); communication gaps (scientific findings communicated in technical language inaccessible to policymakers and adjacent stakeholders facing information overload); and uncertainty framing (appropriately communicated scientific uncertainty can be exploited to delay action). Even the IPCC itself faces challenges in translation, as Summaries for Policymakers involve compromises between scientific accuracy and political acceptability (Solecki et al., 2024).

The Summary for Urban Policymakers (AR6): Lessons for SRCities Translation

The Summary for Urban Policymakers (SUP) series, developed to translate IPCC AR6 findings into city-relevant policy formats, represents an important science-to-policy translation initiative in the urban climate governance space. The SUP process involved direct collaboration between IPCC Working Group authors and urban policy practitioners to produce syntheses that connect AR6 findings to the specific governance, investment, and planning decisions that city officials face. The process included multiple rounds of practitioner consultation, regional validation workshops across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe, and deliberate co-creation rather than top-down translation.

The SUP experience demonstrates that the science-to-policy translation function is feasible at quality – that it is possible to produce authoritative, useful, practitioner-oriented syntheses that connect global scientific findings to local decision contexts. It also demonstrates the demand: SUP outputs were downloaded and circulated at a scale that exceeded initial projections, and the process has been cited by Solecki et al. (2024) as a precedent for SRCities preparation strategy.

However, the SUP's limitations are as instructive as its achievements for SRCities preparation planning. The SUP remained largely external to formal governance systems – It produced high-quality communication products but was not structurally connected to the policy processes that govern actual decisions. The SUP addressed the policy adoption gap by helping cities understand the institutional conditions necessary for adopted policies to deliver measurable outcomes. It did not translate AR6 findings into the financing instrument specifications, governance reform roadmaps, or capacity-building programmes needed to build implementation architecture. And it was produced after AR6 publication rather than prepared in parallel, reducing its impact at the critical moment when policy windows were open.

For SRCities, the preparation task is to institutionalise the SUP function as a permanent governance function rather than a communication exercise: connected to NDC review processes, national urban policy cycles, and MDB investment programming windows; co-designed with practitioners from the beginning of the SRCities writing process rather than produced reactively; and explicitly designed to address the policy outcome gap by translating scientific findings into the institutional, financial, and governance architecture required for implementation.

Sources: Solecki et al. (2024); IPCC WGII

2.5.1 DEVELOPING DIFFERENTIATED, DECISION-ALIGNED COMMUNICATION OUTPUTS

Scientific evidence influences policy only when translated into the decision-relevant language of the actors who must act on it. For SRCities, this means differentiated outputs tailored to national policymakers, city administrations, development finance institutions, civil society, and the private sector. Concrete outputs should be prepared in parallel with SRCities's development and ready for immediate release in 2027: a Summary for National Policymakers focused on governance reform and NDC integration; implementation-oriented briefing materials for city administrations disaggregated by city size and regional context; finance-focused syntheses linking SRCities findings to specific investment categories; and civil society materials connecting scientific findings to lived climate risk.

Communication materials should present evidence not only on what policies cities should adopt, but on the institutional conditions that determine whether adopted policies achieve their projected outcomes (Solecki et al., 2024). A structured SRCities Implementation Conference in 2027 could provide the convening platform for translating outputs into specific policy commitments, regulatory reforms, and investment decisions. The Innovate4Cities research and innovation initiative provides an appropriate and relevant platform for amplifying this message, and the upcoming I4C26 conference in June 2026 (Nairobi, Kenya) will open the door for such conversations going forward.

2.5.2 BUILDING INTEROPERABLE CITY-LEVEL CLIMATE DATA ARCHITECTURE

A foundational lever is the development of interoperable city-level climate data systems aligned with IPCC methodologies. Kukulskyte et al. (2026) document the consequences of data fragmentation: when PPFs use incompatible documentation standards, project handovers require substantial rework, and the system systematically disadvantages non-anglophone and lower-capacity cities who face higher navigation costs. Data interoperability directly reduces cities' transaction costs in accessing climate finance and demonstrating climate impact thereby making it a structural equity measure as well as an efficiency measure. The CDP-ICLEI Public Data platform, providing standardised climate disclosure for over 1,100 cities representing

20% of the global urban population, demonstrates the feasibility of shared reporting infrastructure at scale (Carbon Disclosure Project [CDP], 2025). The City Catalyst platform, developed by the Open Earth Foundation and being scaled to 5,500 cities in Brazil, allows cities to complete a single application that AI automatically converts into multiple funder-specific formats (Kukulskyte et al., 2026). The OECD cautions, however, that AI tools deployed without shared standards risk generating data silos and "shadow AI" that fragments accountability. Governance safeguards including transparency, auditability, and bias testing are prerequisite conditions (OECD, 2024).

2.5.3 INSTITUTIONALISING KNOWLEDGE DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN CLIMATE SCIENCE

The communities most exposed to urban climate risk are systematically underrepresented in climate knowledge production and planning processes. Co-production approaches and equity-sensitive metrics such as participatory risk mapping, meaningful consultation with adequate resourcing, displacement risk monitoring are both normative commitments and practical preconditions for effective implementation (UN DESA, 2024; Ciocco et al., 2024).

2.5.4 SUSTAINING SCIENCE-POLICY DIALOGUE TIED TO DECISION POINTS

Scientific evidence influences policy not when published but when it intersects with open policy windows aligned with budget cycles, NDC revisions, national urban policy updates, investment planning rounds. SRCities will be published once, in 2027. But the governance and financing decisions it needs to influence will be made across a five-to-seven-year cycle. Science-to-policy translation is therefore an ongoing institutional function that must be designed before the report is published.

The mechanism that converts evidence into decision is place-based: a national coordination platform where SRCities findings are interpreted in the context of a specific country's NDC revision schedule, MDB pipeline, and urban policy cycle. Global Innovate4Cities platforms, CCF-LA Local Hubs, and CHAMP Finance Working Groups are the emerging institutional infrastructure for this function and should be explicitly resourced and tasked with SRCities uptake from now on.

Freetown's Treetown Initiative: Community-Led Climate Action at Scale

Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital and home to approximately 1.5 million people (roughly 60% of whom live in or around informal settlements) is one of the world's most climate-vulnerable cities. Between 2011 and 2018, the city lost the equivalent of 12% of its total tree canopy annually to urbanisation and charcoal burning, directly contributing to a 2017 landslide that claimed nearly 1,000 lives. Against this backdrop, Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr launched Freetown the Treetown in January 2020: a community reforestation campaign initially targeting one million trees by 2022, since expanded to five million trees by 2030 and twenty million by 2050.

The initiative's design is directly relevant to the knowledge diversity argument in Lever 5. Rather than a top-down technical programme, Freetown the Treetown operates through community growers, predominantly youth (80%) and women (48%), who plant trees in 113 designated reforestation areas across 13 water catchment zones, use the TreeTracker smartphone app to photograph and geolocate each tree, and receive micropayments for verified maintenance at three-month intervals. This 'pay-to-grow' model directly links community knowledge and labor to digital tracking infrastructure and performance-based payments, generating a self-financing mechanism through voluntary carbon market and impact investor revenue streams.

Over 950,000 trees have been planted and digitally tracked to date, with a tree survival rate exceeding 80%. The initiative has directly or indirectly created over 1,000 green jobs. Supporters include the World Bank (USD 1.8 million), Bloomberg Philanthropies (USD 1 million through 2024), and the Global Environment Facility. A 2025 IISD economic valuation found that the initiative generates a societal return of approximately USD 2.94 for every USD 1 invested, with the largest benefits coming from avoided infrastructure damage from floods and landslides, employment and income generation, and prevention of loss of life. These are co-benefits in housing security, public safety, and economic wellbeing – exactly the polycrisis domains that Lever 4 argues should be made explicit in SRCities communication materials.

Community growers have material and social stakes in the initiative's success; the digital tracking infrastructure creates accountability and visible impact at neighborhood scale; and the linkage to carbon market revenue means that expanding planting generates direct financial returns to communities. These features have sustained political and community commitment through two mayoral election cycles and significant budgetary pressure.

The case demonstrates that climate action designed around community knowledge, material incentives, and visible co-benefits can achieve implementation scale in contexts where formal institutional capacity is limited, which is a pertinent lesson for how SRCities findings on urban climate solutions can be made relevant to the full diversity of urban governance contexts the report will address.

Sources: C40 Knowledge Hub (2022); International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). (2025). Tree planting for climate resilience in Freetown, Sierra Leone. <https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/tree-planting-freetown-sierra-leone>; SDG Local Action. (2024). #FreetownTheTreetown Campaign. <https://sdglocalaction.org/freetown-the-treetown/>

It will be critical to discuss how to implement the findings of SRCities in and with cities to enable accelerated local climate action. Several opportunities to establish this link are emerging, starting with the June Climate Meetings (SBs) in Bonn in June 2026, and continuing in 2027 with Daring Cities in Bonn, an Innovate4Cities conference in Cancún, COP32 in Ethiopia and WUF14 in Mexico City. Such events will need to be designed as a structured

handoff from evidence to action, not a celebration of the report's findings. It should produce country-level uptake commitments with named responsible actors, timelines, and accountability mechanisms; connect SRCities findings to specific upcoming decision windows; and establish the sustained follow-up platforms that ensure SRCities uptake is monitored over the subsequent policy cycle (Solecki et al., 2024; GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024).

3 | Acting Before 2027: Policy Recommendations

The recommendations below are organised by actor group and written as direct guidance. They are not comprehensive but identify the actions with the highest potential to change the institutional conditions that determine whether SRCities drives systemic transformation or remains an important document that is widely cited and quietly

sidelined. Three principles guide the selection: prioritise actions that activate multiple levers simultaneously; prioritise actions that build institutional architecture rather than one-off activities; and prioritise actions that can begin immediately and be in place by 2027.

3.1 National Governments: From Commitment to Operational Architecture

National governments are the essential gatekeepers as political commitment without operational architecture produces hollow decentralisation. The task for national governments between now and 2027 is converting CHAMP endorsements into the governance and financing machinery that makes city-level implementation possible.

A crucial action is establishing a national urban climate co-ordination platform before 2027. Not a committee on paper, but a functioning institution with a standing pipeline forum that brings ministries of finance, environment, and planning together with cities and national development banks at a regular decision cadence; an up-to-date flow-of-funds map showing what instruments are available, on what terms, and through what approval pathways; and a navigator function that actively guides cities through the process. Brazil's CHAMP Finance Working Group, currently being developed with CCFLA support, offers a replicable model. Germany and Brazil as CHAMP co-chairs should publish the institutional design of these platforms as a replicable template for other endorsers by end of 2026.

Alongside this, national governments must undertake a **systematic legal audit of enabling legislation** in the domains that determine whether cities can implement climate solutions: building codes, land use planning,

transport regulation, energy procurement, and municipal finance law. Reform roadmaps identifying the specific legal barriers and the legislative pathway to removing them should be published before SRCities is released, so that scientific findings can be immediately matched to specific reform proposals rather than aspirational statements. On finance, national governments must: **first, reform sovereign guarantee processes** so that access to climate finance is governed by transparent criteria rather than discretionary approval; and **second, establish dedicated concessional finance windows for urban adaptation infrastructure**. Private capital will not organise around investments whose primary returns are flood protection, cooling, and community resilience – this is a structural market failure that only public finance reform can address (CCFLA, 2024). **On multilevel governance, national governments should integrate cities as genuine co-designers in NDC development and implementation**, not post-hoc consultation recipients. The Colombia and Rwanda cases documented in Section 3.1 show what genuine integration looks like: regional co-design workshops, structured technical consultation, and formal feedback mechanisms that connect local priority-setting to national target formulation. Countries that have not done this for NDC 3.0 should build it into their NDC 4.0 planning cycles now.

Finally, national governments must also bring in the cities-climate change nexus into other policy processes, for

example the review of the New Urban Agenda as well as the alignment with National Urban Policies.

3.2 Development Partners and International Organisations

Development partners have the mandates and can contribute to the resources to close the urban climate finance gap, but their internal incentive structures and programming models are not configured to do so. The most important contributions before 2027 are not additional pledges but **structural reforms to how existing resources are deployed**.

For **multilateral development banks**, the November 2024 commitment to accelerate urban climate finance through subnational lending and de-risking instruments is a significant step if it translates into bank strategy, country platform programming, and internal approval process reform. Concretely, MDBs should establish quantitative urban climate finance targets in country strategies, develop subnational lending instruments that reduce dependence on sovereign guarantees, and reform internal project preparation budgets to measure success on project conversion rates.

For **bilateral donors**, the most strategic investment before 2027 is the resourcing of city networks, CCFLA Local Hubs, and CHAMP Finance Working Groups as sustained, outcome-oriented institutions. These are the mechanisms that will translate SRCities findings into country-level policy action across five to seven years of NDC, NAP, and investment cycles. The shift to five-to-seven-year framework agreements, with indicators tied to policy outcomes rather than activity throughput, is the specific reform that makes the difference. Institutional functions that require sustained relationship-building, knowledge transfer, and coalition maintenance cannot be delivered through short-term competitive grants.

For mobilising private investments, it will be critical to work with the private sector to identify how SRCities can help to identify investment opportunities.

3.3 Cities and City Networks: Build Pipelines and Coalitions Now

Cities face a paradox in the SRCities preparation period: the report will document their centrality to climate action, but the institutional conditions that would allow them to act on its findings are largely outside their direct control. They cannot reform national enabling legislation, capitalise guarantee funds, or redesign MDB incentive structures. What they can do is **build the internal capacity, project pipelines, and political coalitions that ensure they are ready to act decisively** when SRCities creates political opportunity.

The most concrete preparation task for individual cities is developing investment-ready project pipelines using financing flightpath discipline: identifying the specific financing instruments the project will target, the national approval pathways required, the investor due diligence requirements that will govern feasibility documentation, and the eligibility gaps that need to be addressed. Cities should engage existing preparation facilities such as the C40 Cities Finance Facility, the City Climate Finance Gap Fund, CCFLA-supported mechanisms, to develop these pipelines now, not after SRCities is published.

For **city networks and stakeholder platforms**, the priority before 2027 is coalition-building and toolkit development. This means developing differentiated uptake toolkits by region and governance context now so that city officials across Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe can immediately translate SRCities findings into specific governance reforms, financing proposals, and NDC engagement strategies relevant to their institutional context.

The I4C24 GRAA's observation that "one of the things that holds us back the most, although there is tremendous will, is coordination problems" applies directly to the SRCities preparation challenge. The institutions and relationships established in the preparation window will determine whether SRCities functions as a catalyst for the governance, finance, and recognition reforms that urban climate action requires, or as another landmark document that documents the gap between what science recommends and what governance delivers (GCoM & UN-Habitat, 2024).

3.4 Priority Actions by Timeline

Table 2. Priority Actions by Timeline

Lever / Barrier	Immediate (2026)	SRCities Release (2027)	Beyond 2027
L1: Governance	Establish national urban climate coordination platforms. Undertake systematic legal audits of enabling legislation. Integrate cities as co-designers in NDC 4.0 planning. Review NDCs 3.0 at the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at COP31 and beyond	Launch SRCities Implementation Conference. Integrate multilevel governance into NDC processes – addressing both adoption and outcome gaps.	Institutionalise multilevel governance as permanent Paris Agreement architecture possibly institutionalisation of local climate action summits and Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change at COPs Scale national urban climate units. Align NDCs and their implementation strategies with National Urban Policies, National Housing Policies and SDG localisation strategies and programmes.
L2: Finance	Reform municipal borrowing restrictions. Establish national project preparation platforms with financing flightpath methodology and outcome-based accountability in line with the Compromiso de Sevilla and the Sevilla Platform for Action on localising development finance.	Fulfill MDB urban finance commitments. Scale project preparation — rewiring incentives from outputs to outcomes. Mandate urban content in all DFI country strategies.	Institutionalise concessional adaptation finance windows. Standardise urban climate finance reporting.
L3: Recognition	Strengthen LGMA Constituency participation. Embed cities as co-designers (not only recipients) in NDC 3.0 processes. Engage the private sector pre-2027.	Translate SRCities into formal UNFCCC and COP process inputs. Establish city participation rights in NDC review mechanisms.	Reform UNFCCC to provide formal subnational decision-making access. Integrate urban metrics into global stocktake.
L4: Polycrisis	Build co-benefit narratives linking climate to housing, health, and economic security. Secure multi-year city network funding insulated from electoral cycles.	Release SRCities materials framed around polycrisis-response co-benefits. Launch political coalition for sustained urban climate prioritisation.	Sustain SRCities uptake through policy dialogue tied to budget and NDC cycles. Mainstream climate in social and infrastructure investment.
L5: Evidence	Develop differentiated SRCities outputs addressing both policy adoption and outcome gaps. Institutionalise co-production. Align city data with IPCC frameworks.	Release SUP and sector briefings simultaneously with SRCities. Deploy AI-assisted translation tools (City Catalyst model). Launch SRCities Implementation Conference.	Sustain science-policy dialogue through NDC, NAP, and budget cycles. Mainstream equity-sensitive metrics in project appraisal.

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Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36	Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1 - 5
53113 Bonn, Germany	65760 Eschborn, Germany
T +49 228 44 60-0	T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 228 44 60-17 66	F +49 61 96 79-11 15

E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de