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Federal Ministry
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DARING
CITIES

DARING CITIES 2026 COMPENDIUM

CASE STUDIES AND RESOURCES
FOR CLIMATE ACTION THAT DELIVERS



INTRODUCTION

Daring Cities 2026 focuses on what it takes to move climate action from commitment to delivery. Through its Know-Lead-Act framework, it connects knowledge and evidence with political leadership and practical action, strengthening the role of local and regional governments in delivering climate goals.

The Daring Cities 2026 Bonn Dialogues, held alongside the UN Climate Change Conference in June, brought local, regional and national leaders together with partners to explore what this means in practice. In a post-COP30 landscape, discussions focused on implementing national climate commitments (NDC 3.0) through multilevel action; preparing to turn the upcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities into action; and strengthening the finance, partnerships and governance needed to scale what works.

The case studies and resources in this compendium capture those discussions on the ground, showing how urban transformation, actionable knowledge, project finance, human wellbeing and multilevel partnerships come together to deliver climate action.

As attention turns to UNFCCC COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, the challenge is to build on what cities and regions are already demonstrating and ensure the global climate architecture enables them to go further. Across the Bonn Dialogues, **five shifts emerged that capture what climate action that delivers requires:**

1 FROM RECOGNITION TO IMPLEMENTATION

Cities are increasingly recognized in national climate plans. The challenge now is turning that recognition into the mandates, capacity and resources needed to deliver.

2 FROM CLIMATE SCIENCE TO REAL-WORLD ACTION

More knowledge alone will not drive change. Science and data need to reach decision-makers in forms that can shape policies, investments and action on the ground.

3 FROM FINANCING GAPS TO INVESTABLE PROJECTS

Closing the urban climate finance gap starts well before investment. Cities need the capacity, project preparation and partnerships to turn priorities into projects that can attract finance.

4 FROM EMISSIONS FIRST TO WELLBEING FIRST

Climate action is about more than reducing emissions. Health, affordability, safety, livelihoods and dignity are essential measures of whether the transition improves people's lives.

5 FROM CITIES AS IMPLEMENTERS TO EQUAL PARTNERS

Cities and regions should not enter the process only when it is time to deliver. Effective climate action requires them as partners in shaping policies, financing and governance from the outset.

THE FIVE SHIFTS IN PRACTICE

This compendium brings together case studies, resources and initiatives from the Daring Cities 2026 Bonn Dialogues, organized around areas of action:

- I Transforming urban systems;
- II Using knowledge for action;
- III Financing solutions at scale;
- IV Putting people first; and
- V Governing through multilevel collaboration.

Together, they show how the Five Shifts intersect in practice and what climate action that delivers looks like on the ground.

Look for the 1-5 markers throughout the compendium to see which shifts each example puts into practice.

I TRANSFORMING URBAN SYSTEMS

Climate ambition becomes meaningful when it changes how cities work. From energy and mobility to resilience and circularity, cities are turning long-term climate goals into practical changes across urban systems.

NEW TAIPEI CITY, CHINESE TAIPEI: WINNING OVER BUSINESS TO GO COAL FREE

New Taipei became Chinese Taipei's [first coal-free city in 2022](#), cutting PM2.5 emissions by roughly 44% and aligning to a 30% reduction target by 2030. Rather than mandate change, the city used a three-pillar value-incentive-trend approach, leveraging the values of second-generation family business owners to bring them on board voluntarily. The strategy favored a behavior nudge over a behavior change mandate, paired with AI-based disaster prevention and smart monitoring tools, and reached more than 1,000 residents through neighborhood-level engagement.

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NITERÓI, BRAZIL: RESILIENCE INVESTMENT THAT SAVED LIVES

A mid-size city across the bay from Rio de Janeiro, Niterói is implementing a [climate action plan](#) targeting net zero by 2050. Over ten years, the city invested more than USD 200 million in landslide prevention and ecosystem-based adaptation, protecting over half its territory. When heavy rains recently hit the city, the investment held: no fatalities, compared to over 200 deaths in a similar event in 2010. Niterói became the first Brazilian city with a dedicated Climate Secretariat and consulted more than 20,000 residents to embed climate action as a lasting city strategy rather than a single administration's initiative.

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PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL: REBUILDING WITH DIGNITY AFTER THE WORST FLOOD IN THE CITY'S HISTORY

In May 2024, floods submerged 30% of Porto Alegre's territory, displaced more than 160,000 people, and caused an estimated USD 2 to 3 billion in damage. The city had already approved a [climate action plan](#) that year, organized around low carbon, resilience, and green growth, and moved quickly to create an [Office of Reconstruction and Climate Adaptation](#) with a portfolio of roughly USD 1.3 to 2 billion for drainage, warning systems, and resilient infrastructure. A new 24-hour meteorological service and real-time alert system now operate independently of the state. Reconstruction is framed explicitly around dignity and social justice, in line with the Malmö Commitment the city joined in 2022.

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FIVE SHIFTS REDEFINING CLIMATE ACTION

TURKU, FINLAND: TACKLING THE LAST STRETCH OF THE ENERGY TRANSITION

Turku has set 2029, the city's 800th anniversary, as its [target for carbon neutrality](#), backed by two decades of council-adopted climate planning that has already brought the city close to eliminating fossil fuels from its heat, cooling, and electricity systems. An energy-positive water system now recovers both nutrients and heat from wastewater, while new positive-energy districts are pushing the transition further still. Turku is treating this closing stretch as a chance to integrate its remaining systems more tightly, turning two decades of steady progress into a complete transition by its anniversary year.

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YOKOHAMA, JAPAN: CIRCULAR ECONOMY THROUGH PHOSPHORUS RECOVERY

Yokohama treats the circular economy as a lever for behavior change and local economic activity, recovering phosphorus from waste to produce fertilizer that feeds back into local food cycles, connecting manufacturers, farmers, and city authorities. In March 2026, the city was named one of the [UN's inaugural 20 Cities Towards Zero Waste](#), recognized for its ambitious circular economy approach. Yokohama is now scaling the model outward through the [Asian Circular Cities Declaration](#), launched in 2025 with the city as the first signatory.

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HELPFUL INITIATIVE

ICLEI GreenClimateCities Program

The program offers local and regional governments a nine-step, three-phase methodology, Analyze, Act, Accelerate, to walk step by step toward climate neutrality. It integrates emissions reduction, climate risk assessment, and resilience building into urban development policies, plans, and processes, combining process guidance, measurement and verification frameworks, and tools tailored to local government needs.

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II USING KNOWLEDGE FOR ACTION

Evidence only matters when it informs decisions. Cities are turning science, data and local knowledge into better policies, priorities and solutions that respond to real needs.

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA: TURNING CLIMATE RISK DATA INTO LOCAL ACTION

Through [ICLEI Africa's DRR4Africa project](#), Lusaka carried out a risk and vulnerability assessment that identified its priority climate hazards, most vulnerable populations, and resilience needs. Those findings informed the co-development of priority interventions and project concepts tailored to the city's context. The city's experience illustrates a pathway from evidence-based risk assessment to concrete climate action, aligned with Zambia's NDC priorities on resilience, disaster risk reduction and adaptive capacity.

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HELPFUL RESOURCES AND INITIATIVES

[Systemic readiness for climate action](#)

A joint policy paper by GIZ, UN-Habitat, and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, this report sets out what needs to be built now to turn urban climate ambition into impact once the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities lands in 2027. It focuses on the systemic readiness, institutional interfaces, translation products, and political relationships that determine whether scientific evidence actually changes how cities and national governments act.

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[CDP-ICLEI Track](#)

CDP-ICLEI Track is the world's leading climate reporting platform, empowering local and subnational governments to take measurable, transparent, and impactful climate action. In 2025, data from more than 1,000 cities, states, and regions, representing over one billion people, was reported through the platform.

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III FINANCING SOLUTIONS AT SCALE

Cities have climate plans and solutions, but turning them into investable projects remains a major challenge. Project preparation, institutional capacity and innovative financing can help move ideas toward implementation and scale.

CHEFCHAOUEN, MOROCCO: FROM PRE-FEASIBILITY TO A PRIVATE-SECTOR WASTE SERVICE

Through the [Gap Fund support](#), the city developed a pre-feasibility study on municipal waste management and recovery. The city already had a climate action plan and clear priorities, and the study turned them into a waste disposal project now delivered by a private operator. The model works because the municipality set clear policies and a long-term strategy to implement the project.

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MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL: TURNING TERRITORIAL DATA INTO FUNDABLE PROJECTS

Home to 853 municipalities, most of them small and short on technical teams, the State of Minas Gerais identified its real bottleneck: projects that fit financing criteria. The State built a climate vulnerability index to pinpoint each municipality's top priorities, ran local workshops to co-design projects with municipalities, and engaged [its state development bank](#) to create dedicated climate pipelines. Municipal consortiums, already delivering health and sanitation services, are now being extended toward adaptation and restoration.

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INDIA: NATIONAL SEED MONEY THAT CROWDS IN PRIVATE CAPITAL

India's [Urban Challenge Fund](#) puts roughly USD 10 billion of national money on the table, covering about 25% of project costs and calling on public-private partnerships to bring another 50%. ICLEI South Asia matches that offer with pipelines of council-endorsed adaptation and mitigation projects, already tested through pilots and ready to scale, now being presented to ADB, the World Bank, and private investors.

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RWANDA: DE-RISKING THE SWITCH TO ELECTRIC MOBILITY

Backed by the [Mitigation Action Facility](#), Rwanda paired an EUR 8.3 million first loss facility at the Rwanda Development Bank with an EUR 1.4 million rebate scheme at the Rwanda Green Fund to help drivers trade conventional motos for e-motos. The first loss facility guarantees 30% of a loan in case of default, unlocking commercial bank lending for local e-moto companies. The model demonstrates how catalytic public finance and targeted subsidies can together activate a private market that would not otherwise move.

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HELPFUL RESOURCES AND INITIATIVES

[A capacity development toolkit for early-stage project preparation](#)

Developed and tested under the Gap Fund's Step-Up Project and implemented by ICLEI, this web-based toolkit compiles 12 essential tools and templates for early-stage project preparation, giving cities a practical starting point for turning a climate priority into a pre-feasibility-ready concept.

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[City Climate Finance Gap Fund](#)

The Gap Fund takes cities from climate action plans to pre-feasibility. Local governments send an expression of interest, concepts are screened, and selected projects receive technical assistance for a pre-feasibility study, with the World Bank, the European Investment Bank, and GIZ as implementer partners.

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[Natural Capital and Nature Finance Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean \(OCN LAC\)](#)

Created with support from Germany's IKI fund, this new regional platform advances the natural capital and nature finance agenda across Latin America and the Caribbean. It functions as a hub for knowledge, innovation, capacity building, and coordination, organizing data, training local governments, and brokering connections between development banks, funders, the private sector, and local governments, with ICLEI serving on its advisory board.

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[ProUrbano Initiative](#)

With a total value of more than €58 million, ProUrbano combines climate-risk insurance with adaptation finance for cities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Its complementary facilities help cities transfer climate risks while developing and financing adaptation measures, connecting risk information with more resilient urban investment. The initiative is led by ICLEI and supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Development Bank (KfW).

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[Transformative Actions Program \(TAP\)](#)

ICLEI's Transformative Actions Program supports local and regional governments in strengthening climate projects and connecting them with project preparation facilities and financiers. As of May 2026, 499 projects had received improvements, 120 were in the TAP portfolio, valued at €1.8 billion, and 39 had accessed financing.

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IV PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Climate action is ultimately about the lives cities make possible. Putting health, affordability, safety, opportunity and equity at the center can deliver climate action that improves wellbeing while building lasting support for change.

BONN, GERMANY: WHAT A THERMOSTAT REVEALS ABOUT ENGAGEMENT

As part of its Climate Neutral 2035 plan, Bonn distributed free [smart heating thermostats](#) to low-income residents holding a city support card, in collaboration with municipal utilities, the consumer advice center, and the German Tenants' Association. The program targets the residential sector, which accounts for roughly 37% of the city's greenhouse gas emissions. By making energy-saving technology directly accessible to lower-income households, Bonn is linking climate protection with social justice on the principle that the heating transition must not fall disproportionately on those least able to afford it.

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KAOHSIUNG, CHINESE TAIPEI: POWERING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR CLIMATE NEUTRALITY BEYOND NET ZERO

Chaired by Kaohsiung and supported by ICLEI, the [Kaohsiung-ICLEI Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Community of Practice](#) brings together 15 cities and regions across East Asia, the Asia-Pacific, and beyond in a two-year capacity-building and peer-learning platform running through 2026. Member cities collaborate to advance climate neutrality and smart city strategies through workshops, co-created transition pathways, and knowledge exchange across circular economy, energy transition, sustainable mobility and innovative finance. Mission Innovation's Flourishing Lives 4 All framework sits at the center of the ComP's agenda, connecting climate neutrality with human needs and urban innovation.

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA, USA: THE JUST TRANSITION TASK FORCE

Home to about 10 million residents, Los Angeles County is holding the line on climate ambition even as national support weakens. Its [Just Transition Task Force](#) offers a practical model for phasing out fossil fuel extraction, mapping jobs lost from oil extraction against new jobs opening up in clean energy, work developed together with environmental justice groups, labor unions, Tribal Nations, and academic institutions to keep affected workers and frontline communities at the center of the plan. In 2025, the Task Force was reconvened to identify implementation pathways and pilot projects.

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NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA: BUILDING FLOURISHING LIVES INTO A CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

[Mission Possible](#) is the name of Newcastle’s Climate Action Plan 2026-2030, which embeds its 77 actions around four pillars with human needs at the center of each: Liveable, Sustainable, Creative, and Achieving Together. Climate measures are explicitly connected to nutrition, health, mobility, energy, and protection from hazards, not emissions alone, drawing on the Flourishing Lives 4 All framework. The city tracks progress through dedicated flourishing lives indicators alongside emissions metrics. In June 2026, following extensive community consultation with residents, all levels of government, business, and industry, the [City Council](#) adopted the CAP 2030.



HELPFUL INITIATIVE

[Flourishing Lives 4 All](#)

Flourishing Lives for All (FL4ALL) shifts climate action from a static agenda of problem-solving and emissions reduction to a solutions agenda: from what we need less of to what we need more of. As the Sustainable Development Goals approach their 2030 horizon, FL4ALL asks what it will take for 8–12 billion people to live good, healthy and dignified lives on a regenerative planet. The initiative emerged from Mission Innovation’s Net-Zero Compatible Innovations Initiative (NCI) in 2025.



V GOVERNING THROUGH MULTILEVEL COLLABORATION

No level of government or sector can deliver the transition alone. Strong partnerships across governments, communities, business and other actors can connect priorities, resources and expertise to accelerate climate action.

BRAZIL: CLIMATE FEDERALISM PUTS CITIES INSIDE THE NATIONAL NDC

Brazil's climate federalism is built on a shared commitment across all levels of government to develop climate plans, targets, and instruments in a coordinated and participatory manner, integrating climate policy into planning at every level, from national, federal to municipal. In 2024, Brazil embedded this commitment explicitly in its [updated NDC](#). As CHAMP co-chair alongside Germany, Brazil is advancing multilevel governance as both a delivery mechanism and a safeguard for climate ambition.

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MALMÖ, SWEDEN: ELECTRIFICATION AND A HUNDRED PARTNERSHIPS

Malmö has set 2030 as its target for climate neutrality, backed by the political decisions and commitment needed to get there. The city has electrified and expanded its commuting systems and invested heavily in cycling infrastructure, with bicycles now accounting for a quarter of all trips. Through its [local Climate Contract](#), more than 100 companies and associations have committed to contributing to a climate-neutral Malmö, creating a structured model for collaboration between the city, the private sector and local actors.

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MUĞLA, TÜRKİYE: PARTICIPATORY CLIMATE GOVERNANCE THROUGH TOWN HALL COP

In May 2026, Muğla Metropolitan Municipality hosted its [second Town Hall COP](#), bringing together government, academia, civil society and international partners to review progress and inform updates to its Climate Declaration and Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). Building on its first edition, Muğla shows how the Town Hall COP can evolve into a practical framework for participatory climate governance, connecting local plans, councils and stakeholders around implementation and accountability.

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VASAI-VIRAR, INDIA: A YOUTH-LED TOWN HALL COP

[Vasai-Virar's 2025 Town Hall COP](#) was hosted by Youth for Unity and Voluntary Climate Action, and used the space to bridge the divide between city officials and migrant residents lacking official residential status. The dialogue centered on this community's adaptation needs and what a just transition should mean for people often left out of formal planning. Its outcomes fed directly into a community climate action plan.

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HELPFUL RESOURCES AND INITIATIVES

[CHAMP Implementation Roadmap](#)

The Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) has moved into its implementation phase with a new three-year roadmap, building on its COP28 launch. The roadmap centers on three priorities: placing multilevel partnerships at the heart of climate governance, strengthening national and subnational collaboration on NDCs and national adaptation plans, and scaling up finance so it actually reaches cities, states, and regions. CHAMP has also introduced a new governance structure, a Steering Committee co-chaired by Brazil and Germany, alongside a new Subnational Advisory Council, marking the first time cities, states, and regions have been formally built into the Coalition's own governance.

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[Global Ambition, Local Action white paper](#)

This working paper traces how local and regional governments have historically engaged with global environmental governance, with particular attention to the Rio Conventions. It provides a documented case for why subnational voices belong inside multilateral processes, not just at the implementation stage after decisions are made elsewhere.

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[Town Hall COP Initiative](#)

ICLEI's Town Hall COP Initiative is a locally organized, community-driven event that brings people together to discuss climate priorities, showcase local action, and connect with national and global climate goals. Each Town Hall COP is designed to reflect the unique needs and voices of the hosting community, whether it's a small town, a major city, or a regional network.

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[Urban Content in NDC 3.0: Cities at the Centre](#)

Tracking the third generation of nationally determined contributions, this UN-Habitat report finds that 80% of NDCs submitted by mid-2026 include well-developed urban content, up from 49% in the prior round, with about half addressing housing and informal settlements. It offers thematic deep dives, case studies, regional trends, and a CHAMP spotlight to help national and local governments strengthen the urban dimension of their next NDC.

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