

Relevance of the Global Covenant of Mayors in the Americas region

Background

The European Union is a key leader in sub-national climate diplomacy. Since 2017, it has been implementing the flagship program for cities worldwide: the **Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy** (GCoM).

Cities are crucial to avert, minimize, and adapt to climate change. Almost 90% of the world's population lives in urban areas. Despite that, countries have yet to fully integrate local governments into their national climate planning. The last United Nations assessment showed that while cities are responsible for over 70% of GHG Emissions, **only 25% of NDCs have a strong urban component**. To effectively address climate change, keep global warming below 1.5°C, and achieve the Global Goal on Adaptation, cities must be at the center. GCoM is the most effective way of ensuring cities are equipped to lead this movement.

GCoM is the largest alliance of cities and local governments committed to fighting climate change, with **over 13,300 signatories**. GCoM cities represent more than 1,2 bi people worldwide and can reduce 24 billion CO₂ emissions by 2030. In the Americas, the European Union provides support to over **950 cities**.

GCoM Americas is achieving concrete results locally by enhancing city staff skills, aiding in Climate Action Plans and projects, and facilitating connections with the private sector and financial institutions. On the policy front, it's leading in fostering multistakeholder cooperation and governance, laying the groundwork for implementing the Coalition of High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) agreement signed at COP28.

Importance of the region



25%

of the GCoM global population



39%

of the non-European GCoM cities



19%

of compliant cities [Latin America]

x



8%

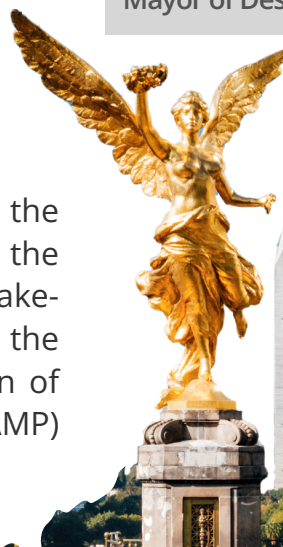
of compliant cities [Europe Union]



Local governments are the first to face and suffer the impact of climate change affecting our communities. That's why it's important to have GCoM, the largest alliance of local governments in the world working for climate action, which allows municipalities and local governments, whether large or small, to **have a voice and tell the world what we are doing**.

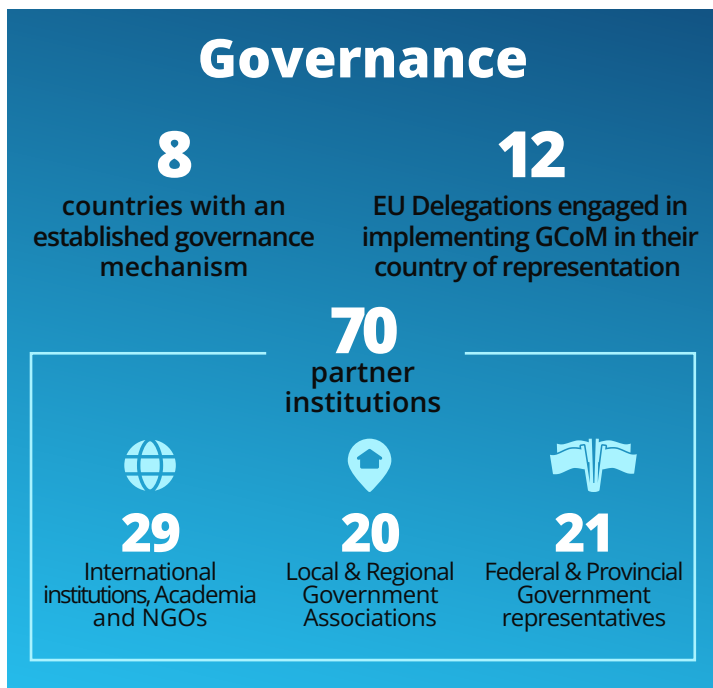
Carolina Basualdo

Mayor of Despeñaderos | Argentina



Stakeholder Cooperation and Multilevel Governance

- Establishment of a transparent, participatory, and diverse governance frameworks across its four covenants, uniting key stakeholders in climate action.
- Efforts in Canada and the US focused on mobilizing city networks for collaboration, while in Latin America, governance structures are more developed. The Caribbean is in the early stages of engagement, mapping relevant stakeholders.
- In Latin America, the governance includes a political steering mechanism, a regional strategic body, and country-level structures. These involve local leaders, city networks, national associations, ministries, CSOs, academia, reflecting GCoM's diversity. The private sector, particularly from the EU, actively engages through matchmaking events to identify partnership opportunities for city projects benefiting from specific technologies and solutions.



The Amazon has its own agenda linked to conservation, climate change, and respect for Amazonian and indigenous culture. We need to have an active presence to empower the Amazonian issue on the global agenda. The GCoM, through its work with local governments, assists us in addressing our challenges and provides the attention needed to make the Amazon the true lungs of the world.

Vladimir Chong

Mayor of Maynas and Vice-Chair of the Amazon Cities Forum | Peru



Cities Climate Maturity

GCoM follows a three-year cycle guiding cities towards developing Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans. GCoM Americas has supported cities in initial stages, fostering an environment for implementing ambitious climate projects. We're now reaching a phase of climate maturity where actions can be implemented and the climate agenda localized. Some examples of this:

- A portfolio of projects at different stages of implementation.
- Initiatives to support access to financing resources and Project Preparation Facilities (e.g., City Climate Finance Gap Fund, funded by the EIB).
- Partnerships with the private sector and matchmaking events.
- Effective governance structures ensure multi-level governance and Mayors' commitment.

There's a consensus among core partners and cities that continuous technical and political support is crucial for implementing climate actions in the Americas, particularly in LATAM and the Caribbean. Subnational climate diplomacy should incorporate mechanisms for direct technical support to cities, enabling tangible results and contributing to global efforts to combat climate change.

Concrete progress by cities

