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CITIES AND NATIONS: A COMMON FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS.

**Macro and micro cosmo:
a way to produce tangible results.
EU and GCCA+ approach**

Presentation plan

- Introduction
- City as catalyst to achieve national climate change target
- How and why cities are moving faster than governments
- How cities are acting and committed to addressing climate change
- The various supports to cities climate action
- Remaining challenges and concrete problems
- GCCA+ approach to cities climate action
- Conclusion



Introduction



WORDWIDE LEVEL: The Paris agreement on Climate Change under UNFCCC focused on keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C above the pre-industrial level and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5°C. In addition, the PA aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of CC

EU REGIONAL LEVEL: Tackling Climate Change is a priority for EU which has settled ambitious targets for GHG reductions in the short and long terms.

- EU Member States are working on fulfilling the commitments as per PA and towards EU
- Developing countries, LDCs and SIDS are committed in the fight against the negative effects of climate change

CITY LEVEL: 74% of the population lives in urban areas in Europe. Cities are responsible for more than 70% of global GHG emissions. They are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their location close to rivers and oceans.

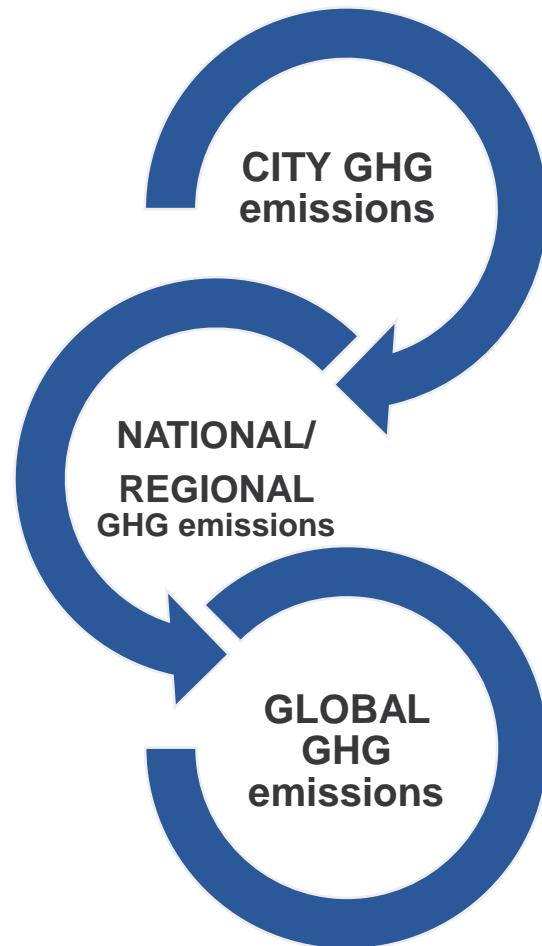


At **EU LEVEL**, actions of cities have to be regarded as a way to support EU policy targets geared towards combating climate change and meeting the objective of the PA



AT **GLOBAL LEVEL**, cities have to be regarded as those supporting national governments in achieving the commitments of climate change towards the PA

CITY AS CATALYST TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE TARGETS



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NATIONAL/GLOBAL LEVEL

- As of 16th November 2017, 195 Parties signed the PA and 170 parties ratified covering 87.90% of global emissions
- After signature and ratification, now concrete and tangible results shall be achieved by the governments.
- Climate actions, decisions and governance at national level influences the development and implementation of climate plans at the lower level administrative level where actions take place concretely and this level is exactly the one city

CITY POSITION

Cities have a double position in the climate picture as they have to be regarded as

1. those affected by the impact of Climate Change (e.g. air pollution having direct effects on health, on quality of life and human resources)
2. **as major contributors to the emissions of GHG due to economic growth and not properly managed urbanization process.** The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that urban areas currently account for over 67 percent of energy-related global greenhouse gases, which is expected to rise to 74 percent by 2030. It is estimated that 89 percent of the increase in CO2 from energy use will be from developing countries.

CITY AS CATALYST TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE TARGETS

Due to this position Cities can be considered **as catalyst for actions**, as the **micro - cosmo** to test actions aimed at GHG reduction, green growth solution and decarbonisation producing concrete results, to be then replicated and scaled up.

Green actions in cities have the potential to influence the national agenda and then influence international negotiations.

OECD, Kamal-Chaoui 2009 suggests that urban policies can lead to reducing total global energy demand, and as a result, CO2 emission. It also shows “that the overall abatement cost of meeting Kyoto emissions reduction can be reduced over time by complementing a global climate policy (e.g., a carbon tax) with urban densification policies and congestion charges” (Kamal-Chaoui 2009)

CITIES ARE MOVING FASTER THAN GOVERNMENTS

CITIES NEED TO ACT CONCRETELY TO SOLVE CLIMATE CHANGE PROBLEMS.

CITIES HAVE ALREADY INCLUDED CLIMATE CHANGE IN THEIR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.

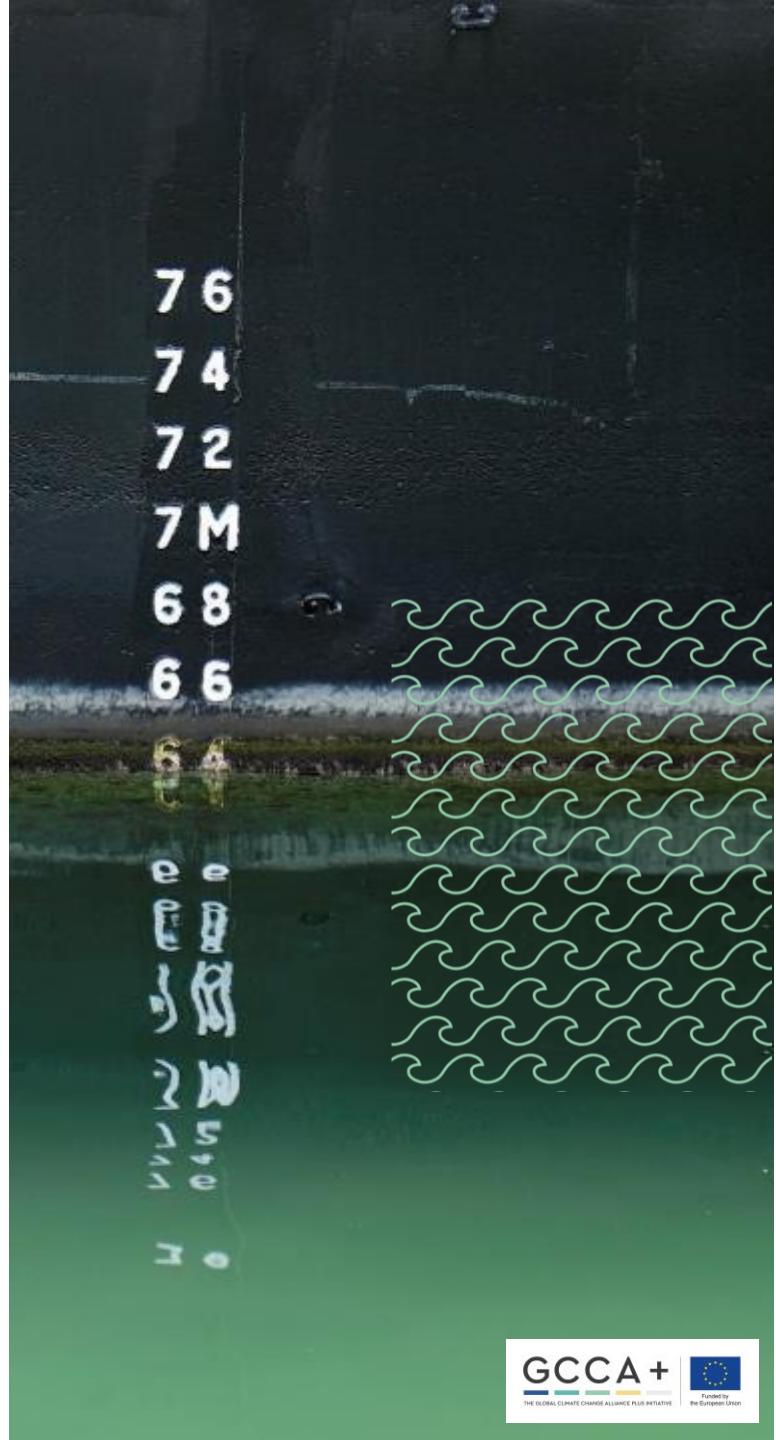
CITIES ARE A MICRO - COSMO.



CITIES ARE MOVING FASTER THAN GOVERNMENTS

Few numbers and examples:

- In Europe, **70 percent** of the largest cities have areas that are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, and most of these cities **less than 10 meters above sea level**.
- **Port cities** in developing countries — such as Kolkata, Shanghai, and Guangzhou — are as vulnerable as such cities in developed countries —Rotterdam, Tokyo, or New York City.
- China alone has **more than 78 million people** living in vulnerable low elevation cities; this number is increasing annually at 3 percent (McGranahan et al. 2007).
- Approximately **360 million urban residents** live in coastal areas less than 10 meters above sea level and are vulnerable to flooding and storm surges (Satterthwaite and Moser 2008).
- **15 of the world's 20 megacities** are at risk from **rising sea levels** and coastal surges
- Subways, sewers, bridges, and other major infrastructures in London, New York, and Paris are **more than 100 years old**.
- Need for **relocation** and potential **abandonment** of key infrastructure and areas prone to flooding.
- Poor city residents tend to locate in the most **vulnerable locations** and housing construction materials are not robust.





**MOVING
FORWARD**

CITIES ARE MOVING FASTER THAN GOVERNMENTS – MAIN FINDINGS

- No matter if cities act locally and each of them is an independent body, but they have a greater understanding of and influence on the local realities, needs and constraint.
- If they act collectively on the same issues they can really complement the efforts of the national governments contributing not only to achieving the national targets towards the Paris agreement, but to achieving global efforts to address climate change.
- Decisions made in cities now can have long lasting impacts on future GHG emissions trends and their infrastructure plan will affect the trends of the emissions.

CITIES ACT

CITIES ARE WELL AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, SOME OF THEM HAD ALREADY ADOPTED A PRO ACTIVE APPROACH

- Cities knows that investing in climate change is a win solution as investing in climate change stands for a blueprint for job creation, stability and global prosperity
- INDEED, ambitious and innovative target needs do impact negatively neither on competitiveness nor on economic performance

Examples:



CITIES ARE STRONGLY COMMITTED

CITIES ARE SO COMMITTED AND BELIEVE IN CLIMATE CHANGE NEW ERA that, in some cases, they are acting better than the Government.

US is the clear example:



Among the cities there are cases like San Diego- California, Miami Beach- Florida, both contending with rising sea levels and coastal erosion

New York aims to cut its annual GHG emission by 30% between 2007 and 2030. Former New York City Mike Bloomberg sent a letter to UN and UNFCCC saying Americans are still committed to the Paris Agreement.

A coalition of US cities, companies and other groups (so called “we are still in”) have pledged to stay committed to the Paris agreement on climate change despite the President initiating US withdrawal from it.

LITERATURE IS SUPPORTING THE NEW ROLE OF CITIES

There is already a consolidated literatures in favor of the role of cities as active player in the climate agenda and as the engine which can move towards the achievement of the national targets towards UNFCCC commitments

“ HEIDRICH 2016

Cities can play a key role in developing and implementing climate change programs because they are located at the interface of local action and national and international level of climate chance adaptation and mitigation commitments.”

“ CASTAN BROTO 2017

Cities play a pivotal role in transnational climate change governance in 3 ways:

- Firstly, cities support processes of learning and exchange between local governments and other sub-national organizations;*
- Secondly, they gather local resources and knowledge in order to implement specific schemes;*
- Thirdly by rising the profile of cities in international agendas, they evoke the interest of political and business actors.*

UNFCCC COP IS SUPPORTING THE NEW ROLE OF CITIES

A Climate Summit for Majors was convened in Copenhagen during COP15 in 2009: 500 participants attended the Summit, 79 cities participated with 67 mayors and deputy mayors (ICLEI- C40)

The message was clear: for the first time city major gathered to demonstrate that cities are at the forefront of fight against negative effects of climate change.

The result was “TASK FORCE” to review climate change in cities focusing in particular on how climate change can affect the urban poor

IPCC-SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY RECOGNIZES CITIES' NEW POSITION

The role of cities in climate change has gained so much relevance that IPCC has dedicated a CHAPTER ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS IN ITS FIFTH ASSESSMENT REPORT.

Human settlements are addressed in both the adaptation report in the fifth assessment, as well as in the mitigation report.

This is the first time that the IPCC has dedicated chapters to the issue of cities and human settlement

EU STRONGLY SUPPORTS ACTIONS AT CITY LEVEL

EU is moving as well recognizing the importance and the role of cities in the worldwide fight against climate change.

THE COVENANT OF MAJORS FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY, launched in 2008 after the adoption of the 2020 EU Climate and energy package, is the most important initiative bringing together 700 local and regional authorities voluntary committed to implement EU climate and energy objectives in their territory

OBJECTIVE: to endorse and support the efforts of local authorities to reduce GHG emissions and implement sustainable energy policies. Renovated in 2015 after the merge with Majors adapt, it asks signatories to commit to the EU 2030 targets to reduce CO2 emissions by at least 40% and adopting an integrated approach towards climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation.

CHALLENGES

- COOPERATION AMONG NATIONAL AND CITY LEVEL IS REQUIRED.
- MERGE THE EFFORTS TO REACH A COMMON TARGET: A GREENER WORLD



CONCRETE PROBLEMS

- GHG emissions mitigations are generally regarded as a responsibility of national governments, but they affect cities ;
- Misalignment between cities/localized short term priorities for local government and national/global long term challenges of GHG mitigation
- at city level capacity may be limited and/or constraint by limited budget availability
- Cities have to be directly involved in the establishment of national targets as the main actors to concretely implement the actions
- local plan of cities shall be considered at national level in order to settle reliable future goals
- national governments have to strongly support cities and their greener policies

GCCA+

GCCA+ in its core activities is supporting both levels (national towards city) through ad hoc actions and ad hoc projects reflecting the needs and challenges of both parties.

GCCA+ aims to create synergies between national and city levels as meeting the ambitious of the Paris Agreement on CC requires strong partnership and cooperation between all stakeholders.

LIBERIA'S GCCA PROGRAM is the typical example of how GCCA+ is working with 2 levels of work

1. **National level:** create the institutional conditions and framework (supporting the competent bodies in policy/institutional aspects as per climate change through capacity building activities)
2. **Local level:** Face and solve the problems introducing transformative approaches capable of producing tangible results, to be then replicated in other local context. (this implies working with the sector stakeholders and municipality in facing a real city problem -urban waste management in Monrovia- and proposing alternative solutions- recycling, composting, waste to energy etc.-including new/alternative financial solution)

CONCLUSION



YES, WE CAN.....

**DESPITE CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS,
CITIES CAN REPRESENT THE STRONG ARM
OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS TOWARDS
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTED TARGETS.**



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