

## ***The OECD: A Long and Multi-disciplinary Experience on Climate Change***

Climate change has become a priority issue in global environmental governance and cities are important players. Cities are home to the majority of global energy use, making them central to the climate policy challenge. At the same time, their prevalent coastal locations, exposed infrastructure, and large numbers of poor and elderly residents make cities particularly vulnerable to sea level rise, storms and heat waves, all of which are likely to be exacerbated due to climate change. The OECD, an intergovernmental organisation representing 30 member countries committed to common principles to support economic development including social and environmental protection, helps governments to improve their collective and individual performance of climate change policies through peer reviews, dialogue and shared policy assessment. Climate change has been on the OECD agenda since the late 1980s. We provide an objective forum, away from international negotiations, for countries to discuss and develop a shared understanding of good practice on policy issues.

## ***Cities are part of the Climate Change Solution***

Today the OECD is actively working with governments to highlight the role of cities in delivering cost-effective policy responses to climate change. Cities are centres of innovation and can advance clean energy systems, sustainable transportation, waste management and spatial development strategies to reduce greenhouse gases. With access to up to date climate science, impacts and vulnerability assessment, local authorities can also work with local stakeholders to design and implement effective adaptation strategies. A number of projects at the OECD are advancing the understanding of the roles that cities can play to respond efficiently and effectively to climate change.

## ***Enhancing Local Benefits of Adaptation & Mitigation Policies***

This activity focuses on assessment of climate policy benefits at local scale, in particular on how policy can limit or avoid climate impacts on urban infrastructure, people and economies. A first priority is to explore the local scale economic impacts of climate change in the face of urban development, including the impacts of projected changes in extreme weather events. Several working papers are available: a literature review on impacts and adaptation at city scale; a conceptual framework for impact and benefit assessment at urban scale; a ranking of the world's large cities most exposed to coastal flooding today and in the future; and an in-depth case study on coastal flood risk in Copenhagen. A second in-depth case study on Mumbai is forthcoming. In 2010, new work is looking at how to finance local and sub-national climate change action with broader national and international policy frameworks, including an investigation of how city authorities and urban-scale mitigation programmes can be better integrated into carbon offset markets.

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On the adaptation dimension, related work is investigating how to better integrate adaptation at city scale in development co-operation and planning in developing countries.

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## ***Cities, Climate Change and Multilevel Governance***

The OECD has also begun to identify a multilevel governance framework to explore linkages between national, regional and local policies and to explore the ability to strengthen multilevel, regional, and urban governance to more effectively address the problem of climate change. A recent report highlights progress made to advance principals of good practice including participatory governance; the existence of a strong analytical foundation for short and long-term planning; cost-effectiveness and economic efficiency; consideration of distributional consequences and procedural equity; use of a long term planning horizon; and policy coherence and feasibility.

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**See also** [www.oecd.org/gov/cities/climatechange](http://www.oecd.org/gov/cities/climatechange) and [www.oecd.org/env/cc/cities](http://www.oecd.org/env/cc/cities)



## **Competitive Cities and Climate Change**

This activity focuses on urban governance, planning and land use, as well as intergovernmental collaborations that link national and regional strategies to local actions. An international conference held in Milan, Italy, in October 2008, and a follow-up workshop on Greening Cities: New Approaches to Local Climate Change Actions held in June 2009, in Las Palmas, Spain built on this theme. A new OECD report “Competitive Cities and Climate Change” assesses the relationship between urbanisation and CO<sub>2</sub>, and identifies key opportunities for action to reduce cities’ contribution and vulnerability to climate change, including complementary urban planning and sectoral policies, “greening” of fiscal policies, financing options, and opportunities to boost green innovation and jobs. In 2010, work will continue on the urban and regional dimensions of climate policies. This will include an analysis of the impact of green growth initiatives on jobs and climate change goals, the effect of different urban spatial forms on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and case studies on urban climate activities. Results of the work on competitive cities and climate change, as well as cities and metropolitan regions’ contribution to green growth, will be discussed at the third meeting of the OECD Roundtable of Mayors and Ministers on Urban Development Strategy in June 2010.

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**See also** [www.oecd.org/gov/cities/climatechange](http://www.oecd.org/gov/cities/climatechange)

## **Transportation and Climate Change**

The International Transport Forum (ITF), formerly the European Conference on Ministries of Transport, is engaged in many aspects of transport-related climate research and policy-making. The ITF has held the world’s largest transport summit around the theme of “Transport and Energy: the Challenge of Climate Change” in 2008 and “Transport and Globalisation” in 2009 – in 2010, the Ministerial Forum will focus on “Transport and Innovation”, including low-carbon innovation. For cities, the Forum has considered measures to encourage travel behaviour change, to promote and enhance public transport and rail service quality, to support for non-motorised means of travel and to manage traffic demand and reduce congestion. Strategies relevant to cities include sustainable urban transport policies, company mobility management plans and the potential for policies (e.g. road pricing) to deliver lasting GHG reductions. The Joint Research Transport Centre will be producing a report on “Opportunities and Costs for Transport GHG Reduction” in early 2010.

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In addition, an OECD Global Forum on Transport and Environment in a Globalising World was held 10-12 November 2008 in Guadalajara, Mexico, including a session on urban transport problems and case studies on how selected cities (Mexico City, Santiago, Milan, Berlin and Singapore) have promoted environmentally sustainable transport. As a contribution to the meeting, the publication “Mind-Forg’d Manacles – The Constraints to Optimizing Urban Transport Policy” discussed the possibilities for introducing road-pricing schemes.

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## **Recent Publications**

- OECD 2009. Cities, Climate Change and Multilevel Governance. Paris.
- OECD 2009. Competitive Cities and Climate Change. OECD International Conference, 9-10 October 2009.
- OECD 2009. Mind-Forg’d Manacles – The Constraints to Optimizing Urban Transport Policy Paris.
- OECD 2009. OECD Policy Guidance on Integrating Climate Adaptation into Development Cooperation. Paris
- Hallegatte, S., F. Henriot, and J. Corfee-Morlot. 2008. The Economics of Climate Change Impacts and Policy Benefits at City Scale: A Conceptual Framework. ENV/WKP(2008)3. Paris: OECD
- Nicholls, R., *et al.* 2008. Ranking Port Cities with High Exposure and Vulnerability to Climate Extremes: Exposure Estimates. OECD Environment Working Paper 1, ENV/WKP(2007)1. Paris: OECD.