

## **MONTRÉAL CALL TO ACTION**

### **on Cities, Climate Research and Governance**

*The Montréal Call to Action on Cities, Climate Research and Governance, issued at the 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference, co-hosted by the Global Covenant of Mayors and UN-Habitat brings together academia, government, civil society, and industry at the intersection of cities, climate science, and innovation. This Call to Action is signed by leaders representing these communities working at the intersection of urban development and climate change science. It aims to accelerate climate action by making science, knowledge and innovation available in support of stronger, more ambitious and widespread collaboration between subnational (cities, towns, states and regions) and national governments.*

The 2023 Global Stocktake showed the world is off track from the goals of the Paris Agreement; at the current rate we are moving towards a dangerous and unstable future of 2.8C global heating, compared with the pre-industrial era. Communities around the world are already feeling the impact of climate change, including worsening heatwaves, floods and wildfires, with the most vulnerable being hit the hardest. Without resolute and ambitious action, all of this is pointing towards a systemic collapse.

In this context, we at the 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference (I4C24),

**Recognize** that urban science, research and innovation are critical to broker solutions and pathways that meet local needs - and must be inclusive of regional characteristics and sensitivities that can foster fair and inclusive action.

**Recognize** that urban research and knowledge are most impactful when co-generated with a range of urban stakeholders including low-income and other marginalised groups, and when they inform multi-level governance and partnerships with a robust evidence base that can bridge the gap between urban climate ambition and action - and deliver on the Paris Agreement.

**Acknowledge** that many local governments are reducing per capita emissions at a faster rate than their national governments and these efforts should be maximised<sup>1</sup>. Based on current targets and actions, Global Covenant of Mayors signatory cities could collectively achieve the equivalent of 10% of the emissions reduction needed globally to keep global temperatures from rising above 1.5°C by 2030<sup>2</sup>.

**Acknowledge** that there is an increasing awareness that climate action in cities, states and regions must be supported by national governments. Fully implementing the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) initiative, endorsed by 72 countries at COP28 can lead to more, better resourced, subnational projects that can reduce emissions, boost adaptive capacity and improve livelihoods.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/impact2023/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unep.org/interactives/emissions-gap-report/2023/#section-4;>

[https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GCoM-2023-Global-Impact-report-2023\\_10.12.2023.pdf](https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/GCoM-2023-Global-Impact-report-2023_10.12.2023.pdf)

**Recall** that there are knowledge and data gaps on urban climate action - including, but not limited to climate science and urban systems; the challenges of more effective local (and multi-level) governance that bridge the gap between ambition and implementation; just, equitable, and resilient livelihoods for inhabitants of informal settlements that acknowledge their vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change; and the incorporation and representation of culture, heritage, and history in forward-looking climate action planning - inclusive of indigenous and traditional communities.<sup>3</sup>

**Commit** to co-generating and sharing our knowledge, research and best practices for innovative subnational climate action through the Innovate4Cities initiative, the Global Research and Action Agenda on Climate Change and Cities (GRAA) and to contribute our knowledge, identified research gaps and opportunities for consideration by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - in particular through the Special Report on Climate Change and Cities.

- **As researchers and scientists, we commit** to generating policy-relevant knowledge and insights that can catalyse subnational climate action.
- **As private sector leaders, we commit** to sharing our intellectual capital and expertise with subnational governments, co-facilitating public-private partnerships and investing into urban climate change solutions.
- **As civil society leaders, we commit** to generating and contributing good practice, expertise and the perspectives of the communities we represent - especially among marginalised and under-represented groups - to ensure urban climate research and solutions are just, co-designed, and fit-for-purpose.

**Commit** to ensuring that urban research, knowledge and innovation informs policy, decision-making and effective multilevel climate action, including supporting national governments to collaborate with cities, towns, states and regions, such as the ones who joined the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) at COP28.

**Call** on national governments to fully realise the potential of urban climate research, knowledge and innovation by:

- Engaging with the academic, practitioner and business communities for the latest knowledge and science - including through Innovate4Cities and the forthcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities - to ensure emerging findings inform national, regional and local climate strategies and implementation pathways.
- Building on urban climate research, knowledge and innovation and including subnational governments in the development process and content of national targets and strategies on climate, energy, and biodiversity.
- Increasing funding to subnational climate projects and access to financing, including directing at least one-third of research, development, and deployment funding towards programs and activities channelled through cities, regions and their governments.

<sup>3</sup> Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy & UN-Habitat. (2022) Discussions and Findings from the 2021 Innovate4Cities conference: new insights for the 2018 Global Research and Action Agenda on Cities and Climate Change Science. Walsh, B. (ed) and Greenwalt, J. (ed) et al. <https://doi.org/10.26188/62795d16f3bab>

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