

## INTERNATIONAL CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION

*National governments continually struggle to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, frequently failing to meet the commitments made in both the Kyoto Protocol, 1996, and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992 (FCCC). In contrast, many local governments are demonstrating success in setting targets, reducing emissions and improving local air quality. Furthermore, these local efforts are important nationally since at least fifty percent of the greenhouse gases emitted from all sources fall under the direct or indirect control of local governments.*



Adrian Atkinson

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' (ICLEI) Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP) was launched in 1993, and has united more than 400 local governments in their efforts to cut the local GHG emissions that contribute to global warming and air pollution. Collectively, these 400 cities and towns account for approximately 8% of global emissions. In Europe, more than 100 local governments participate in the CCP Campaign with national campaigns underway in Finland, Italy and the United Kingdom. The programme is currently being introduced into Poland and other central and eastern European countries.

The goals of the CCP campaign are to strengthen local commitment to, and capacity for, reducing GHG emissions. This is achieved by: 1) developing and disseminating tools that increase local capacity and enhance strategies for energy efficiency, 2) promoting best practices to reduce energy use in buildings and transport, 3) providing a collective international voice for local governments vis-à-vis national govern-

ments and international bodies and 4) facilitating local government activities in national and regional climate strategies.

For example, through CCP, over one hundred Australian local governments, representing over forty percent of the country's population, have committed to reducing their emissions. Local governments in Australia are supported by a strong national commitment through the Australian Greenhouse office, and other initiatives like the Australian Municipal Energy Improvement Facility, which works with local authorities improving management skills and demonstrating how local governments can profit financially from reduced emissions.

In Japan, Saitama Prefecture and the city of Nagoya have hosted respectively Local Government Leaders Summits On Climate Change in 1995 and 1997. Following the Nagoya Summit, a delegation of local government leaders from the CCP Campaign attended the third conference of parties meeting in Kyoto to report to the national governments assembled on local progress to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In Mexico and the Philippines, local authorities have undertaken initiatives to reduce local emissions in a two-year pilot project. Similar projects are currently being launched in South Africa, India and Indonesia, three of the top greenhouse gas emitters in the developing world. As with all local initiatives, efforts must be supported through enabling legislation and action at the national level, and through the opportunity to contribute to international processes like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Furthermore campaigns such as CCP help to raise awareness that there does not have to be a trade off between green and brown agenda concerns in tackling climate change and air pollution. Although reducing GHG emissions is often a lower priority for cities in developing countries than the more immediate need to improve air quality, there need not be a trade-off between the two. Reducing greenhouse gas emission is becoming an increasing focus in the developing world as a result of the Clean Development Mechanism, an element of the Kyoto Protocol which has been promoted through the CCP. Through this mechanism, developed countries can offset their own emissions by investing in clean environmental technologies, like renewable energy, or by financing the conservation of tropical forests (carbon sinks), in developing countries. As a result, developing countries may benefit from new investment to increase economic productivity at the same time as reducing GHG emissions and improving local air quality.



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