



PROCEEDINGS DOCUMENT

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND CITES

**UN@HABITAT** 

#### International Conference on Climate Change and Cities

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#### Acknowledgements

We thank all conference participants for their contributions before, during and after the Cities and Climate Change Science conference for their detailed contributions to this proceedings document. We thank the Organizing Partners: Cities Alliance, City of Edmonton, C40 Cities Leadership Group, Future Earth, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, IPCC, Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) as well as the other conference sponsors, for their financial support to the conference and post-conference work.

We thank the authors of the pre-conference commissioned papers for preparing these pre-conference documents. We thank the the University of Alberta student volunteers who took minutes during all conference sessions, and assisted in preparing the session summaries.

Special thanks also to the members of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) for their dedication and contributions toward, during and post the Cities and Climate Change Science Conference: Shobhakar Dhakal (Co-Chair), Seth Schultz (Co-Chair), Diana Ürge-Vorsatz (Co-Chair), Xuemei Bai, Aliyu Barau, Helen Cleugh, David Dodman, Richard Dawson, Boram Lee, Lykke Leonardsen, Valerie Masson-Delmotte, Megan L. Melamed, Gian C. Delgado Ramos, Roberto Sanchez Rodriguez, Debra Roberts, Cynthia Rosenzweig, Karen Seto, William Solecki, Maryke van Staden. We also would like to thank Matthew Chapman, M'Lisa Colbert, Sarah Connors, Marlies Craig, Joanne Douwes, Jessica Espey, Jae Mee Lee, Robin Matthews, Sean O'Donoghue, Anne-Helene Prieur-Richard and Brenna Walsh for their support in compiling inputs to for the proceeding before, during and after the conference.

UCCRN was a key contributor to the conference and and the SSC.

Coordinator: Joyce Mavoungou and Marcus Mayr, Climate Change Planning Unit, UN-Habitat

Design and Layout: Freddie Maitaria Front & back cover photo: © Shutterstock

### FOREWORD

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Message from His Worship Mayor Don Iveson

Our city has been a gathering place for thousands of years of civilization, a place where diverse groups have come together to trade, share ideas and learn from one another. Edmonton was honoured to

host the inaugural CitiesIPCC conference as a continuation of this legacy, bringing together local leaders, global organizations and scientific experts to explore the challenges of climate change.

This was a conference of many firsts – the first time the scientific community focused its attention on the role of cities in combating climate change, the first time cities and city networks gathered with technical experts to align climate efforts, and the first concrete example of the multi-level collaboration enshrined in the Paris Agreement.

Cities are where innovation and progress happen. As hotbeds of research and collaboration, they are uniquely positioned to tackle the ever-evolving challenges of climate change. CitiesIPCC was an important step in bringing local government leaders and the scientific community together to address the challenges that lie ahead. Conversations and presentations at CitiesIPCC clearly demonstrated that municipalities must commit to a new kind of partnership with the scientific community – a partnership based on data, research and innovation – to guide investment and policy decisions. One of the most important outcomes from CitiesIPCC was the Edmonton Declaration – a city-focused document that reaffirms the importance of science-based policy and decision making. It recognizes that powerful change is possible through the unified and consistent efforts of government, businesses and the scientific community.

This summary report provides a snapshot of the CitiesIPCC conference, along with key recommendations to guide local governments towards a more sustainable future. It will help keep the City of Edmonton, as well as communities around the world, focused on our efforts to address climate change.

I would like to extend a resounding thank you to the organizations of CitiesIPCC and the many sponsors and supporters who helped to make this inaugural event a resounding success. The work we do today as a result of this conference will have an enduring impact on the future of cities – and the world.

Don Iveson Mayor

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The Paris Agreement in December 2015 has ushered in an era in which climate science is focusing increasingly on solutions to the challenges of climate change. There is also a growing awareness among both policymakers and the scientific community of the

role that non-state actors can play in addressing climate change.

At its 43rd Session in April 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya, the IPCC decided to recommend, within the scoping processes, a stronger integration of the assessment on the impacts of climate change on cities and their unique adaptation and mitigation opportunities. The Panel decided to include a Special Report on climate change and cities in the Seventh Assessment Report cycle, and to consider working with academia, urban practitioners, and relevant scientific bodies and agencies, to organize an international scientific conference on climate change and cities early in the Sixth Assessment Report cycle, in order to stimulate scientific reports and peer-reviewed publications on this subject.

A proposal for an International Conference on Climate Change and Cities, submitted to the Panel, was approved at its 44th Session in October 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Both cities and the scientific community are critical players in helping to identify solutions that not only address the challenges of climate change but also the broader sustainability imperatives of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The International Conference on Climate Change and Cities, held in Edmonton, Canada, in March 2018, brought these important players together to identify the critical knowledge gaps that need to be filled if the opportunity of urban climate action at scale is to be harnessed.

The IPCC welcomed the partnership with the nine other organizations in delivering this milestone event. The research agenda emerging from this conference will contribute to scientific literature in areas that future IPCC assessments can consider.

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Hoesung Lee Chair of the IPCC

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At UN-Habitat, we recognize climate change as one of the fundamental challenges faced by countries, cities and all human settlements around the globe. Cities, the people that live in them, and our common habitat, are vulnerable to climate change. This brings unprecedented

challenges, increasing the frequency and intensity of known disasters on one hand, and bringing new forms of disasters on the other. Losses in terms of property and economic assets; infrastructure destruction; and disruptions in people's lives and livelihoods are the consequences of climate change.

Often, it is people that are already living in disadvantaged locations that suffer the most. One must look no further than to informal settlements in developing countries to understand the challenge of protecting all people from climate change. At the same time, it is understood that human activities in cities are also the source of a significant portion of global greenhouse gas emissions. With the Paris Agreement as the guiding framework, positive action at the level closest to the people, is becoming the new norm and focus of the global community.

What are the options and solutions to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change in the world's diverse cities and human settlements – whether large and small, developed and emerging? As much as we need to embrace, scale-up and accelerate known climate solutions, we also need to be equally open and search for new solutions and innovation in climate action. We need to support science and knowledge, underpinning local climate action. To this end, we need to strengthen the ties between decision makers, practitioners and scientists to provide a rigorous evidence-base for better informed urban climate policy-making, as well as adaptation and mitigation action. In line with this, UN-Habitat is actively engaged in supporting science and innovation, contributing to scientific publications and supporting research and researchers. In 2017, we partnered with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other leading institutions in the field of cities and climate change to organize a dedicated International Conference on Climate Change and Cities – CitiesIPCC. This conference was in direct support of the development of a global research and action agenda, to advance the science, we need for the cities we want.

The CitiesIPCC conference in Edmonton, Canada in March 2018 brought together practitioners, policy makers and scientists to develop a global research agenda for advancing the science, and to inform the Intergovernmental-Panel on Climate Change about the state of knowledge today, as well as potential key areas of future focus in the field of cities and climate change.

The conference – and this publication, presenting its key findings – seeks to contribute to a positive and integrated engagement between the scientific community, urban practitioners and policy-makers. In today's reality, the way we plan, develop and manage our cities is crucial for sustainable development and for addressing the climate challenge.

UN-Habitat remains committed to implement the Research and Action Agenda in partnership with academia, urban practitioners, local authorities, and the scientific community.

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-Habitat

## ACRONYMS

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AR	Assessment Report
GHG	Greenhouse gases
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLPCs	Short-lived climate pollutants
SR	Special Report
SSC	Scientific Steering Committee
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WG	Working group
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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