



## Climate City Contract

# 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document

## Guidance and Explanations V2.1

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Document history			
Date	Version	Author	Changes
January 2023	V1	ICLEI	/
June 2023	V2	ICLEI	The template was amended to include a front-page note “The Commitments template is for guidance only. Cities are encouraged to adapt it to their circumstances, while remaining mindful of the CCC Checklist and guidance documents”.
November 2023	V2.1	ICLEI	<p>Each section was amended to open with a summary of expected information. Guiding questions were included for each template field (to be replaced with writer’s text).</p> <p>Footnotes were introduced throughout the template to provide definitions for uncommon terms and references to additional (external) guidance.</p> <p>Section “Purpose of this Guide”: Text was added to indicate that “The 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document should be concise and draw upon the detailed work presented in the Action Plan and Investment Plan annexes, aiming for a maximum of 10-15 pages excluding signatories’ contracts”.</p> <p>Section 4 (Process and underlying principles): “climate justice” was added to key principles.</p> <p>Section 5 “Signatories’ commitments”: A line was added to suggest highlighting additional signatories or the ones that withdrew from an iteration to the other one.</p> <p>Section 6 “Contracts” was edited to encourage the signatories to adhere to specific, time bound and measurable commitments that reference the 2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan and 2030 Climate Neutrality Investment Plan.</p> <p>The document was edited throughout with guidance to integrate regional/national stakeholder commitment(s) with defined roles, leveraging the multi-level governance engagement supported by NetZeroCities, CapaCities and other emerging national-level initiatives, and to provide examples of concrete incentives for national governments to support the CCC process.</p>



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## Purpose of this Guide

This guidance has been prepared for Mission Cities' Transition Teams to provide some background and prompts on how to prepare your **2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments (Core Contract)** document. The Commitments document is the core component of the Climate City Contract (CCC) and is supported by with the annexed 2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan and 2030 Climate Neutrality Investment Plan. The Climate City Contract is a living document and should be updated periodically to review its effectiveness, accountability to commitments, and to include new stakeholders and commitments in line with budgetary and monitoring cycles and citizen engagement processes.

The 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document captures the outcomes of the co-creation process with local, regional, and national stakeholders to establish new commitments and ways of working together to meet the 2030 climate neutrality challenge. The overall priorities aim to bring about systemic change in the city as a whole, including in the sectors responsible for most emissions in the city. Individual commitment(s) from contract signatories (described further below) contribute to achieving the overall ambition and strategic priorities.

The work on the Commitments document can be supported by the four phases in the NZC Climate Transition Map: *Build a strong Mandate*, *Understand the System*, and *Co-create a Portfolio*, as well as the cross-cutting process to *Activate an Inclusive Ecosystem for Change*.

This guidance document offers step-by-step options for how to work with the **2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document template** and what types of information should be provided for each section. The 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document should be concise and draw upon the detailed work presented in the Action Plan and Investment Plan annexes, aiming for a maximum of 10-15 pages excluding signatories' contracts.

The guidance document provides a structure that is aligned with the NZC Climate Transition Map and it is envisaged that it will align with the upcoming European Commission's Mission Label verification process. A comprehensive Climate City Contract should, at a minimum, include all the information indicated in the guidance and template. This guidance document is being refined and updated over time, responding and adapting to your needs during the implementation process and updated in accordance with the evolving Mission Label verification process. Additional resources, tools, and support offers for Mission Cities will also be developed and linked through the NZC Climate Transition Map and Knowledge Repository on the Mission Portal over time.



# 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments structure

## 1 Introduction

This introductory section is the place for you to describe what motivated you to join the EU Mission on 100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities and share your city's ambition as part of the Mission.

## 2 Goal: Climate neutrality by 2030

The goal of the Cities Mission is set and challenges you as one of the selected Mission Cities to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. This section should articulate your 2030 ambition and commitment as a whole city<sup>1</sup>, as well as mention, where applicable, any emission sources or districts within these administrative boundaries that are excluded from the target of climate neutrality by 2030<sup>2</sup>. Further details on exclusion areas should be included in the 2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan. If the emissions reduction target has changed in relation to your Expression of Interest for the Cities Mission, please include a rationale.

Your city's 2030 ambition should be supported by a Council decision, and ideally by a number of signatories (described in Section 5 and included in Appendix 1).

In this section you could also include what you expect to be the measurable co-benefits of working towards climate neutrality for your city, from improved air quality and increased access to green spaces and related health benefits to increased job opportunities, local innovation, energy independence, and financial savings.

## 3 Strategic priorities

In this section of the Commitment document, your city's Transition Team will share at least 3 or 4 **strategic systemic priorities** that will need to be implemented for your city to become climate neutral by 2030. These should be meaningful changes that will have a profound impact on reducing GHG emissions in your city, like *decarbonising the heating system in the city by 2030* or *generating 100% energy from renewables*.

If you need specific guidance on how to identify your strategic systemic priorities, please refer to the *Understand the System* phase of the NZC Climate Transition Map.

You are encouraged to set ambitious objectives that will bring about real measurable change and radically reduce GHG emissions. You should ideally provide a concrete timeline and monitorable targets for achieving these changes, as well as identify which stakeholders need to be involved and how.

## 4 Process and principles

In this section, you can summarise the systemic work process your city is undertaking to achieve the 2030 climate neutrality target, further detailed in the CCC Action Plan. You may want to also refer to the

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of the Cities Mission, the term city is used to refer to a geographical subnational jurisdiction ("local administrative unit") such as a town or a city that is governed by a local government as the legal entity of public administration, understanding that the institutions of local governments may vary from country to country and terminology used in national contexts may differ.

<sup>2</sup> By default, the participating city would commit the whole city or entity to become climate-neutral. However, where duly justified, the city may propose to exclude one or more district(s) or sources of emissions from the 2030 deadline, but in this case should commit to a strategy of climate neutrality for these districts as soon as possible, and of course no later than 2050. In this context, districts will be considered as neighbourhoods or zones of special interest of a city administered or governed by some type of "district council".

provisions for monitoring and joint learning with your transition team and relevant stakeholders<sup>3</sup>, including the intentions for updating the Climate City Contract. Describe the key principles that will guide your city in its Climate City Contract implementation. The CCC should encompass principles such as climate justice, multi-level governance approaches co-creation, innovation, stakeholder and citizen engagement.

## 5 Signatories' commitments

Include the list of signatories who are committing to help your city achieve climate neutrality by 2030. Strive for a diversity of private, public, and third sector actors. Climate City Contract signatories should include national and/or regional governments, where possible also leveraging agreements made through the multi-level governance engagement processes supported by NetZeroCities, CapaCities<sup>4</sup> and other emerging national-level initiatives. The info box below offers examples of concrete incentives for national governments to support the CCC process. The number and relevance of signatories is likely to increase over time. You should highlight any additional (or withdrawn) signatories in your future Climate City Contract iterations.

### Examples of concrete benefits of the CCC process for national governments

#### National-level reporting

- **Under the EU framework - Revision of National Energy and Climate Plans in Europe:** Under Article 11 of the regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, the European Commission mandated national governments to establish a multi-level and multi-stakeholder climate and energy dialogue to deliver on the clean energy transition and the European Green Deal. The CCC is a proven governance innovation tool that could enable national governments to facilitate such a dialogue, deepen connections with representatives of different sectors, and align climate action across all levels of government.
- **Under the UNFCCC framework:** Local governments are critical actors in the implementation and reporting of climate actions under the UNFCCC framework, including **National Communications** and **Biennial Reports**. Their involvement is essential for collecting data, implementing climate policies, and contributing to the overall efforts to combat climate change at the national and global levels.

#### Strengthened climate action monitoring and learning

- The CCC process encourages cities to plan, implement and monitor their climate actions in an integrated, strategic and holistic way. This can trigger a multi-level conversation on better alignment of indicators and lead to development of comprehensive national monitoring and learning frameworks that support implementation of climate interventions across all levels of governance. In the absence of national monitoring frameworks, the NetZeroCities Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning framework developed under the EU Cities Mission provides useful insights on how local, regional and national governments can better track, align and learn from their climate action.

#### New finance opportunities

- Investment plans developed by cities in the CCC process help estimate amounts of capital necessary to achieve climate neutrality and direct different finance-streams to concrete climate interventions. It encourages cities to experiment with innovative sustainable finance tools as well as with different models of partnerships. This provides national governments with valuable information on the scale of investments needed to achieve national targets and

<sup>3</sup> Learnings from monitoring your progress towards climate neutrality should be processed and shared with your transition team and stakeholders, in order to build a common understanding of how your Climate City Contract can be improved in future iterations.

<sup>4</sup> CapaCities runs from October 2022 to September 2024 – more information available here: <https://dutupartnership.eu/capacities/>



reduces financial burden on national governments through bringing in more private finance and experimenting with new ways of financing.

#### Standardisation

- The CCC process can play a crucial role in contributing to national standardisation efforts in many ways, for example, through collecting and sharing local data, testing new technologies and regulations, piloting national standardisation initiatives, and collecting input and feedback from residents and local communities.

## 6 Contract (Signatures)

In this section, your city's Transition Team should include the declarations of agreement with the 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitment signatories. The Commitments template includes a sample form to this end.

Individual signatory commitments should be concrete actions that will contribute the overall climate neutrality target in line with the strategic priorities. To be effective, the signatories' commitments should ideally be as specific as possible, time bound, and measurable, and reference the 2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan and the 2030 Climate Neutrality Investment Plan.



The 2030 Climate Neutrality Commitments document must be signed, at a minimum, by your city's Mayor or equivalent. However, it is strongly encouraged to engage as many signatories as possible in the process.