



GLOBAL COVENANT OF MAYORS ANNOUNCES COMMITMENT TO BUILD CITY RESEARCH & INNOVATION AGENDA

Co-Chairs Michael Bloomberg and Maroš Šefčovič are driving effort to provide cities with urban-focused research

Brussels, Belgium, 22 March 2018 – Today the Global Covenant of Mayors' Co-Chairs, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Climate Action Michael Bloomberg and European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič, **announced a bold new commitment to develop a City Research & Innovation Agenda to address critical knowledge, data and innovation gaps that will enable cities to take accelerated and more ambitious climate action.** This agenda will be co-developed by engaging cities and city networks as well as scientists and research institutions around the world, to complement the IPCC research agenda on the science of cities and climate change. The City Research and Innovation Agenda will be discussed with Mayors and Ministers alongside the third Mission Innovation Ministerial on May 23-24 in Malmö/Copenhagen with the goal to include cities' needs in national research agendas. It will be taken forward at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco this September.

In Europe last February, the 2018 Ceremony of the European Covenant of Mayors (the European chapter of the Global Covenant of Mayors) had a particular focus on 'Speeding up Innovation in Cities', in the presence of Bertrand Piccard, President of Solar Impulse, as well as on finding synergies between cities and industry to speed up the clean energy transition. And at the global level, this initiative builds off the first of its kind CitiesIPCC Cities & Climate Change Science Conference that took place in March 2018 in Edmonton, Canada, where leading scientists, urban policy makers and practitioners gathered to discuss the urgent need to generate a new global body of knowledge on cities and climate change to further innovation in action. The [Edmonton Declaration](#) initiated a call to the global scientific community to step up their efforts in support of evidence based city climate action.

And today, **Global Covenant Co-Chairs Michael Bloomberg and Maroš Šefčovič will make the commitment to lead a jointly developed response, additionally mobilizing the science, technology & innovation community, including the private sector, to join city policy makers, scientists and practitioners.** This new initiative is a moon shot to mobilize resources and knowledge generation on cities and climate change. It will provide [the science we need](#) to make our cities more livable, prosperous and healthy and to ensure the successful implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The City Research and Innovation Agenda will **focus on some of the most critical areas to drive climate action in cities**, including frontier-research on low-carbon urban infrastructure, e.g. **smart grids, access to affordable green energy, low carbon heating and cooling of buildings, e-mobility and integrated public transport systems, as well as adaptation responses such as resilient infrastructure and early warning systems.** It will support national-based decisions on climate change mitigation at the local level as well as resilience measures to help cities cope with the effects of climate change. And it will provide local governments and practitioners with city level data to help them understand where they stand and how to use smart data for inclusive governance and financing, better planning and more ambitious action, with a special focus on the rapidly urbanizing areas in the Global South.



Governments have been committing significant resources in support of climate science for the past 30 years, but rarely have these efforts focused specifically on the scale of local governments, where much of the action must take place. The initiative will also help deliver on the America's Pledge commitment of cities, business and universities to ensure that the United States deliver the country's ambitious climate goals of the Paris agreement.

Vice President Šefčovič will host a cities roundtable with mayors and ministers during the third Mission Innovation Ministerial on May 23-24 in Malmö/Copenhagen to galvanize climate science and create the next generation of research and innovation. The European Commission co-holds the Mission Innovation presidency in 2018 and will work with UN Special Envoy Mike Bloomberg through the Global Covenant of Mayors to put cities on the agenda of Mission Innovation and mobilize research and development resources on all levels - national, sub-national, academic and in the private sector.

QUOTES:

Michael Bloomberg, Co-Chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Climate Action: Mayors recognize that if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. Data allows them to identify challenges and opportunities - and respond. This new collaborative effort gives cities access to critical resources that will help them do more, faster, to take on climate change.

Maroš Šefčovič, Co-Chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors, Vice President of the European Commission: Cities are experimenting with innovative solutions. It is in cities that most of the technological innovations and nature based solutions will be deployed to increase resilience and improve the well-being of citizens, that charging points for urban electric vehicles will be rolled out, that decentralised renewable energy production will take off and smart buildings in energy positive neighbourhoods will be constructed. This research and innovation agenda will create a pathway to channel existing funding commitments around research and innovation and develop a new research pipeline that will mobilize resources and knowledge generation for cities. I am looking forward to the Mission Innovation Ministerial on May 23-24 in Malmö/Copenhagen where we will further develop this ambitious agenda.

Don Iveson, Mayor of Edmonton, Canada: Local research is essential in reducing a city's environmental footprint and in developing locally tailored climate actions and solutions. In order for Edmonton and cities around the world to lead in the global effort to address climate change, sound research and city data is imperative. That's why we were pleased to host the recent CitiesIPCC conference in Edmonton, and the Edmonton Declaration speaks to furthering that commitment around the world.

Seth Schultz, Co-Chair of the Scientific Steering Committee for the CitiesIPCC Conference: The impacts of climate change are already being felt in our urban areas, and the next few years are critical for determining how effectively we will rise to the challenge of protecting our cities. However, we can't undertake this work blindly. We need billions of dollars of research invested in the most important areas of inquiry so we can use precious time and resources in the most efficient and targeted way possible. And this research won't just help save our cities – it will also improve them for generations to come.



Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Co-Chair UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN): Cities and urban areas are the pivot around which inclusive, productive, safe, and climate resilient sustainable development will be delivered over the next few decades. This will happen through the collective efforts of communities, tens of thousands of local and regional governments, enterprises, universities and other stakeholders in local to global partnership with national governments, UN, intergovernmental and international institutions. This will require transformatory changes in governance, financing and behavior; that will be underpinned by a new urban knowledge and science, built on rapid advances in sustainability and climate science, across the world.

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Note to editors

About the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy formally brings together the Compact of Mayors and the Covenant of Mayors, the world's two primary initiatives assisting cities and local governments in their transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient economy, and helping demonstrate their global impact. Led by UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Climate Action, Michael R. Bloomberg, and European Commission Vice President, Maroš Šefčovič, in partnership with local, regional and global city networks, the Global Covenant has thousands of city signatories across 6 continents and more than 120 countries, representing over 700 million people or nearly 10% of the global population. Learn more at: www.globalcovenantofmayors.org.

About Mission Innovation

Mission Innovation (MI) is a global initiative of 22 countries and the European Union to dramatically accelerate global clean energy innovation. As part of the initiative, participating countries have committed to seek to double their governments' clean energy research and development (R&D) investments over five years, while encouraging greater levels of private sector investments in transformative clean energy technologies. These additional resources will dramatically accelerate the availability of the advanced technologies that will define a future global energy mix that is clean, affordable, and reliable. Mission Innovation was announced on November 30, 2015, as world leaders came together in Paris to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change.

About CitiesIPCC

The CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference's aims are to improve scientific knowledge and to stimulate research underpinning effective and efficient urban responses to climate change, as well as to provide inputs to the products of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This conference brought together representatives from academia, scientific bodies, other research organizations and agencies; member states of the United Nations; city and regional governments; and urban and climate change practitioners and policy-makers.



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