



**22 FEBRUARY 2018**

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## **GLOBAL CLIMATE RESEARCH AGENDA TO BE ANNOUNCED AT CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE CONFERENCE IN EDMONTON**

**On March 5-7, the City of Edmonton will host the first-of-its-kind CitiesIPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference, where scientists, policymakers, researchers, and development experts will gather to advance global understanding of climate change, its impacts on cities, and the critical role localities play in solving this challenge.** The conference will be marked by the establishment of a global research agenda, which will support a new special report on climate change and cities prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The agenda will also create a blueprint for new scientific research supporting effective climate action strategies in cities around the world.

Co-sponsored by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the conference will assess the current state of academic and practice-based understanding of cities and climate change, identifying key knowledge gaps to inspire new research in this area. By forging stronger partnerships among the more than 750 leaders, innovators, and influencers attending, the conference will lay a solid foundation for increased global collaboration on scientific research, funding, and knowledge-sharing.

“Climate change is a uniquely global challenge; it doesn’t discriminate based on geography, and so we see its effects in every corner of the world,” said **IPCC Co-Chair Dr. Debra Roberts**. “Our response must also be global, uniting people across cities, countries and continents. That enables us to share best practices based in sound science to meet global commitments that will create a more sustainable and just urban world for future generations.”

More than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas, and as centres of both high population density and economic activity, cities around the world are highly vulnerable to the most dangerous and damaging impacts of climate change. For these same reasons, however, cities are fighting back, as the scale of ongoing urban expansion creates more impetus for meaningful cooperation and the ability to pursue more ambitious climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. The conference will highlight the crucial role that cities are currently playing and will continue to play in the fight to stop global climate change.

“Cities are already leading the charge to combat climate change and Edmonton is proud to stand side by side with the other cities around the world taking courageous action,” said **Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson**. “With the majority of the world’s population living in urban centres, we need

to strive to make cities even healthier and more sustainable to live in and tackling climate change is part of the solution. Edmonton is thrilled to host this conference and be part of an exciting opportunity to work together with the scientific community and develop innovative solutions that will transform our cities for the better.”

In recent years, the United Nations has championed global cooperation and ambitious programs such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals to tackle some of the world’s most pressing problems. As it does so, the important role of rigorous, peer-reviewed science as a foundation for planning and implementation has come into sharp focus. In their work to meet these commitments, cities have become incubators of innovative, science-based solutions to global climate change.

“Cutting-edge scientific research is essential to solving global climate change, and cities are where that science gets translated into action oriented policy,” said **Seth Schultz, C40 Cities’ Director of Science and Innovation and Co-Chair of the Scientific Steering Committee** overseeing the conference. “Though rapid urbanization continues to exacerbate the effects of climate change, cities also represent an opportunity that will allow us to tackle climate change at a transformational scale. An ambitious global research agenda on cities and climate science is a critical step in ensuring that we generate knowledge at the speed and scale with which cities need to take action while simultaneously making our cities better places to live.”

The three-day conference, organized by a Scientific Steering Committee made up of engineering, science, humanities, and urban development experts, will focus on four major themes:

- **Cities and Climate Change** – Global commitments like the Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development goals, New Urban Agenda, and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction require cities to implement new sustainable development plans to adapt and respond to climate change. This theme will explore gaps in knowledge of climate mitigation and adaptation in the context of meeting these global commitments, including the costs of climate action/inaction, equity and justice issues related to climate change, and the imperative for actions resulting in low-carbon, climate-resilient, sustainable development.
- **Urban Emissions, Impacts, and Vulnerabilities** – Cities are some of the largest contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions, and as such, experience some of the worst effects of climate change. This theme will explore current and future urban emission drivers, urban climate impacts, and climate risks and vulnerabilities to provide science-based pathways for cities to pursue emissions reductions and resilience strategies.
- **Solutions for the Transition to Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Cities** – With the advent of advanced technological and scientific solutions to climate change, this session will explore the transformative nature of cutting-edge sustainable development strategies. The theme will include discussions about disruptive technology, urban infrastructure and design, and institutional innovation.
- **Enabling Transformative Climate Action in Cities** – City climate action takes place in the context of diverse social, environmental, economic, and developmental realities. This theme will explore new and existing avenues for enabling climate action that addresses

poverty and inequality, re-shapes power relations, and re-conceptualizes our vision of what cities are, could be, and should be.

In addition to the **IPCC**, the other CitiesIPCC partner organizations providing practical support to the Cities and Climate Change Science conference are **C40 Cities, Cities Alliance, Future Earth, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment ), UN-Habitat, and World Climate Research Program (WCRP).**

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#### **Notes:**

##### **About C40 Cities**

C40 Cities connects more than 90 of the world's greatest cities, representing 650+ million people and one quarter of the global economy. Created and led by cities, C40 is focused on tackling climate change and driving urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, while increasing the health, wellbeing and economic opportunities of urban citizens. The current chair of the C40 is Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo; and three-term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the Board. C40's work is made possible by our three strategic funders: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), and Realdania. To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit [www.c40.org](http://www.c40.org), follow us on Twitter [@c40cities](https://twitter.com/c40cities) or Instagram [@c40cities](https://www.instagram.com/c40cities) and like us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/C40Cities>.

##### **About Cities Alliance**

Cities Alliance is the global partnership supporting cities to deliver sustainable development. Working in cities where it matters most, the Brussels-based organisation promotes long-term programmatic approaches that are focused on strengthening local skills and capacity, developing national urban policies, investing in infrastructure, enabling strategic city planning, and engaging citizens. Its diverse membership includes multilateral organisations, national governments, international associations of local government, international NGOs, private sector, foundations, and academia.

##### **About City of Edmonton**

Nestled on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River, Edmonton is home to nearly one million people from all walks of life including Indigenous people and new Canadians. Our city's strength is founded in this diversity and the varied languages and traditions that create our cultural fabric. Home to six post-secondary institutions, humming research parks and creative start-up organizations, Edmonton is a international destination for advanced technologies, healthcare and green energy. Edmontonians enjoy a strong connection with nature and work together to adapt to the reality of climate change and create environmental sustainability and resilience for future generations.

##### **About Future Earth**

Future Earth is an international platform of research, innovation and collaboration to support and accelerate transformations to a sustainable world. It operates from five global hubs – in Montreal, Stockholm, Colorado, Paris and Tokyo – and is connected to over a dozen regional and national offices across the globe. The Governing Council of Future Earth is composed of the [International Council for Science](https://www.icsu.org/) (ICSU), the [International Social Science Council](https://www.issc.org/) (ISSC), the [Belmont Forum](https://www.belmontforum.org/) of funding agencies, the [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization](https://www.unesco.org/) (UNESCO), the [United Nations](https://www.un.org/)

[Environment Programme](#) (UNEP), the [United Nations University](#) (UNU), [Sustainable Development Solutions Network \(SDSN\)](#), the [STS forum](#) and the [World Meteorological Organization](#).

#### **About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability**

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability is the leading global network of more than 1,500 cities, towns and regions committed to building a sustainable future, impacting over 25 percent of the global urban population.

#### **About Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a partnership of scientists and policymakers. It is the international body for assessing the science related to climate change. The IPCC was set up in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide policymakers with regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation. IPCC assessments provide a scientific basis for governments at all levels to develop climate-related policies.

#### **About United Cities and Local Government (UCLG)**

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is the world organization of local and regional governments and their associations, representing and defending their interests on the world stage. UCLG's network of members represents 70% of the world's total population and is present in all world regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, the Middle East and West Asia, and North America; organized into 7 regional sections, 1 metropolitan section and 1 Forum of regions. This network includes over 240,000 towns, cities, regions and metropolises, and over 175 associations of local and regional governments in 140 countries. Among UCLG's key areas of political interest are: local democracy, climate change and environmental protection, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, local finance, urban development and city diplomacy in peace building.

#### **About UN Environment**

The United Nations Environment Programme is the leading global environmental authority. The work of UN Environment encompasses: assessing environmental conditions and trends, developing environmental instruments and strengthening institutions for environmental management.

#### **About UN-Habitat**

UN-Habitat is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

#### **About the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**

The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) mobilizes scientific and technical expertise from academia, civil society, and the private sector to support practical problem solving for sustainable development at local, national, and global scales. The SDSN has been operating since 2012 under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General. The SDSN is building national and regional networks of knowledge institutions, solution-focused thematic networks, and the [SDG Academy](#), an online university for sustainable development.

#### **About World Climate Research Program (WCRP)**

World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) – co-sponsored by the International Council for Science (ICSU), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) – is the primary coordination mechanism for international climate research. WCRP focuses on fundamental and underpinning cutting-edge climate science where international coordination enables scientific advances that would not happen otherwise; its research and climate modeling efforts provide the foundation for national and international climate assessments. WCRP serves as the community's preferred voice advocating the importance of climate research; for use in an increasing range of practical applications of direct relevance, benefit and value to society.