2020 Annual Report
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It is our pleasure to present you our 2020 Annual Report with ICLEI’s global new corporate logo and visual design, in celebration of our 30th anniversary.

2020 was a unique and remarkably tough year - with both the coronavirus pandemic and climate change being a global threat that countries around the world are trying to grapple with. Despite having reported dramatic changes in their works, ICLEI’s global network of local and regional governments have not loosen their commitment to sustainability, and are striving to build back the society better with socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable recoveries.

Reviewing 2020, the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat has expanded partnerships with local governments and institutions in the region, and continued to deliver projects and programs tailored to local needs. In the meantime, we are also honored to have welcomed the newly elected ICLEI East Asia Regional Committee Members of 2021-2024 term on board.

Like previous years, we continued carrying out research projects, delivering capacity building activities, and facilitating East Asian cities’ engagement in international events under our flagship programs like the East Asia Clean Air Cities Network (EACACN) and the Green Circular Cities Coalition (GCCC), and have managed to leverage additional resources to strengthen their frameworks, in providing better services and supports to the participating local governments. These programs are designed to accelerate local governments’ in transition towards low-emission and circular development.

ICLEI East Asia has also expanded our work with Ulaanbaatar. With our technical support, the city completed its first climate data reporting on the CDP-ICLEI platform in December, and is determined to persistently improve its building energy efficiency via retrofitting projects.

In the run-up to the 15th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15), which is to take place in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China, ICLEI East Asia expanded our activities in relation to urban biodiversity and nature-based solutions. In 2020, we officially launched the UrbanByNature program in China together with other ICLEI offices, and have kick-started cooperation with the Sino-German Urbanisation Partnership in promoting knowledge exchange on sustainable urban renewal experiences between Chinese and German cities. In the meantime, we are also working closely with the CBD Secretariat, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of P.R.C, Yunnan Province, and Kunming City in preparing for co-hosting the 7th Global Biodiversity Summit for Local and Subnational Governments during the CBD COP15.

Last, but not least, under the Resilient Development pathway, ICLEI contributed in developing the Technical Guidelines for Urban Climate Change Adaptation (UCCA) for Chinese Cities under a technical assistant project funded by the Asian Development Bank, and have joined hands with UNDRR in delivering training to Chinese cities to strengthen their capacities on disaster risk reduction, as well as on designing and implementing urban resilience in the context of climate change.

Cities of ICLEI are leading the way towards global sustainability. ICLEI East Asia is committed to accelerating these efforts with work that starts on the ground, across the region. With the five ICLEI pathways as a guidance, we will continue to support local and subnational governments in the region to design integrated solutions and scale up sustainable urban development.
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network of more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125 countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. Our Members and team of experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability.

ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Hosted by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, ICLEI East Asia has developed local and regional programs and exchange platforms to accelerate sustainable and low carbon development in the region, including the East Asia Clean Air Cities Network, the Green Circular Cities Coalition, the UrbanByNature program, as well as Urban Resilience. By providing technical consulting, training and information services to build capacity and share knowledge, we support local government Members in China, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Korea, and Mongolia in pursuing sustainable urban development.

To further extend our support to Chinese cities, ICLEI East Asia opened the Beijing Office in 2018.

Membership

Globally, ICLEI Membership is active in 124 countries worldwide. By the end of 2020, 91 local governments in the East Asian region have joined the global network.

New Member

Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province in Southwest China, has been a frontier in fostering low carbon development and green transition. During the past few years, ICLEI has worked with Chengdu on topics including urban resilience, co-benefits of air pollution control and climate change, as well as sustainable urban renewable, and has supported the city in featuring its Park City Initiative at the international level. With Chengdu officially joining the global network, ICLEI is looking to further deepen the relationship with the city, and support branding its efforts, experiences and achievements via ICLEI’s international projects, training opportunities, and various other advocacy channels.

Donghu Park in Chengdu / Photo by Daderot, Wikimedia Commons
ICLEI Council

ICLEI is democratically governed by our Members through the ICLEI Council -- the overarching decision making and guiding body. The Council approves the ICLEI Strategic Plan with a six-year scope, and has the sole power to amend the Charter and elect the Global Executive Committees -- the GexCom -- portfolio seats.

Chaired by elected President and Vice Presidents, the GexCom is composed of up to 6 appointed Members and Representatives from the 9 Regional Executive Committees -- the RexComs -- and represents ICLEI towards international institutions and has the authority to make strategic decisions concerning the organization.

ICLEI East Asia RexCom

This year, ICLEI in every region has elected their own RexCom members to make strategic decisions concerning the network in the region for the 2021-2024 term. After finalizing the election process in September, ICLEI East Asia hosted the virtual the 9th RexCom Meeting on 26 November, bringing together the newly elected Members to catalyze actions to help the Region to maintain climate ambition along the recovery.

On this occasion, RexCom members, advisors and ICLEI offices demonstrated their commitment and efforts to support the global network's development and operations in the region, and presented their plans and proposals to drive ICLEI's agenda in the region despite the challenges brought by the novel pandemic. This meeting helped consolidate the regional strategy and work plan in 2021 to be implemented by the joint actions of ICLEI offices under the guidance and support of the RexCom.
2020 ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

**ICLEI-UNDRR Resilient Cities Training for Chengdu**
7 JAN / Chengdu, China

**Green Circular Cities Coalition Turku City Study Tour to Japan**
21-24 JAN / Tokyo & Yokohama, Japan

**Online Seminar on Belt and Road Sustainable Cities Building Livable Cities in Post COVID-19 Time**
7 AUG / Chengdu, China + Virtual Event

**Capacity Building on Integrating Air Pollution & Climate Change Planning in Cities: Chengdu**
7 SEP / Chengdu, China + Virtual Event

**2020 Beijing International Forum for Metropolitan Clean Air and Climate Actions**
7 SEP / Beijing, China + Virtual Event

**URA Science-Policy Dialogue Series Integrated Urban Rural Development Practice in China and Germany**
23 SEP / Virtual Event

**Daring Cities 2020 Bold Circular Development as Daring Climate Action**
12 OCT / Virtual Event

**Daring Cities 2020 Chinese - German Knowledge Exchange on Sustainable Development and Urban Renewal**
23 OCT / Virtual Event

**4th High-Level International Forum on Sustainable Urban Development Enhance Urban Resilience in Green and Healthy Approaches - Nature-based Solutions as a Means**
17 NOV / Chengdu, China + Virtual Event

**9th ICLEI East Asia RexCom Meeting**
26 NOV / Virtual Meeting

**Sustainable Urban Renewal - Experience from Chinese and German Cities: Dortmund**
2 DEC / Virtual Event

**2020 Green Development Forum & 8th Shenzhen International Low Carbon City Forum**
7-8 DEC / Virtual Event

**International Urban Resilience Forum Seoul 2020**
9 DEC / Seoul, Korea + Virtual Event

**ADB Technical Exchange Event on Mainstreaming Urban Climate Change Adaptation in China**
16-17 DEC / Virtual Event
In this urban era, cities are centers of opportunity and prosperity where innovation sparks and takes root. But, at the same time, cities and their surrounding regions are also on the front lines of global change.

Local and regional governments across the ICLEI network have recognized the warning signs of global challenges, and have responded through the ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision 2018-2024, which lays out five interconnected pathways of how the network drives and scales up sustainable urban development in the swiftly urbanizing world.

The five ICLEI pathways towards low emission, circular, nature-based, resilient and equitable development are designed to create systemic change. They serve as a basis for sustainable urban development that considers the complexity of urban systems, and provide a framework enabling local and regional governments to think holistically and design integrated solutions that balance the patterns of human life and the built and natural environments.

ICLEI East Asia incorporates different pathways and helps local and regional governments advance sustainable urban development. Often, our activities are guided by a predominant pathway or set of pathways. But we design our works to integrate as many pathways as possible into any given activity, such as a project, partnership or initiative.
East Asia is one of the most polluted regions in the world due to swift urbanization and industrialization. Managed by ICLEI East Asia, the regional inter-city cooperation platform East Asia Clean Air Cities launched by local governments from Korea, China, Japan and Mongolia in 2016, has grown into a network of 15 local governments and various partners committed to promote clean air actions.

To provide better support and service, ICLEI East Asia has managed to raise additional resources and expanded the program by establishing the East Asia Clean Air Cities Network (EACACN) Secretariat in November 2020, which will focus further on project activities, and leverage more partners’ and stakeholders’ support on local actions and disseminate East Asian cities’ best practices in accelerating clean air actions.

Knowledge exchange and International Engagement

EACACN supports its members to showcase their local clean air actions and achievements by facilitating their participation in international forums and events.

In response to the first International Clean Air Day of blue skies on 7 September, EACACN supported its member cities Suwon (with the support of ICLEI Korea) and Ulaanbaatar to share their local air quality action and achievements via the #CleanAirForAll campaign led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Like previous years, ICLEI East Asia was also supported the Beijing Municipal Ecology and Environment Bureau in organizing the 2020 Beijing International Forum for Metropolitan Clean Air and Climate Actions. Themed “Synergistic Clean Air and Climate Action in the Energy and Transportation Sectors,” the online-offline hybrid Forum invited representatives from California, London, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, and Hong Kong, as well as experts from research institutes to exchange and share the air quality and climate planning goals, measures, and achievements of their cities, with a special focus on the co-control of air pollutants and GHG emissions.
Beijing-Seoul Bilateral Research on Air Quality Management

Under the frame of Beijing-Seoul Joint Committee, ICLEI has completed a bilateral research project on the comparison of air quality control policies between Beijing and Seoul, with a special focus on the fields of boiler replacement, vehicle control, fugitive dust management, and seasonal control. The results of the study were first presented during the 2020 Beijing International Forum for Metropolitan Clean Air and Climate Actions. For the next step, ICLEI East Asia will further seek exposure to present the key findings, lessons learned and recommendations generated from the project.

Integrating Air Quality and Climate Planning in Cities in Asia

Air pollution and climate change are two of the most pressing environmental issues confronting cities in Asia. With a range of practical actions existing, there is a huge opportunity for cities to advance climate change mitigation while addressing air pollution through integrated planning.

Funded by the Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) between 2019-2020, ICLEI East Asia, Clean Air Asia (CAA), and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) co-developed a training curriculum program for cities in Asia to incorporate short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) reductions and climate change into policy processes.

The curriculum introduces successful local governments’ practices, including the experiences from three metropolises in the region - Beijing, Seoul, and Tokyo. As part of the deliverables, ICLEI East Asia delivered an online training session to Chengdu using the curriculum in September. Themed “Integrating Air Pollution and Climate Change Planning in Cities”, the session provided around 30 officials from the municipal government and its relevant entities with the latest knowledge on SLCPs, methods for quantifying and integrating co-benefits of climate change and air quality control into policy and decision-making, as well as good practices and lessons.

The curriculum was also used in the training sessions delivered to Santa Rosa of the Philippines and Ulannbaatar of Mongolia by project partners. ICLEI East Asia will further use this project deliverables to provide support to more local governments.
Asia LEDS Partnership

The Asia Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) Partnership is a voluntary regional network of individuals, governmental and non-governmental organizations active in designing, promoting, and/or implementing LEDS.

Under the Partnership, ICLEI East Asia produced two case studies, one on Beijing’s Emission Trade System (ETS), and one on building energy efficiency and thermal retrofitting in Ulaanbaatar. The case studies showcase the latest development of the two cities’ achievement in reducing GHG emissions as of 2020, and will be released by the Partnership Secretariat in early 2021. Webinars on these cases are under preparation.

Building Efficiency in Ulaanbaatar

Mongolia updates its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) with a more ambitious mitigation target of reducing 22.7% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, compared to the business as usual scenario. The new mitigation target is a leapfrog on the 14% goal from the country’s earlier NDC.

ICLEI East Asia has been working closely with Mongolia’s capital city Ulaanbaatar since 2017, to support the city in delivering its commitment to improve building efficiency and to participate in a variety of relevant programs and activities.

Building Efficiency Accelerator Deep Dive Program

Ulaanbaatar joined the Building Efficiency Accelerator (BEA) – a public-private collaboration that turns global expertise into action to accelerate local government implementation of building efficiency policies under the UN Sustainable Energy for All initiative - in 2017, and was further selected for a deep dive program.

Under the BEA Deep Dive Program, ICLEI East Asia and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) worked together with Ulaanbaatar to develop a series of animated videos and testimonial interviews with residents living in retrofitted buildings, aiming to raise public awareness about the importance of building efficiency.

With support from partner organizations and ICLEI East Asia, Ulaanbaatar has completed several thermo-technical retrofitting projects, including improving the external insulation of an environmental education center and 24 building blocks. The city has committed to further retrofitting all the remaining precast buildings. According to the simulation developed by the World Resource Institute (WRI), the cumulative energy savings from retrofitting will reach 2.9 million MWh by 2030, which is equivalent to 3 million tonnes of carbon reduction.

Energy Performance Contracting for Residential Retrofitting

The proposal of the “Energy Performance Contracting for Residential Retrofitting in Ulaanbaatar City” project, co-developed by GGGI Mongolia and ICLEI East Asia to create a financing mechanism for the city to retrofit 375 residential building blocks, has entered the deep preparation phase and submitted an interim report to the NAMA Facility in 2020. Despite the impact of COVID-19, the project team has managed to carry
Cities are responsible for around 70% of global energy-related GHG emissions, and are among the most vulnerable areas to climate change impacts. The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM) is the largest global alliance for city climate leadership, uniting over 10,000 cities and local governments and 100+ partners who share a long-term vision of supporting voluntary action to combat climate change and towards a resilient and low-emission society.

With over 50% of Mongolia’s national population residing in the capital city Ulaanbaatar, the city’s efforts on climate mitigation and adaptation have significant impacts on achieving the country’s Nationally Determined Contribution. Ulaanbaatar joined GCoM in March 2020, and has committed to taking ambitious climate actions. With ICLEI’s technical support, the city has completed its first climate data reporting on the CDP-ICLEI unified platform in December the same year, and is currently working on drafting a climate change sub-national program through science-based approaches.

To further support sub-national governments in Mongolia in reducing GHG emissions and fostering local climate resilience, ICLEI East Asia also prepared the exclusive “ICLEI-GCoM Cities’ Climate Data Training” for local government specialists from the 6 selected cities and provinces. The training is delivered through an online learning platform where participants can watch the pre-recorded video lectures at their convenience, and all training materials have been translated into Mongolian. It aims to equip participants with better understanding of the importance of data in cities’ climate strategies and investments, and to familiarize them with GCoM initiatives. In addition, Seoul - the GCoM champion city in the region - was also invited to share its valuable experiences in climate data management and its engagement in GCoM. The training was endorsed by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Mongolia and the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar, and was supported by local non-profit organizations Healthy City Network of Mongolia and Climate Campaign.

Knowledge Sharing

As part of the output of the Building Efficiency Accelerator (BEA) project, ICLEI East Asia coordinated the translation of the Building Efficiency Targets Playbook, the Codes Playbook, and the Renovations Playbook into Korean, Simplified and Traditional Chinese with the support of the ICLEI Korea Office and the Kaohsiung Capacity Center. These Playbooks provide step-by-step guidelines and case briefings of how cities can improve building efficiency. The Simplified Chinese version of the Playbooks are available on ICLEI East Asia’s website.

out several small-scale stakeholder engagement and consultation meetings and strengthened endorsements from ministries and the municipality. More than 2,000 households showed their interests in supporting the project. The project consortium will continue to push forward for the final submission of the deep preparation phase in June 2021.
Ambitious City Promises

Sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Conservation (BMU), the ICLEI World Secretariat and the Southeast Asia Secretariat have supported selected cities in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam on developing an ambitious local climate change action plan since 2017. As knowledge transfer partners and technical assistants, ICLEI East Asia and the Seoul Metropolitan Government have delivered a training program to the participating cities, assisting them in establishing achievable and measurable indicators and stakeholder networks through working group discussions. In 2020, ICLEI East Asia and Seoul completed the review of the first draft of Jakarta, Pasig, and Hanoi's city promise, following Seoul's model of inclusive, low emission oriented, community-led plan.

In addition, Hanoi and Jakarta updated its GHG inventory up-to date successfully and based on the discussions up until 2019, Hanoi has selected air quality as its priority in 2020, while Jakarta and Pasig have chosen energy efficiency. Along with the newly established citizen participatory platform and each city's focused priority, the project implementers including ICLEI East Asia now seek opportunities in relation to these prioritized areas with a strong commitment to keep the project momentum, even after the conclusion of the project in June 2021.

ICLEI-SHRDC Capacity Building Program

ICLEI East Asia has been co-organizing annual training on urban sustainability for local government officials in the region with the Seoul Human Resource Development Center (SHRDC) since 2016. However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, ICLEI and SHRDC have cancelled the training in 2020, and are planning to resume the program in April 2021 virtually for Chinese Cities. The training will especially incorporate a green recovery agenda aspect such as the sharing of Seoul's Green New Deal and governance structure to best meet the interest of the audience.
To support cities moving towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient, and circular economy, ICLEI East Asia launched the Green Circular Cities Coalition in 2019, presenting an opportunity for ambitious cities to become global leaders in urban circular transitions.

Coalition Development

As one of the annual activities of the Green Circular Cities Coalition, ICLEI East Asia and the GIZ IWM NAMA Project co-hosted the webinar “Bold Circular Development as Daring Climate Action” during Daring Cities 2020, attracting over 60 participants from China and overseas. On this occasion, representatives from Essen, Shanxi Province, Suzhou, and Hong Kong, as well as experts from Tsinghua University, GIZ, and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, shared cities’ experiences in utilizing industrial waste circularity and food waste recovery at the local level, and how the measures contribute to their climate action goals.
Turku City Study Tour to Japan

To assist member cities in having deeper mutual understanding on each other’s circular development works, and to identify a common ground for future collaboration and peer-learning, ICLEI East Asia and ICLEI Japan co-facilitated a study tour for delegates from Turku of Finland to Japan on 21-24 January 2020, connecting them with local government departments and institutions in Tokyo and Yokohama. Through a series of workshops, bilateral dialogues, and site visits to key local project facilities, delegates from the three cities all noticed that the integration of circular economy, climate action and biodiversity is being highly addressed, with a variety of projects and initiatives having been piloted with the intention to deepening systematic solutions. In addition, the cities have all highlighted the importance of residents’ and businesses’ engagement.

Following the study tour, Yokohama subsequently accepted Turku’s challenge to host the parallel 1.5-Degree Life Video Competition in Japan in December 2020. Youths in the two cities were invited to share their best tips on climate-friendly living by uploading creative video clips to social media for public voting. ICLEI was excited to facilitate the two cities’ exchange extending from government officials to residents.

SUN Institute Project

In 2020, ICLEI and the SUN Institute joined hands to re-evaluate ICLEI’s stance and stock-taken its offers in the Circular Development Pathway. As one of the main deliverables of the project, ICLEI has launched its brand new ICLEI Circulars platform in April 2021. The ICLEI Circulars platform consists of three regional hubs, and the ICLEI Beijing Office is leading the content development of the China Hub, with a special focus on reviewing the priorities.

Knowledge Sharing

During the World Circular Economy Forum on 28 September, ICLEI East Asia assisted Beijing E-Twon to participate in one Forum session to showcase its “market-oriented” collaborative method through which the district managers interact with investors to promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

In addition, based on the Study on International Experiences in Pursuing Zero Waste conducted for the Foreign Economic Cooperation Office of China’s Ministry of Ecology and Environment in 2019, a series of case stories were produced covering the legal framework and policy design of waste management and circular development in EU, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, and Japan, together with examples of city actions in these countries. The series was shared with local government officials and partners in China via ICLEI East Asia’s official WeChat account.
and needs of Chinese cities through the lens of circular economy. The project team has showcased Beijing, Shenzhen, Shanghai, and Suzhou cities’ circular approaches, helped identify leading cities’ - Changchun, Chengdu, Datong, Hong Kong, Shenzhen, and Tianjin - needs, and explored potential interventions during the inception phase of the project. ICLEI will further dive into developing concrete projects together with Chinese cities, and look for opportunities to promote bilateral collaboration between cities in China and Germany in the next phase.

Regional Circular Cities Research

Circular Food System in Cities Project
80% of food is expected to be consumed in cities by 2050, and the amount of food waste and loss is exponentially increasing. Being aware of the food culture and the high urbanization rate in the region, the Secretariat applied ICLEI’s circular development 5Rs framework to investigate the urban food circular economy practices in Seoul, Hiroshima, and Sapporo. The outcome will be synthesized as the Best Practices of Circular Food Production and Consumption in Japan and Korea: A Handbook For Local Governments, scheduled for publication in 2021. By unpacking the three frontrunner cities’ policies and strategies on urban agriculture, and food loss and waste reduction, the handbook will provide invaluable references for other local governments in the region to kick-start their journey towards circular food systems. The project is funded by the Konrad Adenauer.

Plastic and Food Waste in Ulaanbaatar
The recycling rate in Mongolia was reported less than 10% in 2018, but the country has set an ambitious goal to reach a waste recycling rate of 30% by 2025, and 40% by 2030 in the Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision-2030. To help accelerate the improvement of plastics or/and food waste recycling in Ulaanbaatar and Mongolia, ICLEI joined hands with the Asia Foundation (TAF) to conduct a pre-feasibility study on Ulaanbaatar’s plastic and food waste recycling status and circular economy potential in 2020. The study reviews both the national and municipal policies and regulations, maps ongoing projects and initiatives, analyses waste management lifecycle, and identifies current challenges through interviewing plastic and food waste recycling businesses. The result provides rich information for further developing project pipelines.

ICLEI supports circular economy implementation at the local level through its circular development pathway. Circular development encourages equitable access to resources and supports new local economies in minimizing resource extraction and waste while delivering positive biodiversity, climate and socio-economic benefits. The 5Rs framework – Recover, Reduce, Reuse, Redesign and Regenerate – was co-developed by ICLEI and Circle Economy to help city government identify and prioritize circular economy strategies. Find out more at ICLEI Circulars.
In light of the global pandemic, the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has been postponed to 2021. Originally scheduled for October 2020 in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China, the meeting is aimed to review the achievement and delivery of the CBD’s Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and to adopt the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as a follow-up for the next decade.

Despite the postponement, ICLEI East Asia has been working closely with the key stakeholders including the CBD Secretariat, China’s Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the Yunnan Provincial Government and the Kunming Municipal Government, planning to jointly host the 7th Global Biodiversity Summit of Cities & Subnational Governments, as one of the official parallel events under the CBD COP15. The Summit will provide not only a platform for national governments to engage with their local and subnational peers, but also an international space where local and regional governments from around the world can share and exchange their practices and achievements, and jointly promote the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in cities, as well as a healthy and vibrant urban environment at the local level.

Urban Biodiversity & Nature-based Solutions

Nature-based development protects and enhances biodiversity and urban ecosystems, which underpin key aspects of local economies and the well-being and resilience of our communities.
Since 2018, ICLEI East Asia has been engaging in the Connecting Nature and CLEVER Cities projects under the Horizon 2020 program of the European Union. While both projects aim to promote methodologies on integrating nature in cities, demonstrate best practices of nature-based solutions, and strengthen communication and capacity of cities and subnational governments, Connecting Nature focuses on leveraging nature-based solutions for urban water and climate resilience; whereas the CLEVER Cities project uses them as a means to improve public health, enhance social cohesion and increase economic opportunities.

On the occasion of the 4th High-Level International Forum on Sustainable Urban Development held in Chengdu, ICLEI East Asia, together with the ICLEI European and World Secretariat and the China Center for Urban Development, officially launched the China stream of the UrbanByNature program – a joint endeavor of the two projects to empower local governments around the world in harnessing the boundless potential of nature for sustainable urban development.

The event took the blended onsite-online format, gathering over 70 participants, including officials from Chengdu, Changchun, Shanghai Changning District, Kunming, Chongqing, Ningbo and Guangzhou, as well as representatives of China’s Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the Executive Agency for SMEs of the European Commission, and the Delegation of the European Union to China.

Knowledge Sharing

The China Center for Urban Development, UN-Habitat, ICLEI and the Chengdu Municipal People’s Government, co-hosted the webinar “Building Livable Cities in Post COVID-19 Time” on 8 July, gathering representatives from Chengdu, Glasgow, and Hamburg to exchange the challenges they have encountered on the way towards a sustainable future, as well as their responses to the novel pandemic. The webinar attracted over 200 attendants from around the world, together exploring the challenges and opportunities of developing new spaces and garden cities to create sustainable, livable, and healthy urban environments.

In 2021, the UrbanByNature program Chinese stream will kick off a series of capacity building workshops on nature-based solutions. By collaborating with local academic institutions, local authorities, the private sector and NGOs, etc., the workshop series aims to facilitate the adoption of nature-based solutions at urban scale in Chinese cities. It will also provide cities with the opportunity to exchange on ambitions, processes, policies, financing options and business approaches on how to solve development challenges with urban nature.
Rapid urbanization has brought an increasing number of opportunities, but has also escalated the impact of environmental degradation, climate change as well as various hazards and risks – especially in urban areas. The common challenges have given rise to a growing trend of urban development in consideration of sustainability. Many countries, including China and Germany, are endeavoring to support innovative transformation and regeneration of their cities and communities to enhance their sustainability, resilience and livability.

To address the common challenges, under the Sino-German Urbanisation Partnership (SGUP) project, ICLEI East Asia and GIZ co-organized the Daring Cities 2020 session “Sustainable Urban Renewal through Nature-Based Solutions: Lessons learned from Chinese and German Cities” on 23 October, providing a space for representatives from Chengdu, Foshan, Manheim, and Hamburg, experts, research institutes and international organizations to showcase and exchange how nature-based solutions can be integrated into urban development and renewal processes. The event attracted around 120 online participants from different time zones. The full event report is available on ICLEI East Asia’s website.

In addition, under the same project framework, the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat Beijing Office has conducted two case studies, featuring the sustainable urban renewal experiences in Dortmund City of Germany and Chengdu City of China. The studies looked into how these two cities have revitalized and strengthened their economy and society through urban renewal, while integrating nature into the creation of green, sustainable and livable cities. The key findings and experiences have been shared through a series of webinars, and the final study report will be published in 2021 for broad dissemination.
ICLEI East Asia, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Office for Northeast Asia and Global Education and Training Institute (UNDRR ONEA-GETI), is providing a series of training to cities in China to strengthen their capacities on disaster risk reduction, as well as on designing and implementing urban resilience in the context of climate change.

Following the first training session carried out in Ningbo in 2019, the second training was delivered for Chengdu in January 2020, during which around 50 officials from over 10 different bureaus within the municipality jointly conducted a preliminary assessment on the city’s status of resilience with the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities structuring around UNDRR’s Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient. The assessment result suggested that Chengdu’s strengths lies at ‘Strengthening Institutional Capacity’, and ‘Ensuring Effective Disaster Response’; whereas the biggest challenge came from ‘Understanding and Strengthening Societal Capacity for Resilience’, as the participants found it not easy to connect to the mandates of the government bureaus.

The training series have allowed the participants to expand their knowledge on climate change adaptation and urban resilience, and stimulate new ideas on how their cities can enhance their own capacities. The training series will be continued in 2021 with two other Chinese cities, Beijing and Shanghai Changning District.
Since 2019, ICLEI East Asia has been participating in the Technical Assistance (TA) project “Mainstreaming Urban Climate Change Adaptation in the People’s Republic of China”, which is funded by the Asian Development Bank and implemented by China’s Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (MoHURD). As a core member of the technical team, ICLEI has contributed in developing the Technical Guidelines for Urban Climate Change Adaptation (UCCA), which provides a step-by-step process for Chinese cities to build and strengthen their adaptation capacity to climate change.

Under the project framework, an online training workshop was delivered to three project pilot cities – Zhuhai, Changde, and Xi’an in December 2020, to support them in establishing their local adaptation strategy and action plans by applying the Technical Guidelines. Following the training, ICLEI East Asia has been supporting the cities in summarizing the learnings and proceeding with recommendation reports, and will continue to enhance its methodology, aiming to support more cities and regions in China to enhance their climate change adaptation capacity.

Knowledge Sharing

Besides events and activities host by the ICLEI global network, ICLEI East Asia has also shared the experience of working with local governments in the region, promoting understanding and recognition of the importance of urban resilience at the local level, and ICLEI’s methodologies, tools and platforms of urban resilience on various occasions, including the International Urban Resilience Forum Seoul 2020, the Sustainable Development and Urban Innovation Forum, the KIPA-UN DESA Forum on Public Governance and Innovative Partnerships for Addressing the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the International Workshop on Urban Climate Change Adaptation.

In addition, ICLEI East Asia has also completed and released the Simplified Chinese version of the Resilient Cities, Thriving Cities: the Evolution of Urban Resilience report, which was published by the ICLEI World Secretariat, using the decade-long experience of the Resilient Cities Congress series as a proxy to track the evolution of the global resilience debate over the last ten years.
Sustainable Mobility and EcoLogistics

Cities SHIFT

Mobility is a prerequisite to social and economic opportunities, and the pressing issues of congestion, air pollution, inequality, and climate change that follow, have forced cities to recognize the need to create a sustainable mobility system. Yet, the lack of direct feedback on the effectiveness of the transport system is one of the common challenges for city administrations in planning and implementing policy and solutions. ICLEI’s Sustainable Mobility initiative works with policymakers to raise awareness, and support cities in creating and providing sustainable mobility options for all.

Co-funded by the Hewlett Foundation and the EcoMobility Alliance, the two-year (2018-2020) project “Cities SHIFT: Capacity Building and Networking for climate- and people-friendly mobility” was designed to assist cities in identifying challenges and opportunities for its urban mobility system, and shift towards more ecomobile modes of travel, i.e., walking, cycling, shared and public transport.

With the support of ICLEI East Asia, the Chinese cities of Kaili and Foshan participated in the project and adopted the EcoMobility SHIFT+ tool to measure their performances in urban mobility by evaluating 23 indicators categorized under ‘Enablers’, ‘Transportation system and services’, and ‘Performance’. Despite having their characteristics drastically different, both Kaili and Foshan scored highly on ‘Enablers’, due to the visionary policies and financial investment mobilized to improve their urban mobility systems.

Contribute to SDGs

City of Foshan, China  /  Photo by ICLEI
However, the assessment results also suggest that Foshan could further upgrade its ecomobility performance by revamping the pedestrian and bicycle network and infrastructure to improve the safety and comfort for people; whereas Kaili was recommended to consider strengthening its urban and transport planning for better inclusivity, accessibility, and connectivity as a means to encourage more residents to walk and cycle as part of their mobility mode, and enable people with reduced mobility access to enjoy similar access to services and opportunities. The project’s final report is available on the website of ICLEI’s Sustainable Mobility initiative.

**EcoLogistics in East Asia: the Next Frontier of Sustainable Mobility**

Asia is home to about four billion people accounting for almost 60% of the world’s population. By 2050, 96% of urban growth will occur in East Asia’s less developed regions, with 255 million new urbanites. The new urban centers will see the sharpest increase in carbon emissions corresponding to the burgeoning demand from new consumers for goods and services. The increased demand for goods and service trading will require excellent logistics hubs and infrastructure.

East Asian cities are among the fastest-growing regions for e-commerce uptake with the broad penetration of smartphones, telecommunication, and efficient urban logistics networks. But while freight movement is intrinsically linked to cities’ economic development, most East Asian cities do not proactively plan and integrate logistics and freight into sustainable mobility planning. Furthermore, the rise of e-commerce economies and digitalization will exacerbate freight transport’s externalities, such as low air and noise quality in cities; traffic congestion and road accidents; and public space competition with other road users, which compromise cities’ livability.

In 2020, the ICLEI World Secretariat led the research “EcoLogistics in East Asia”, analysing the logistics situation, policies and institutional framework, strategies, and challenges in three East Asian cities. Under this project, ICLEI East Asia supported the research on Seoul Metropolitan and Suzhou City. The research also highlighted the importance of incorporating ecologistics into long-term sustainable mobility policy planning and steps city governments can undertake to kickstart the transformation process through stakeholder collaboration, proper financing and demonstration projects. The project’s final report is released in the first half of 2021.
ICLEI East Asia Secretariat and the Beijing Office have delivered the Sustainable Urban Development Assessments (SUDA) desk research results for the 7 Chinese Cities – Beijing, Guiyang, Ningbo, Nanchang, Shijiazhuang, Shenzhen and Tianjin – of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Pilot (SC-IAP) under GEF-6. The SUDA Research is to ascertain how the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) are addressing sustainable development by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of each city. The results inform recommendations for capacity development and opportunities to provide assistance to the cities’ transformation towards a low-carbon, resilient, and sustainable trajectory.

In 2021, ICLEI East Asia will continue participating in the implementation of the GEF-7 Sustainable Cities Impact Program (SCIP), which will strengthen vertical integration between governance structure and experience from the pilot phase and will support 24 cities in 9 countries – including Chengdu, Ningbo, and Chongqing of China. The program will be delivered through two interlinked components: 1) innovative implementation models for integrated sustainability solutions and investments in selected cities and countries; and 2) a Global Platform for sustainable cities for knowledge exchange, learning, and fostering partnerships for raising ambition and on-the-ground actions. ICLEI East Asia will be serving as the China Coordinator and focus on the second component under the program.

**SUDA Research on GEF-6 SC-IAP Cities in China**

**Urban-Rural Assembly**

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and coordinated by Technische Universität Berlin (TUB), the Sino-German research and development project 'Urban-Rural Assembly (URA)' aims at managing inclusive transformation-to-sustainability processes at the urban-rural interface of the Huangyan-Taizhou region in China. The project follows a systematic and inter-disciplinary approach, covering a wide range of topics, including social-spatial practices, material cycles, landscapes and spatial typologies, ecosystems, mobility and migration, as well as governance and policies.

As a project partner, ICLEI East Asia has completed the first *periodical* with the consortium for external audience communication in August 2020, and co-organized with TUB and Shanghai Tongji University a virtual Science-Policy Dialogue between government officials and researchers on 23 September to discuss urban-rural development practice in China and Germany, sharing the approaches used in Taizhou Huangyan District and Thuringia. ICLEI East Asia will continue to participate in the project’s Research and Development Phase (2021-2024), support coordination among consortium partners in the two countries, and conduct Chinese urban-rural interface policy research that integrates outputs from the sectoral thematics mentioned above.
ICLEI East Asia continues to build new partnerships with relevant government agencies, organizations and institutes to promote global sustainability through knowledge and multilateral cooperation.

In 2020, through constant cooperation with relevant government agencies and organizations on various activities, ICLEI has forged new, as well as strengthened collaboration with long-standing Partners in the region, include:

In the first half of 2021, ICLEI East Asia and KOICA are jointly implementing a 6-month Young Professional program by hosting one young professional in the organisation. For the second half of the year, ICLEI East Asia also plans to start a year-long research program with the National Institute of Biological Resources Exhibition & Education Division of Korea's Ministry of Environment, by hosting a researcher to focus on biodiversity topics in East Asia.
To facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise on urban sustainability between Members, and to showcase their achievements globally, ICLEI East Asia prepares publications related to our programs and projects, with localized contents based on local and regional needs.

In 2020, ICLEI East Asia launched our new website, and have completed the Chinese translation of a number of publications and articles related to our project works from the ICLEI global network and from our partner organizations. These resources have been shared with our Members and Partners via our website and social media channels in English and Chinese.

Publications

Green Circular Cities Coalition Newsletter
In The Loop Issue 2
2020.4 / English

Event Report: Chinese - German Knowledge Exchange on Sustainable Development and Urban Renewal
2020.11 / English

Case Study: Beijing’s Pilot Emission Trading System
2021.1 / English

EcoLogistics in East Asia: the Frontier for Sustainable Urban Mobility
2021.4 / English by the ICLEI World Secretariat
2021.5 / Chinese Summary by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Cities SHIFT: Capacity Building and Networking for Climate- and People-friendly Mobility Report
2020.5 / English by the ICLEI World Secretariat
2020.8 / Chinese Summary by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Event Report: Chinese - German Knowledge Exchange on Sustainable Development and Urban Renewal
2020.11 / English

Resilient Cities, Thriving Cities: The Evolution of Urban Resilience
2019.11 / English by the ICLEI World Secretariat

Building Efficiency Targets Playbook - General Guidance for Cities
2020.8 / Chinese by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Translated Publications

Resilient Cities, Thriving Cities: The Evolution of Urban Resilience
2019.11 / English by the ICLEI World Secretariat

Cities SHIFT: Capacity Building and Networking for Climate- and People-friendly Mobility Report
2020.5 / Chinese Summary by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Building Efficiency Targets Playbook - General Guidance for Cities
2020.8 / Chinese by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Building Efficiency Targets Playbook - Case Study: Shanghai Changning District
2020.8 / Chinese by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Building Efficiency Renovation Playbook
2020.6 / Chinese by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

Building Efficiency Codes Playbook
2020.6 / Chinese by the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat

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Event Report: Chinese - German Knowledge Exchange on Sustainable Development and Urban Renewal
2020.11 / Chinese
2021 PREVIEW

ICLEI World Congress 2021-2022: Part I
13-15 APR / Malmö, Sweden + Virtual Event

ICLEI Resilient Cities Capacity Building Series: Shanghai
15-16 APR / Shanghai, China

ICLEI Resilient Cities Capacity Building Series: Beijing
21-23 APR / Beijing, China

Capacity Building Training for Chinese Local Governments on Sustainable Development
28-30 APR / Seoul, South Korea + Virtual Event

5th High-Level International Forum on Sustainable Urban Development
1-3 JUL / Chengdu, China

Eco Forum Global Annual Conference Guiyang 2021
7-9 JUL / Guiyang, China

IUCN World Conservation Congress
3-11 SEP / Marseille, France

CBD COP15 and the 7th Global Biodiversity Summit of Cities & Subnational Governments
11-24 OCT / Kunming, Yunnan Province, China

Seoul Mayor’s Forum on Climate Change
26-27 OCT / Seoul, South Korea + Virtual Event

Seoul International Forum on Air Quality Improvement
28-29 OCT / Seoul, South Korea + Virtual Event

2021 Beijing International Forum for Metropolitan Clean Air and Climate Actions
Q3-4 / Beijing, China + Virtual Event

UNFCCC COP26
1-12 NOV / Glasgow, Scotland

*Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the listed events may be subject to change or cancellation. For more information on specific events, please contact the ICLEI East Asia Secretariat.
# MEET OUR TEAM

Shu Zhu  
*Regional Director & China Representative*

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<tr>
<th><strong>East Asia Secretariat</strong></th>
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<td>Monika Zimmermann</td>
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<td>Senior Advisor</td>
<td>Senior Advisor</td>
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<td>Regional Administrator</td>
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<td>Merlin Lao</td>
<td>Jingning Liu</td>
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<td>Program Officer &amp; Assistant to Chief Representative</td>
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<td>Samhee Han</td>
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<td>Financial Officer</td>
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Yun (Yvonne) Yang  
*Senior Program Officer*

Sin Yi (Beatrice) Chng  
*Senior Program Officer*

Yu-Ting Chang  
*Senior Communication Officer*

Xuan Xie  
*Program Officer*

Yeajee Kim  
*Young Professional*

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