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## E-Newsletter - July - October 2024



Dear friends,

As we reflect on recent months, I am proud to share the impactful strides ICLEI South Asia has made in advancing sustainable urban development, climate resilience, and low-emission strategies in the region. Our efforts, rooted in collaboration and innovation, continue to address the growing challenges of urbanisation, climate change, and environmental sustainability.

One of the key highlights has been the Asia LEADS Partnership (ALP) Forum 2024, held in Bangkok in August, where 150 participants from 32 countries convened to discuss low-carbon development strategies. The Forum focussed on aligning Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) and highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, inclusivity, and innovation, underscoring the need for climate action that integrates economic growth and emission reduction. A notable outcome was the announcement of the USAID initiative - Competitive Procurement Center (CPC) in Bangkok, aimed at supporting clean energy across Southeast Asia.

Another milestone reached was the first-ever release of seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070 in India, which took place at the CapaCITIES II National Workshop. Presided over by Shri Tokhan Sahu, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, and key officials from MoHUA, SDC, NIUA, and various state representatives, these action plans offer a transformative roadmap for achieving net-zero emissions and building climate-resilient cities by 2070, aligned with India's ambitious climate targets. The workshop facilitated in-depth discussions on critical climate interventions, including urban flood early warning systems and solar-powered charging stations for electric buses. This launch also marks India as the first country in South Asia and Southeast Asia to release these comprehensive plans.

In Malaysia, we officially handed over Green City Action Plans (GCAPs) for four cities - Penang Island, Langkawi Island, Kota Bharu, and Kuching (Padawan) to the Malaysian

Minister of Economy and Asian Development Bank (ADB) officials during the IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting. These plans offer a comprehensive strategy for building low-carbon, resilient cities aligned with Malaysia's Twelve Malaysia Plan (12MP).

Additionally, we released a Handbook on the Ecological and Cultural Significance of Urban Khazans in Goa, as part of a biodiversity conservation project aimed at sustainably developing these crucial ecosystems in the region.

Beyond these flagship initiatives, ICLEI South Asia's experts have been actively contributing insights and knowledge on prominent platforms, shaping key discussions on urban sustainability, climate resilience, and green financing. Our teams have also developed several case studies and knowledge products, capturing best practices and innovative solutions across diverse sectors.

Looking ahead, we remain deeply committed to advancing our mission of building greener, more resilient cities across South and Southeast Asia. I encourage you all to explore the recent publications and case studies, and join us in continuing to drive collaboration for a sustainable urban future.

Stay connected with us on social media and watch the space for coverage of exciting developments and events in the weeks to come.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

**Emani Kumar**

*Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI and Executive Director, ICLEI South Asia*

## LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

### Catalysing Climate Action in the Asia Pacific Region through the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024.

The Asia LEDS Partnership (ALP) Forum 2024, held from August 20-22 in Bangkok, Thailand, was a key event driving climate action in Asia-Pacific. Hosted by the ALP Secretariat with support from global partners like GCAP, USAID's SPP, NDC Partnership, and UNESCAP, the forum attracted over 150 participants from 32 countries, including leaders, policymakers, and climate experts.



Focussing on the theme "Towards Decarbonisation in the Asia Pacific through 2025 NDCs," the forum tackled the dual challenges of rapid urbanisation and rising emissions, with sessions on aligning Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS). Key discussions revolved around regional cooperation, inclusive approaches, and innovative

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## ICLEI South Asia and Partners Present Green City Action Plans (GCAPs) to Malaysian Minister and ADB Officials

On September 12, 2024, at the 30<sup>th</sup> Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) Ministerial Meeting in Desaru, Malaysia, ICLEI South Asia and its partners presented the GCAPs for four Malaysian cities—Penang Island, Langkawi Island, Kota Bharu, and Kuching (Padawan)—to Malaysian Minister of Economy Mr. Rafizi Ramli and ADB Vice President Mr. Scott Morris. ICLEI South Asia, Executive Director Mr. Emani Kumar and Manager Mr. Keshav Jha underscored the plan's role in fostering sustainable urban growth through collaboration and strategic planning.



These GCAPs are pivotal for Malaysia's efforts to develop low-carbon, resilient cities, aligned with the Twelve Malaysia Plan (12MP) and serving as roadmaps for future urban development. Spearheaded by ADB and the Ministry of Economy, this initiative aims to help 14 Malaysian cities create similar GCAPs through knowledge and technical assistance. The consortium behind this effort includes ICLEI South Asia, ICLEI Southeast Asia, and the IMT-GT Joint Business Council Malaysia, highlighting a united commitment to sustainable urban development in the region.

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## Seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070 Released for the First Time in South and Southeast Asia

For the first time in South and Southeast Asia, seven *Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070*, were launched together at the CapaCITIES II National Workshop on Multi-Level Action for Climate Resilient Cities on September 18-19, 2024. These plans cover Rajkot, Vadodara, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Udaipur, and Siliguri, charting a path toward net-zero emissions and climate resilience by 2070.



The Action Plans were released by Shri Tokhan Sahu, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, in the presence of other key officials from MoHUA, SDC, NIUA and other State representatives as well as over 150 participants, including city representatives, experts from ADB, World Bank, and other organisations. Key solutions discussed urban flood

early warning systems, solar charging stations, watershed management, green mobility zones, Miyawaki forests, and scalable projects like Coimbatore's waste-to-bio-CNG facility and floating solar projects.

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### Handbook on Ecological and Cultural Significance of Urban Khazans Released in Goa

ICLEI South Asia, supported by Azim Premji University, has worked on a project to sustainably develop Goa's vital ecosystems. On August 12, 2024, a handbook highlighting the ecological and cultural importance of Urban Khazans in Goa was released by Dr. Suresh Kunkaliker, Principal & Dean of Goa College of Agriculture, and Dr. Bhushan Bhawe, Principal of Vidya Prabodhini College.



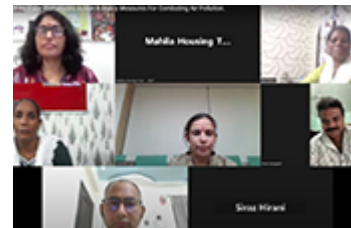
Urban Khazans are traditional coastal ecosystems supporting agriculture, aquaculture, and salt production while also serving as natural flood defences. However, urbanisation and environmental degradation threaten their survival, making their conservation crucial for biodiversity protection, livelihoods security and climate resilience.

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### Ms. Avantika Arjuna Represents ICLEI South Asia as Expert Speaker in Webinar on Air Pollution

Ms. Avantika Arjuna, Assistant Program Coordinator at ICLEI South Asia, spoke at a webinar titled "Breathing Easy: Community Action and Policy Measures for Combating Air Pollution" organised by Mahila Housing Trust on Thursday, September 12, 2024. She stressed the importance of collaboration with local communities and highlighted government initiatives like the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) and 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission funding.



Avantika also emphasized partnerships with educational institutions, effective communication by city governments, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) opportunities in smaller cities. She showcased ICLEI South Asia's ongoing air pollution mitigation efforts in Delhi NCR and other regions.

[Watch Webinar Recording](#)

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### Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Engagement on Climate Action Plan

Programme to the Additional Commissioner (Projects) of VMC on July 25, 2024. The program will assist VMC in assessing its disaster resilience and formulating gender-equitable, socially inclusive, and ecosystem-based disaster action plans. This collaboration seeks to chart a transformative path toward locally-led, climate-resilient urban development.



Additionally, ICLEI South Asia is developing a training module for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to support the creation of climate-induced disaster-resilient city action plans. The module emphasizes a proactive disaster mitigation, preparedness, and the integration of gender equality, social inclusion, and EbA into disaster resilience planning, enhancing local capacity for sustainable climate responses.

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### Community Engagement in Kakinada: Strengthening Disaster Resilience

ICLEI South Asia assessed Kakinada's disaster resilience using the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities developed by UNDRR. While the city is well-prepared for disaster response, the assessment identified the need to improve financial, institutional, and societal capacities.



A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Kakinada's fisherfolk highlighted impacts of climate change, such as reduced fish catches and the need for alternative livelihoods. Despite risks from cyclones and heavy rains, fishing remains central to livelihoods, supported by early warning systems. Government discussions also pointed to opportunities for improved disaster response, eco-tourism, and livelihood support, with a focus on inclusivity for vulnerable groups like women and the elderly.

This engagement is key to building a more resilient and inclusive Kakinada, prepared for climate challenges.

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### Stakeholder Workshop on Accelerating E-Mobility in Himachal Pradesh: Roadmap and City Action Plans Discussed

On July 5, 2024, a stakeholder workshop was held in Shimla to advance electric mobility (E-Mobility) in Himachal Pradesh. Organized by the Directorate of Transport with technical



support from ICLEI South Asia, the workshop convened 50 participants from public and private sectors, including EV

manufacturers, charge point operators, financial institutions, policymakers, and environmental experts.

The focus was on formulating a state-level roadmap and city-specific action plans for Shimla, Mandi, Baddi, Hamirpur, and Dharamshala, aiming to address unique challenges and scale electric vehicle adoption across the state. Key discussions revolved around infrastructure development, policy frameworks, and integrating E-Mobility into the tourism sector.

The event concluded with commitments from stakeholders to fast-track policy approvals and pilot EV projects, marking a crucial step toward a green transportation future in Himachal Pradesh.

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### Building Urban Resilience in Bangladesh: Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Adaptation Workshop

Under the CDKN project, ICLEI South Asia, along with UNDRR's MCR 2030 Campaign, organised a workshop for municipalities of Bangladesh from July 1-3, 2024, in Dhaka. The workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of local government units to plan for climate resilience and effectively manage disaster risks. Key discussions included the integration of climate change adaptation into DRR planning, global partnership opportunities. The event included a visit to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) of Dhaka North City Corporation to inform participants about its operations and usefulness in emergency situations.

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### Online Discussion with Bangladeshi Cities' and Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB)

On September 3, 2024, under the CDKN project, the ICLEI South Asia team engaged in an online collaboration with the climate core team in Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat, as well as MAB, to deliberate on strategies for advancing their initiatives in the aftermath of the socio-political upheaval that transpired in Bangladesh from mid-July to mid-August. Subsequently, the team devised plans for a stakeholder consultation aimed at obtaining comprehensive insights, scheduled for October. Furthermore, ICLEI South Asia team is preparing for the climate risk and vulnerability assessment in these cities.



## Dhaka's Climate Action Journey: Paving the Way for a Resilient Future

A blog by ICLEI South Asia's colleagues at Dhaka, Makame Mahmud and Md. Jubaer Rashid, highlights Dhaka's Climate Action Plans (CAPs) targeting 70.6% reduction in emissions by 2050 focus. The plans focus on seven sectors, including renewable energy, sustainable transport, and waste management. They aim to source 85% of energy from renewables, promote low-carbon mobility and expand public transport. The CAP also addresses waste management, heat stress and health risks by proposing climate-resilient healthcare and enhanced water access for vulnerable communities.



[Read Full Blog](#)

## “ओवर टूरिज्म और स्थानीय लोगों की परेशानियाँ”

कोरोना के बाद कई शहर पर्यटकों की बढ़ती संख्या से परेशान हैं। पर्यटकों की संख्या में वृद्धि और पर्यटन उद्योग के विकास के परिणामस्वरूप, भारत में कई महत्वपूर्ण स्थानों में कई प्रकार की चुनौतियाँ सामने आ रही हैं, जिससे न केवल वहाँ के स्थानीय लोग बल्कि पर्यावरण के लिए भी समस्याएँ पैदा हो रही हैं।

नैनीताल, मनाली, शिमला, मसूरी, ऋषिकेश, धर्मशाला जैसे शहरों में प्रवेश करने से पहले घंटों के जाम में अपने वाहन में बैठे रहना जैसे एक मजबूरी बनती जा रही है। साल २०२३ की दिवाली और क्रिसमस-नए साल के दौरान उदयपुर के कई चौराहे और पुराना शहर बहुत बुरी जाम में फंसे रहे थे और स्थानीय लोगों को अपने घर पहुँचने तथा पर्यटकों को होटल पहुँचने में कई-कई घंटे लग गए थे।



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# HOT OFF THE PRESS

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Launch of U.S. - South Asia Mayoral Platform on Clean Energy and Sustainable Cities**

Bringing together mayors and city decision-makers from U.S. and South Asia for peer-to-peer learning. Fostering



more sustainable energy systems by developing and sharing Whitepapers, Case-Studies, Factsheets, and Technical Briefs, Thematic Support, Knowledge Exchange Tours, Participation in International Forums and Annual events.



**Date:** October 22, 2024

**Venue:** Jaipur, India

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### CBD COP 16: 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference

The 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will take place from October 21 to November 1, 2024, in Cali, Colombia. Building on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the conference will focus on evaluating the progress of countries towards their national biodiversity goals.



Adv. M Anil Kumar, Hon'ble Mayor of Kochi and Dr Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board will contribute as speakers from South Asia, sharing insights on global biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. ICLEI South Asia will be represented by Dr. Monalisa Sen, Senior Programme Coordinator ( Biodiversity), Ms. Rithika Fernandes, Deputy Manager and Dr. Alex CJ, Deputy Manager

**Date:** October 21-November 1, 2024, 2024

**Venue:** Cali, Colombia

[More Information](#)

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### World Urban Forum 12

World Urban Forum (WUF12), convened by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in collaboration with the Government of Egypt, focuses on local actions for sustainable cities and communities. WUF 12 will address the most pressing issues of rapid urbanisation and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies.



**Date:** November 4-8, 2024

**Venue:** Cairo, Egypt

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The 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Climate Change conference (UNFCCC), more commonly known as COP29.



COP29 aims to limit global warming to 1.5°C, emphasizing the urgent need for investment in climate action. The approach involves boosting ambition through national plans and transparency while driving action with effective financing to reduce emissions and address climate impacts

**Date:** November 11-22, 2024

**Venue:** Baku, Azerbaijan

[More Information](#)

## MORE FROM ICLEI ACROSS THE GLOBE

- [Philippines to host Board of Loss and Damage Fund](#)
- [Finland joins CHAMP initiative, becoming the 73rd nation to endorse the multilevel climate pledge](#)



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### About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network working with more than 2500 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.

ICLEI firmly believes that sustainable cities are the foundation of a just and sustainable world. We create systemic change in urban areas through practical, integrated solutions and spark city-to-city and city-to-region connections. ICLEI brings a strong urban component to national and global sustainability policy and translates global policy into action. Through our collective efforts, ICLEI is building a sustainable urban world to shift the trajectory of global development.

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