



PRESS RELEASE

Title: C40 and UN-Habitat launch the Urban Planning Accelerator for Climate Responsive Cities

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (4 November 2025)

C40 Cities and UN-Habitat have launched the Urban Planning Accelerator, a new joint initiative to help cities around the world transition to a climate-responsive urban planning model by 2035.

Through this joint initiative, C40 and UN-Habitat will provide technical, policy, and political support to participating cities to ensure that climate considerations become a central element of urban growth and development. Through tailored assistance, peer learning, and knowledge exchange, the Accelerator will help local governments reform planning frameworks, strengthen urban resilience, and align city master plans with global climate goals.

The Urban Planning Accelerator responds to the growing urban and climate challenges that cities around the world are facing: In many areas, urban expansion is outpacing population growth, green spaces are disappearing, and housing is increasingly impacted by climate-related hazards.

Cities joining the Urban Planning Accelerator commit to a climate-responsive urban planning model by incorporating the following objectives into the city's master plan and/or other relevant land-use plans:

- **Compact:** Prioritise regeneration and densification over urban sprawl.
- **Polycentric:** Adopt a polycentric model and foster mixed-use neighbourhoods.
- **Connected:** Steer new development near transit hubs to encourage residents to adopt sustainable mobility patterns.
- **Risk-Informed:** Restrict new development in areas of high climate risk.
- **Nature-Positive:** Secure and protect land for nature to shield against extreme weather events.

- **Inclusive:** Mandate adequate and affordable housing to improve resilience for the most vulnerable.

The initiative supports UN-Habitat's strategy to advance environment and climate action through sustainable housing, land use, and basic urban services, helping cities plan and grow in ways that strengthen resilience and improve living conditions for all.

C40 and UN-Habitat will work closely with signatory cities, fostering city-to-city knowledge exchange, documenting best practices, and monitoring progress toward the Accelerator's targets through consistent follow-up and reporting.

[Find out more](#)

Signatory cities

Accra, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, eThekweni/Durban, Freetown, Johannesburg, Tshwane, Quezon City, Tokyo, Athens, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Istanbul, Madrid, Milan, Paris, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Curitiba, Fortaleza, Guadalajara, Lima, Medellín, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, Chicago, Portland, Vancouver, Amman, Karachi

Signatory mayors of the C40 & UN-Habitat Urban Planning Accelerator demonstrate that urban planning can be a powerful tool for climate action:

"Over the past century, Amman has undergone a remarkable transformation — evolving from a small town into a dynamic metropolitan city of over four million residents, now home to nearly 42% of Jordan's population. This rapid growth has shaped the lived experience of Ammanis, who have witnessed both the opportunities and challenges of urban expansion.

Like cities around the world, we — as urban leaders and urban planners — carry the responsibility to shape this growth in ways that promote prosperity, equity, sustainability, and resilience for current and future generations.

In this spirit, I am proud to announce that Amman has joined the C40 and UN-Habitat Urban Planning Accelerator — an initiative uniting cities that are leading the way in climate-responsive urban development. Through this collaboration, Amman is eager to learn from global best practices, while also sharing our own experiences and success stories from the Arab region."

- Dr. Yousef Al Shawarbeh, **Mayor of Amman**

"A greener and more resilient Quito is the city we are building for future generations. By joining the C40 & UN-Habitat Urban Planning Accelerator, we are transforming our vision into commitment and concrete actions: a compact, polycentric, and connected city that reduces emissions and brings services closer to every neighborhood; a preventative, inclusive, and nature-based model that strengthens our resilience to climate risks. We prioritise mixed-use neighborhoods, sustainable mobility, and the protection of our ecosystems. This commitment strengthens compliance with our Climate Change Action Plan and commits us to planning with the well-being of all Quito families in mind. Every decision today builds a safer, healthier, and more livable capital for all."

- Pabel Muñoz, **Mayor of Quito**

"Milan's participation in the C40 & UN-Habitat Urban Planning Accelerator reinforces our commitment to deliver inclusive climate action from the city-scale, down to each individual neighbourhood. We value the initiative, that accelerates our ongoing work to deeply integrate sustainability, inclusivity, and climate resilience into local planning, fostering communities that are walkable, low-carbon, and highly liveable. We will leverage this global partnership to advance sustainable urban planning strategies within Milan and other European cities, strengthening the region's capacity to innovate and share lessons with the broader global urban community."

- Giuseppe Sala, **Mayor of Milan**

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About C40

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis and create a future where everyone, everywhere, can thrive. Mayors of C40 cities are committed to using a **science-based and people-focused approach** to limit global

heating in line with the Paris Agreement and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities. We work alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to support mayors to halve emissions by 2030 and help phase out fossil use while increasing urban climate resilience and equity.

The current co-chairs of C40 are Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, United Kingdom, and Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr of Freetown, Sierra Leone; 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 and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit [our website](#) or follow us on [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries supporting policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action.

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