



Statement by Şiir Kılıç, Vice-Chair, Working Group III, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, at the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13) in Baku on the role of urban areas in addressing climate change

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It is a pleasure to share this statement from WUF in Baku, Azerbaijan. There are three key messages that need to be shared.

First, climate science provides ample alerts that each increment of global warming matters and informs potential options going forward. Findings from the IPCC emphasize that extreme weather events become more frequent and intense with each and every additional increment of global warming. This includes hot temperature extremes and heavy precipitation over land as well as agricultural and ecological droughts in drying regions. In comparison to a climate without human influence, these extremes are now already more frequent by up to 2.8 times and when they occur, occur more intensely. These increases continue to multiply at each future global warming level. For this reason, avoiding additional climate-induced changes depends on efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions that underlie the causes of global warming.

At the urban level, evidence on urban adaptation is growing, including those that are also complemented by early warning systems, with various categories of effectiveness based on current levels of global warming. In reducing emissions, urban areas also have a key role due to their existing emission levels and key opportunities for their mitigation. In 2020, urban emissions were estimated to be 29 GtCO₂-eq and could be up to 40 GtCO₂-eq in 2050 with low mitigation efforts. It is only with ambitious and immediate mitigation efforts, including high levels of electrification and improved energy and material efficiency, that global consumption-based urban CO₂ and CH₄ emissions can be limited to 3 GtCO₂-eq in 2050. Another major finding from the most recent assessment has been that urban areas are systems where multiple mitigation options – especially when integrated – have cascading positive effects across transport, energy, buildings, land use, and behaviour. Layer by layer, these layers interact.

The second key message: sustainable, integrated urban planning is essential for limiting global warming, avoiding limits to adaptation, and increasing wellbeing. Overall, limits to adaptation manifest in multiple forms and require utmost attention to limit global warming. With sustainable planning, compact urban form can increase access to services, including piped water and wastewater services. Based on a relevant comparison, when cities expand through compact growth rather than horizontal expansion, 220 million more people could gain access to piped water, and



190 million to wastewater services. Among related evidence, integrated spatial planning involves thoughtful urban design that leverages density, diversity, neighbourhood design, destination access, and distance to transit.

The third message is: increasing actionable connections between climate science and sustainable urban planning is possible. Baku is also important for urban climate action, initiating the Multisectoral Actions Pathways to Resilient and Healthy Cities that started here in this city during COP29. The much-needed emphasis on urban areas for climate mitigation and adaptation action also takes place as the preparations for the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities, forthcoming in in early 2027. COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, has identified 10 priority themes. Climate-resilient cities are among these priorities with an emphasis on scaling up low-carbon solutions and supporting future-ready urban systems.

Thank you!