ICLEI South Asia Annual Report

April 2024-March 2025

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WHO
WE ARE

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 - Local Governments for Sustainability, South Asia (ICLEI South Asia) comprises a multidisciplinary team of 83 staff members, including, climate change specialists, civil engineers, ecologists, energy managers, environmental engineers, environmental planners, power systems engineers, transportation engineers and urban planners. We work together to support South Asian cities on multiple aspects of sustainable development. We aim to build and serve a regional network of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in regional and global sustainability through local initiatives.

Source: iStock

ICLEI SOUTH ASIA NETWORK

100+

Local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development

Countries we work in:

India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka

We are also working with national and local governments in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Thailand

HANSA PATEL

Chairperson, ICLEI South Asia

The world is grappling with intensifying climate change impacts such as flash floods, landslides, heatwaves, extreme rainfall, cyclones, as well as biodiversity loss. Addressing these challenges calls for bold actions that not only mitigate their impacts but also ensure sustainable development.

For the past 20 years, ICLEI South Asia has been working with local governments in the region, supporting their journey towards sustainability and resilience, and helping them emerge as regional leaders shaping South Asia's climate path for the next generation.

Sustainable transformation is the stepping stone that will help cities rewrite their stories, transforming into engines of a new climate future where resilience, equity and innovation define progress. Across South Asia, cities are already taking bold action and responding with courage and creativity. ICLEI South Asia stands firmly beside these local leaders in this journey.

Over the past two decades, we have significantly expanded our reach, guiding local governments in developing climate action plans and formulating biodiversity conservation strategies, advancing urban heat management, replenishing critical ecosystems, promoting sustainable transport solutions, and building capacities for implementing these measures. Our work in areas such as offshore wind, climate-resilient urban infrastructure, e-mobility, sustainable energy transition, and community-led water security has delivered substantial and result-oriented progress aligned with our long-term vision.

The future of cities will be based on the collective actions that we take today; actions that integrate climate-secure development with innovation and local leadership. We have to showcase how cities of the Global South are designing their blueprint for green development and demonstrating strong climate leadership.

It is my immense pleasure to present the Annual Report 2024-2025, and I extend my deep appreciation to the ICLEI South Asia team for their hard work in creating solutions and amplifying voices from the Global South in the discourse on urban resilience. Congratulations on completing 20 remarkable years and my best wishes for continued success in the years ahead.

GINO VAN BEGIN

Secretary General,
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

We stand today at one of the starkest crossroads in history, where the paths of development and climate converge. The escalating climate crisis is intensifying extreme weather events — from severe heat waves, record rainfalls and storms, to floods, landslides, and biodiversity loss. At the same time, widening inequality continues to undermine progress and stability.

Urban centres, home to the majority of the world's population and engines of economic growth, are also where these impacts are most acutely being felt. To secure a sustainable future, we must respond with speed and scale, advancing bold measures that protect people and nature. This calls for systemic transformation that integrates climate action with sustainability, biodiversity conservation, social equity, inclusivity, and economic development.

At ICLEI, we believe that with the right mix of leadership, finance, and innovation, cities can grow beyond incremental measures to deliver large-scale, transformative, and solution-oriented actions. Emerging technologies, innovations, and new forms of green finance are expanding what is possible, but it is the commitment, spirit, and work of local actors that ultimately turn opportunity into action.

In South Asia, one of the world's most climate-vulnerable regions, ICLEI has demonstrated for more than two decades that cities are not passive victims but active innovators. By fostering collaboration among national and sub-national governments, municipalities, local entities, and various stakeholders, ICLEI South Asia has been driving the region's ambitious climate targets, shaping practical and future-ready solutions. It has been championing efforts in several key areas, such as renewables, green finance, nature-based solutions, capacity building, gender equity, social inclusion, energy efficiency, and community-led resilience. I invite more cities to join the ICLEI South Asia network, to share knowledge, build solutions, and amplify the collective voice of local governments.

Together, we must continue to strengthen our cities so that they remain at the heart of the global transformation toward a climate-secure, equitable, and sustainable future.

EMANI KUMAR

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

As I look back on the past year, I feel deeply proud of the strides ICLEI South Asia has made in contributing to climate resilience, sustainability and biodiversity planning and implementation in the region. This report represents an important moment to pause and reflect on the tangible and intangible impact our team has made across the region.

Over the past year, we strengthened our role as a trusted partner to cities and regions in turning global agendas into local action. Together, we prepared Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans for 10 cities in India and Green City Action plans for four cities in Malaysia, developed five City Biodiversity Indices, advanced the Voluntary Local Review for Male city in the Maldives, and supported the design of heat action plans. With our support, Ahmedabad became the first city in India to include a chapter on 'Climate and Sustainability' in its municipal budget. It has also set up a Net-Zero, Environment, and Climate Resilient Cell, comprising its officers and staff. Both these actions have ensured that we have systemised the process, which has now become an integrated part of the city governance process. At the national level, we partnered with NITI Aayog to develop long-term net-zero strategies for India's waste sector through 2070, supporting the country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) commitments. At the state level, we supported the Government of Tamil Nadu in developing a Roadmap on Offshore Wind Energy and continue to assist the Project Management Unit of the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company.

We worked to strengthen urban disaster preparedness and develop inclusive, locally-led and gender-sensitive resilience and adaptation plans across four South Asian countries, besides promoting food and nutrition security, modelling net-zero strategies for the waste sector, and helping create safer, more inclusive environments for young children.

Venturing outside urban spaces, we travelled to the lush hills of Darjeeling for hand-holding tea garden communities to tackle water scarcity. Each of these actions reflects bold choices taken by local leaders, choices that ICLEI South Asia has been proud to enable and amplify.

While we strive to make our cities more resilient, we also recognise that many impacts can no longer be entirely avoided. The growing focus on loss and damage opens new avenues for cities to access finance, address vulnerabilities, and build forward better after climate shocks. By supporting local governments to engage with this agenda, we are helping ensure that resources flow where they are most needed.

All of these efforts are underpinned by partnerships and finance, while working with businesses, development partners, and civil society to co-create solutions. The Asia LEDS Partnership Forum, held in Bangkok, reflected regional partnership at its finest, hosting more than 150 participants from 32 Asia-Pacific countries, who together engaged in regional cooperation, inclusive approaches and innovative solutions.

As the technical coordinator for the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy – South Asia (GCoM SA), we are supporting 53 GCoM signatory cities across six South Asian countries. This engagement with ICLEI South Asia has helped to raise the profile of many of our member cities, enabling them to access support and climate finance from GCoM SA.

I am happy to present our annual report for the year 2024-25. As we complete our second decade of work in South Asia, my invitation is simple: let us widen the circle. I encourage more cities across the region to join the ICLEI South Asia network, to share, to learn, and to lead. Together, we can ensure that our cities remain at the forefront of the global transformation toward a net-zero, resilient, and sustainable future.

The ICLEI South Asian REXCOM

2024-2027

One of the governance bodies for ICLEI, the South Asian RexCom, or Regional Executive Committee, is the regional representation of ICLEI members in South Asia. It consists of four members and two advisors elected for the 2024-2027 period.

JOIN US!
Local governments, and associations of local governments

Please visit our website:
http://southasia.iclei.org/our-members/join-us.html

write to us at:
membership@iclei.org

REXCom MEMBERS

Ugyen Dorji
Mayor, Thimphu Municipality, *Bhutan*

Bhim Prasad Dhungana
President, Municipal Association of Nepal, *Nepal*

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Mayor, Rajkot Municipal Corporation, *India*

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Special Advisors

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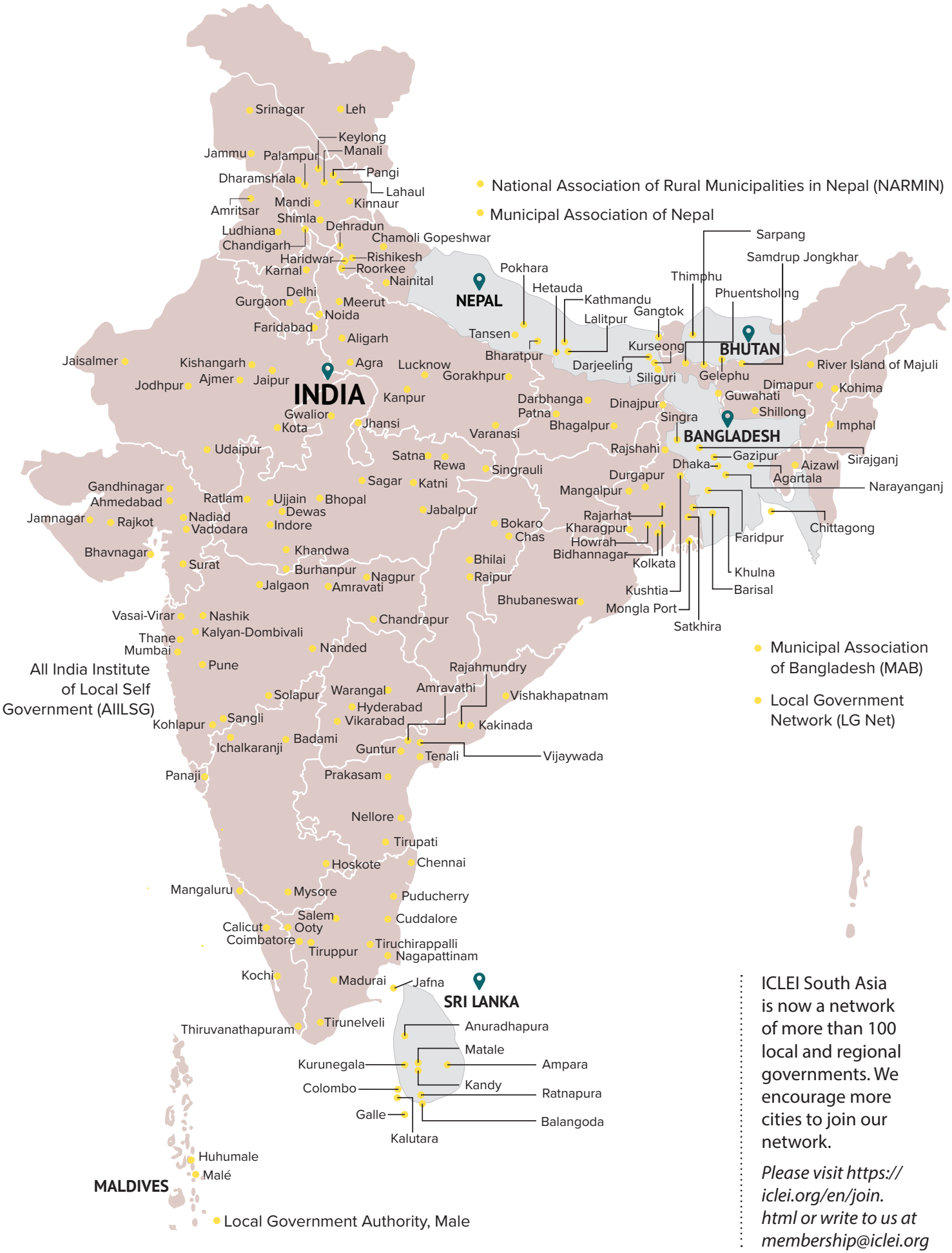
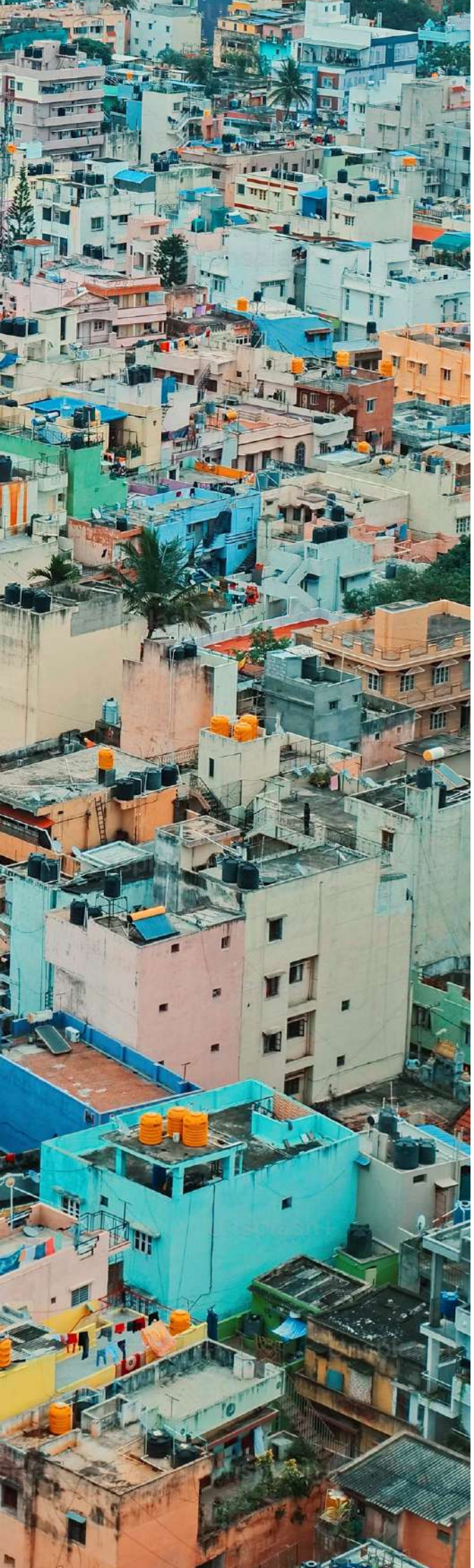
Hemanthi Goonasekera
CEO, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities, *Sri Lanka*



ICLEI South Asia is now a network of more than 100 local and regional governments. We encourage more cities to join our network.

Please visit https://iclei.org/en/join.html or write to us at membership@iclei.org



Our Vision

ICLEI envisions a world of sustainable cities that confront the realities of urbanisation, adapt to economic and demographic trends and prepare for the impacts of climate change and other urban challenges. This is why ICLEI unites local and regional governments in creating positive change through collective learning, exchange and capacity building.

Our Mission

To build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions.

Our Members

ICLEI members are committed local and regional governments, representing diverse communities the world over. They guide our efforts to make sustainability fundamental to all development and to scale up sustainable urban development worldwide. ICLEI Members steer the direction of our work, shape our strategy and support the mission, mandate and principles set in our statutes. They are eligible to vote and take part in our network-wide governing bodies. Membership is open to all local and regional governments, as well as to their global, regional, national and subnational associations.

OUR PATHWAYS

Zero Emission Development

Help curb climate change, reduce pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions in all activities, achieve climate neutrality and promote renewable energy and non-motorised solutions such as walking and cycling for sustainable passenger mobility.

Equitable Development

Help to build more just, liveable and inclusive urban communities, address poverty and pursue processes and patterns of an "inclusive development for all" that safeguard the natural support systems for human life.

Nature-Based Development

Protect and enhance the biodiversity and ecosystems in and around cities, which underpin key aspects of our local economies and upon which we depend for the well-being and resilience of our communities.

Resilient Development

Support cities to anticipate, prevent, absorb and recover from shocks and stresses, in particular those caused by rapid environmental, technological and social change, and to improve basic response structures.

Circular Development

Promote models of production and consumption to build sustainable societies that use recyclable, shareable and regenerative resources to meet the material / development needs of a

The Year in **Review**

Impacted
18 States and
2 Union
Territories

80+
Cities and
Towns

supported in developing Climate Action Plans, Climate Resilience Plans, Heat Action Plans, Green City Action Plans, Local Adaptation Plans, City Biodiversity Index, and Local Biodiversity Strategy Action Plans

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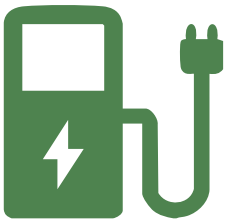
61
Knowledge
Products

including baseline reports, training manuals, assessment frameworks, guidance documents

Developed
1148 sq. metre

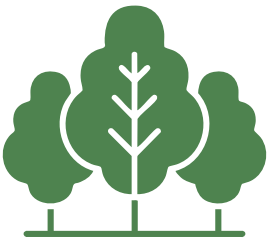
under 16 urban food gardens across municipal schools in Delhi



60
Electric Vehicle Charging Points

installed in Himachal Pradesh.

One solar-powered E-bus opportunity charging station in Ahmedabad



13,400 sq. metre
area brought under Miyawaki forests

900+ people
trained in climate action, resilience building, and sustainability

US$
1519
million
committed by municipalities for climate action + Ahmedabad develops India's first 'Climate and Sustainability Budget'

9 Pilot Initiatives
across 4 Indian states

Zero Emission Development Pathway

Through this pathway, ICLEI South Asia enables local and regional governments to advance towards climate neutrality by reducing carbon emissions and pollutants, while building energy-efficient and climate-neutral infrastructure and operations. Cities are supported to adopt green energy and green mobility, apply nature-based solutions, mainstream climate resilience, and prioritise people-centred solutions.

ICLEI South Asia supported over 30 cities across South and Southeast Asia in accelerating decarbonization by driving sectoral transitions in e-mobility, renewables, and energy efficiency, institutionalising Net-Zero Cells, and embedding climate priorities into local governance. By aligning city-level action with national and global climate goals, these initiatives build municipal resilience, expand access to climate finance, and guide the development of 'just transition' roadmaps.

At the national level in India, ICLEI South Asia supported NITI Aayog in modelling net-zero strategies for the waste sector until 2070 to contribute to India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) efforts. This involved a baseline assessment and development of an existing policy scenario and a Net-Zero Scenario for waste sector GHG emissions. In collaboration with a working group comprising officials from the MoEFCC and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, ICLEI South Asia supported GHG emissions modelling for solid waste management, domestic wastewater, and industrial wastewater.

The draft report, titled "**India's Waste Sector: Net-Zero Strategies 2070 for NDC 3.0**," highlights the critical need to integrate the waste sector in India's NDC 3.0. It points out the sector's significant potential to contribute to national GHG emission reduction targets and net-zero ambition through sustainable waste management practices and the adoption of circular economy approaches. The report outlines three resilience goals, nine targets, and 12 strategies for achieving net-zero in waste management by 2070.

The recommendations align with the targets of national programmes, such as the *Swachh Bharat* Mission and AMRUT, as well as the SDGs.

Source: unsplash

September 2024, New Delhi: Hon'ble Tokhan Sahu, Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, released seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070 at the CapaCITIES II National Workshop on Multi-Level Action for Climate Resilient Cities.

Source: ICLEI

The second phase of the **CapaCITIES** project (September 2019-December 2024) concluded successfully during the reporting period, significantly enhancing the expertise of eight partner cities in India to develop and implement low-carbon, climate-resilient strategies, contributing to both national and global climate goals.

The third phase (August 2024-July 2026) of the project has commenced, under which ICLEI South Asia is providing technical support for institutionalising the Net-Zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans (Net-Zero CRCAPs) into regular urban planning processes, identification of various funding opportunities for implementing climate actions at the state level in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, and at the city level in Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Ahmedabad, Vadodara and Rajkot. In this regard, the project has signed MoUs with the three partner cities, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, and Tirunelveli, in Tamil Nadu.

Seven CRCAPs:

For the first time in South and Southeast Asia, seven Net-Zero CRCAPs — for Vadodara, Rajkot, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli, Udaipur, and Siliguri — were released simultaneously at the National Workshop on Multi-Level Action for Climate Resilient Cities, held in September 2024. Ahmedabad released its net-zero CRCAP in July 2023, during the U20 Mayoral Summit, setting a precedent for other cities. These plans are aligned to India's ambitious target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

First municipal budget with a chapter on climate and sustainability:

Ahmedabad established a Net-Zero, Environment, and Climate Resilient Cell in FY 2023-24, based on a concept note prepared by ICLEI South Asia. In FY 2024-25, the Cell discussed the formats for the Annual Climate Action Plan and Climate Budget 2025-26, using Budget 2024-25 as a reference. With CapaCITIES support, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has prepared India's first 'Climate and Sustainability Budget', allocating 72% of the total capital budget for FY 2025-26 to climate and sustainability actions, and incorporating it into the Municipal Budget Book 2025-26. Vadodara, Rajkot, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, and Tirunelveli have also indicated that they would be establishing the net-zero cells.

A budget analysis of all partner cities reveals a substantial financial commitment of CHF 1,255 million (approximately US$1,458 million) for climate actions in FY 2024-25, a strong indicator of their dedication to translating plans into tangible action.

Quick wins/Co-Financing projects:

Nine quick-win/ co-financing projects were implemented under the recently concluded Phase 2 of the CapaCITIES project —

- Tamil Nadu: A 154-kWp floating solar PV co-financing project in Periyakkulam Lake in Coimbatore; a co-financing project on restoration of Chettikulam lake through nature-based solutions in Tiruchirappalli; and a flood early warning and monitoring system in Tirunelveli.
- Gujarat: A 240 kW opportunity charging station for public electric buses, along with 120 kWp solar PV in Ahmedabad, a Miyawaki urban forest at Chhani Lake in Vadodara, and 100 e-autos were deployed with financial support as part of the Green Mobility Zone (GMZ) programme in Rajkot.

- Rajasthan: Miyawaki urban forest in Mohta Park, Udaipur.
- West Bengal: Miyawaki urban forest in Siliguri, and the commissioning of a 25 kWp solar PV system on the main administrative building of the city corporation.

Bankable projects:

Several cities were supported in developing bankable projects through capacity building, technical assistance, and handholding with the provision of toolkits. These included a 250 TPD waste-to-bio-CNG plant in Coimbatore; replication of waste-to-CNG plants in six cities of Tamil Nadu; a GMZ in Udaipur's walled city; and preparation of Sustainable Energy Action Plans for Ahmedabad and Coimbatore.

Knowledge products:

Nine case studies and six project notes were developed to foster learning on the climate actions and pilot projects implemented in the project cities, focusing on: increasing the penetration of electric autorickshaws as part of the Rajkot GMZ; waste-to-energy (biomethanation/ bio-CNG) in Coimbatore and Udaipur; floating solar for lakes in Coimbatore; a solar-powered opportunity charging station for BRTS electric buses in Ahmedabad; green building certification for public buildings in Tamil Nadu; rooftop solar PV plants for public buildings in Siliguri; rejuvenation of lakes in Tiruchirappalli; flood early warning and monitoring in Tirunelveli; Miyawaki urban forests in Siliguri, Udaipur, and Vadodara; and the Tamil Nadu Urban Liveability Framework.

Support at state level:

Based on the support extended to the state on various climate change-related topics during the first two phases of the project, Tamil Nadu actively engaged with us for the structuring of other climate change-related programmes, including the Tamil Nadu Climate Resilient Urban Development Programme (TNCRUDP), which aims to improve climate resilience in urban local bodies. Under CapaCITIES-III, the Net-Zero CRC methodology has been adopted for 21 urban local bodies in the state, and the cities will develop cross-sectoral climate action plans.

Additionally, Tamil Nadu was supported in the rollout of climate indexation for 21 corporations, 138 municipalities, and 490 town panchayats, by helping with the Tamil Nadu Urban Liveability Framework, following similar support in 2023. The framework is built on the learnings from the Basket of Solutions developed as part of the project, and helps scale climate action at the state level.

In Gujarat, technical support was provided to the Gujarat Urban Development Mission for preparing a proposal to establish a state- and city-level Climate Cell or Net-Zero Cell, which would coordinate, implement, and monitor various climate projects. The Urban Development Department submitted the proposal to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) under the CITIIS 2.0 programme (State Component

CAPACITIES: KEY OUTCOMES

- **Net-Zero, Environment, and Climate Resilient Cell was established in Ahmedabad to achieve net-zero by 2070 targets, being institutionalised and operationalised by ICLEI South Asia**
- **AMC develops India's first 'Climate and Sustainability Budget', with 72% of the total allocated to climate and sustainability actions, and incorporated into the Municipal Budget Book 2025-26.**
- **Ahmedabad becomes the first Indian city to implement a solar-powered opportunity charging station for public electric buses.**
- **Coimbatore becomes the first city in Tamil Nadu to implement Floating Solar PV on an open water body (Periyakulam Lake).**
- **For the first time in South and Southeast Asia, Net-Zero CRCAPs for seven cities were simultaneously released.**
- **Nine pilots were implemented across four Indian states.**
- **More than 80 government officials were trained in Net-Zero Climate Resilient City Action Planning and Implementation.**

May 2024, Kakinada: Consultation meeting of the Kakinada Municipal Commissioner with the Climate Core Team and Stakeholder Committee under the Mainstreaming Climate Action in Three Cities in Andhra Pradesh project.
Source: ICLEI

2). MoHUA has approved the proposal for further implementation.

Additionally, over 80 engineers, urban planners, and architects from the Government of Gujarat were trained in 'Net-Zero Climate Resilient City Action Planning and Implementation'.

The cities of Kakinada, Vijayawada, and Visakhapatnam have taken bold steps under the **Mainstreaming Climate Action in Three Cities of Andhra Pradesh** project (June 2023-August 2025). Vijayawada and Kakinada have developed their Net-Zero CRCAPs. ICLEI South Asia on its own initiative has taken up the development of Visakhapatnam's CRCAP which is currently ongoing. These plans include sectoral targets and specific actions along with investment estimates to curtail GHG emissions and enhance climate resilience at the community scale. The CRCAPs provide a blueprint to support the cities in achieving net-zero emissions by 2047, in line with the state's climate-first approach under the *Swarna* Andhra 2047 Vision Plan and net-zero goal outlined in the Andhra Pradesh Integrated Clean Energy Policy, 2024.

Adopting a data-driven, localised approach, the CRCAPs include GHG emission inventories and climate risk assessments to assist the cities in developing climate adaptation and mitigation actions, including ward-level interventions.

Energy Audits:

ICLEI South Asia also provided technical assistance for investment-grade energy audits (IGAs), which were conducted in the Kakinada Municipal Corporation's (KMC) offices and water supply infrastructure, as well as in energy-intensive water supply and wastewater treatment facilities in Visakhapatnam. The audit identified specific energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) measures, while also addressing integration of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in municipal buildings. Additionally, a design review was conducted for KMC's upcoming office building to incorporate measures for energy efficiency, water efficiency, and waste management, which will support its green building certification going forward. Through this work, Technical Guidelines for Low-Carbon Public Buildings in Kakinada have been developed, guiding passive design strategies, sustainable material selection, thermal comfort systems, and efficient lighting.

Building Heat Resilience:

In Vijayawada, the first-of-its-kind Technical Guidelines for Heat-resilient and Sustainably Cooled Buildings have been developed to support policymakers, architects, builders, and urban planners in integrating heat resilience and energy efficiency measures and EE retrofits within building design and operation. The guidelines were informed by on-site assessments to evaluate existing practices and improvement opportunities of cooling systems across six building typologies in Vijayawada. These technical insights were mapped to city and state policies, helping users

navigate available financial incentives and implementation support.

A design review of a municipal school in Vijayawada identified sustainable cooling measures to benefit its 1,500 students. With recommendations on shading, vegetation, window placement, roofing, and wall materials, the study offers critical insights to support improved thermal comfort, climate resilience and learning conditions in educational institutions.

A knowledge exchange workshop on "Building Climate-Resilient Cities: From Planning to Implementation" held in Visakhapatnam in November 2024, brought together 40 state and city officials and local stakeholders. It featured discussions on the climate action plans for Kakinada and Vijayawada, during which experiences of climate actions implemented by Udaipur, Tirunelveli, and Ahmedabad were shared. Additionally, the climate action plans and the findings of the technical studies have been presented to the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, which is eager to support implementation and scale-up statewide. Together, the CRCAPs and the accompanying technical studies equip city and state officials with actionable and localised strategies to drive the transition towards low-carbon, climate-resilient, and energy-efficient urban infrastructure.

The CRCAP for Hyderabad is also being developed. Baseline assessments for the action plan, including the GHG emissions inventory and CRVA, were prepared. The city reported its GHG emissions inventory to the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) through the CDP-ICLEI track.

In another initiative aligned with India's net-zero commitments, ICLEI South Asia is supporting the development of Surat's Net-Zero CRCAP (July 2024-August 2025) under the **Mainstreaming Climate Action in Cities** project. Surat's baseline climate assessments, including the city-wide GHG emissions inventory and CRVA have been completed. The CRCAP will be aligned with *Viksit* Gujarat Vision 2047.

In parallel, focused technical support on air quality management is being extended to Ahmedabad for implementing targeted mitigation measures at identified air pollution hotspots (December 2021-April 2025). Additionally, technical assistance was provided to AMC to comply with necessary monitoring and reporting requirements under the National Clean Air Programme through the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's (MoEFCC) PRANA portal.

In November 2024, the city approved a policy on "Good Construction Practices in Ahmedabad to Reduce Air Pollution". Aligned with this policy, AMC has installed over 100 dust sensors at large construction sites (built-up area of more than 20,000 m^2). Technical assistance was provided in developing software and mobile applications for tracking and monitoring air pollution sources through field inspections. ICLEI South Asia is also assisting AMC in enabling the automatic issuance of e-challans for violations related to the Pollution Under Control Certificate. This is being done by integrating the application programming interface of the National Informatics Centre, mParivahan website, and AMC's existing traffic surveillance infrastructure. Coordination with local, state, and national authorities is being facilitated to ensure effective implementation of various air pollution mitigation measures.

As part of community engagement, AMC was supported in organising awareness activities during World Environment Day and Swachh Vayu Day celebrations, with over 350 students participating in the events.

In acknowledgement of the city's noteworthy performance in improving air quality at both state and national levels, Ahmedabad was awarded incentive grants exceeding INR 70 million for FY 2024-25.

AMC has installed over 100 dust sensors at large construction sites (built-up area of more than 20,000 m^2)

To address the growing risk of heatwaves and the need for granular heat risk assessments, ICLEI South Asia is supporting TNGCC in developing an **Urban Heat Island Assessment and Strategic Guidelines for Urban Cooling**. The guidelines present a detailed ward-level heat risk analysis for the four cities of Chennai, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, and Tirunelveli,

March 2025, Tirunelveli: Tirunelveli has implemented a flood early warning system, which is equipped with upstream and downstream sensors feeding into a centralised monitoring hub.

using remote sensing and GIS-based tools to map vegetation, built environment, surface temperatures, and urban heat islands. Applying the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Hazard-Exposure-Vulnerability framework, it identifies heat-prone wards and analyses their links to built-up environment characteristics and socio-economic vulnerabilities. This will enable the formulation of targeted heat mitigation strategies, including green infrastructure, cool roofs, and nature-based urban design. The guidelines provide actionable recommendations for mainstreaming urban cooling strategies into Tamil Nadu's climate planning, infrastructure development, and community engagement processes.

ICLEI South Asia also supported the Tamil Nadu Department of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in conducting an **investment-grade energy audit at Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital, Chennai**, the state's largest public hospital. This effort aligns with Tamil Nadu's broader objectives under the "One Health and Climate" initiative, part of the National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health, which focuses on retrofitting hospitals for EE and climate resilience. The audit includes the identification and feasibility analysis of specific measures to improve energy performance across heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, plumbing systems, and electrical systems, as well as the integration of rooftop solar panels. These interventions are expected to generate annual energy savings of up to 3 million kWh and cost savings of INR 30 million. The audit also recommended improvements in water consumption, wastewater management and waste segregation and disposal. Deliberations are underway to implement the recommended actions, and the study is now being scaled up to include public health facilities across Tamil Nadu.

In the clean energy space, under the **Development of Offshore Wind Roadmap for Tamil Nadu** project (June 2023-December 2024), ICLEI South Asia led the preparation of a strategic roadmap with strategic recommendations to support early-stage development of offshore wind (OSW) energy in the state. Tamil Nadu is one of India's hubs identified for OSW energy, with 35 GW of OSW energy potential identified along the state's coastline by MNRE. In early 2024, India's first OSW-related tender was published by MNRE to kick-start activities by project developers to support the deployment of 4 GW of OSW projects in Tamil Nadu. The state has earmarked OSW as a key area for growth in the energy sector in its objective to become a US$1 trillion economy by 2030.

Developed to support these ambitions, Tamil Nadu's OSW roadmap was prepared in consultation with multiple stakeholders, including national and state government institutions, grid operators, equipment manufacturers, OSW project developers, investors, financial institutions, and R&D institutions. It outlines a strategy for early-stage OSW development, assessing the state's current energy landscape, providing an overview of the global OSW market and technology, mapping key stakeholders, identifying a trajectory for OSW development in Tamil Nadu, and opportunities for OSW-based power purchase, investment, and infrastructure needs. The roadmap provides recommendations spanning policy, governance, and institutional coordination, as well as market demand creation for OSW power, local industry-based development, financial mechanisms and incentives, and capacity and skill development to address the OSW ecosystem holistically.

The OSW roadmap was also presented to MNRE officials to facilitate its adoption within MNRE's broader OSW strategy and engagements with the state. In line with India's National OSW Energy Policy, the project advances global goals, particularly SDG 7

on clean energy, SDG 13 on climate action, and SDG 9 on innovation and infrastructure.

In central India, the Government of Madhya Pradesh is implementing the second phase of the Madhya Pradesh Urban Development Programme (MPUDP II) to strengthen urban governance and enhance basic services in selected towns. The state received support for strengthening its capacity in these efforts and for developing guidelines for Climate Change Action Plans (CCAPs), under the **Consultancy Service to Support Cities in Madhya Pradesh to Develop Climate Resilient Urban Infrastructure** (June 2024-June 2025).

A state-wide climate assessment was conducted to evaluate vulnerabilities and climate risks in small and medium-sized towns. The assessment covered urban infrastructure and utility service delivery, as well as institutional structures and financial capacities of urban local bodies.

Guidelines were prepared to assist towns in preparing their CCAPs, including identifying practical, inclusive, and context-specific actions to build climate resilience in key sectors such as water supply, sanitation, transportation, energy, solid waste management, and disaster management.

A framework was also prepared to support the towns in identifying and planning investments in green and climate-resilient infrastructure, with a focus on nature-based solutions and low-carbon development.

These outputs will inform the MPUDP II programme and align with programmes such as AMRUT 2.0 and *Swachh Bharat* Mission 2.0.

At the regional level, ICLEI South Asia organised the **Asia LEDS Partnership**'s flagship event, the ALP Forum 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand. More than 150 participants from 32 Asia-Pacific countries, including leaders, policymakers, practitioners and international experts, engaged in discussions, plenaries, and collaborative workshops. Key focus areas were regional cooperation, inclusive approaches, innovative solutions, and building resilient partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region.

Building on the success of the forum, the ALP hosted a side event at the three-day GCAP Global Workshop 2024 in Brazil. Held in parallel with the Clean Energy Ministerial and the G20 summit, the event highlighted cross-cutting themes within the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and LT-LEDS processes. The ALP facilitated discussions on 'just transition' strategies and solutions in Asia, with a focus on skill enhancement and workforce development in the transport and energy sectors. The participants shared country experiences on clean freight, electric mobility, and LEDS financing with an emphasis on data-driven climate action, collaboration, and integrated planning.

As part of the Secretariat's services for the ALP, the Leadership Group for Clean Transport in Asia launched a training series to support member countries in developing their upcoming Transport Sector NDCs. The training sessions addressed the need to support the NDC goals, leveraging electrification as an opportunity for economic and regional cooperation, as well as regulation-linked incentives and additional policy levers.

Bangkok, August 2024: Over 150 participants from 32 countries convened at the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum to discuss low-carbon development, with a focus on advancing regional cooperation, inclusivity, and innovation.

This was followed by a study tour to power facilities in the Province of Palawan, Philippines, which provided insights into local operations and highlighted the need to integrate innovative tools and strategies.

Subsequently, the ALP, jointly with partners, launched a training series on "Production Cost and Capacity Expansion Model Training using SIENNA," an open-source modelling framework for power sector planning for the energy sector that can be used by personnel, university students, and key stakeholders.

Towards the end of 2024, the ALP and partners organised a pre-event at the Environmentally Sustainable Transport Forum 2024 in Manila, themed "Sustainable Urban Mobility Solutions-Empowering Cities towards Low Carbon Pathways for Achieving Co-benefits and Economic Resilience in the SDGs Era". The plenaries explored innovative financing strategies, policies for catalysing effective and inclusive governance in the transport sector, and gender balance and inclusivity. A key highlight was the Regional Communique, led by the ALP with support from other partners, which culminated in its formal adoption by the Philippines.

ICLEI South Asia launched a centre for clean energy procurement, **Competitive Procurement Center (CPC)** at Bangkok, during the ALP Forum. The CPC serves as a central hub for best practices and technical assistance, promoting the transparent and competitive procurement of advanced energy systems, including clean energy, clean technologies, and related products or services, in support of the energy transition in the ASEAN region.

Managed and led by ICLEI South Asia, the CPC aims to assist stakeholders throughout the Southeast Asia region with research products, guidelines, template documents, and tailored advisory services, such as procurement model development, planning assistance, and evaluation criteria design, enabling efficient, transparent, and cost-effective clean energy procurement that accelerates renewable energy deployment in the region and thus supporting the regional decarbonisation goals.

Competitive procurement for clean energy, which includes tenders and renewable energy auctions, ensures cost-effectiveness, quality, and standardised technical specifications of energy and the energy products procured. A well-designed competitive mechanism streamlines

Managed and led by ICLEI South Asia, the CPC aims to assist stakeholders throughout the Southeast Asia region

the procurement decision-making. At the same time, a transparent timeline and process can boost investor confidence and encourage greater bidder participation, ultimately leading to increased deployment of clean energy projects and improved sustainability in the energy sector.

To strengthen regional city-to-city collaboration, the **US-South Asia Mayoral Platform on Sustainable Cities** was launched during the South Asia Clean Energy Forum in Jaipur in October 2024. This initiative establishes a collaborative bridge between cities in the US and South Asia, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and innovations in sustainable urban development. Twenty-four mayors and decision-makers from 15 US and South Asian cities participated in the platform's launch event and knowledge-sharing sessions.

The platform is designed to foster the development of low-carbon, climate-resilient urban infrastructure by pairing cities from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka with their counterparts in the US. Key focus areas include sustainable energy transitions, climate-responsive urban planning, green infrastructure, clean and inclusive mobility solutions, and integrated approaches to circular and sustainable waste management.

In South Asia, ICLEI South Asia's role as the technical coordinator for the **Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) for Climate & Energy–South Asia** programme has enabled the organisation to scale climate action across multiple cities. Technical assistance is being provided to 53 GCoM signatory cities in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. This support involves preparing climate action plans, enhancing their understanding of climate issues, including adaptation and mitigation strategies,

October 2024, Jaipur: Launched at the South Asia Clean Energy Forum, the US–South Asia Mayoral Platform connects cities across the region with US counterparts to advance low-carbon, climate-resilient urban development and sustainable city solutions.

and mobilising resources and financing for climate-resilient infrastructure projects.

Bhavnagar, India, has approved the CRCAP developed for the city as part of GCoM assistance. The CRCAP provides adaptation and mitigation strategies to enhance the city's climate resilience and reduce GHG emissions.

Additionally, Ahmedabad, India and Narayanganj in Bangladesh were provided with technical support to access finance for their climate-resilient infrastructure projects.

The GCoM Bankable Cities' Climate Projects supported two initiatives. One focuses on restoring the Siliguri watershed and developing the Mahananda riverfront through nature-based solutions. The other is Udaipur's Green Mobility Zone Programme.

Under the GCoM Business Matchmaking initiative, Shimla and Gangtok are being supported in holding discussions with European businesses and technology providers. A "smart parking" project, involving AI-powered monitoring, LED displays, and linked to the city tourism app for updates, was implemented in Shimla's Lift parking area (for accommodating 700 vehicles) and at the Old Bus Stand (for accommodating 150 vehicles), with support from Cocoparks, a French curb and parking management startup. Discussions were facilitated between Gangtok and Neo-Eco, a French company specializing in circular economy solutions, to provide tailored solutions for processing the city's solid waste.

ICLEI South Asia represented GCoM South Asia on national and international platforms, including the GCoM Asia Regional workshop and COP29. It shared crucial updates in Global Regional Coordination and Technical Working Group meetings. The Ahmedabad Mayor was also supported in representing the viewpoint of South Asian cities at the GCoM Board.

Building on its sustainable mobility efforts, ICLEI South Asia is supporting the Government of Himachal Pradesh in accelerating the state's electric mobility transition through strategic technical assistance and stakeholder coordination under the **Accelerating E-Mobility in Himachal Pradesh** project (June 2023–January 2026).

A comprehensive charging infrastructure strategy suited to the state's hilly terrain was conceptualised. ICLEI South Asia's work enabled the deployment of over 60 EV chargers, prioritising hotels and tourist destinations, and promoted e-mobility-linked eco-tourism. Support was provided for the development of over 2,000 km of green EV corridors across key tourism and intercity routes, backed by 41 fast chargers, and the installation of fast chargers at 23 fuel stations.

One of the most important contributions was facilitating the procurement of 297 electric buses.

ACCELERATING THE ELECTRIC SHIFT IN HP

- Conceptualised EV charging infrastructure strategy
- Enabled installation of 60+ EV chargers, particularly in hotels and tourist locations
- Supported the creation of green EV corridors over 2,000 km
- Facilitated procurement of 297 e-buses (India's largest state-level purchase)
- Informed budgetary discussions on state-supported charging stations and EV fleet procurement
- Influenced policy decisions such as the ban on procurement of new diesel vehicles for the government fleet and the introduction of a mining cess to fund EV ecosystem development
- Technical inputs informed state budget allocations, including INR 4200 million for electric bus procurement and INR 1200 million for depot upgrades.

This is the largest outright purchase by any state government in India to date. ICLEI South Asia's technical inputs also helped to identify appropriate locations for solar and battery energy storage-based chargers in districts where the electricity grid remains unreliable.

ICLEI South Asia also facilitated greater cooperation across various departments, including Transport and Tourism, as well as DISCOMs, urban local bodies, and the Skill Development Department, which helped ensure the integrated planning and rollout of EV initiatives.

This initiative is directly aligned with the Himachal Pradesh Electric Vehicle Policy 2022 and contributes to national missions and global and national climate goals.

In terms of knowledge outputs, an EV Readiness Framework was developed for Himachal Pradesh, along with district-wise infrastructure gap assessments, draft Terms of Reference for feasibility studies, and a training needs assessment for vocational skilling related to EV operations and maintenance. Nine multi-stakeholder workshops were also organised across the state, engaging over 300 participants from the government, industry, and civil society.

As a lead implementing partner of the **Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) E-Bus Mission** (June 2024–April 2025) in India, ICLEI South Asia provided detailed technical and strategic support to seven cities – Bhopal, Rajkot, Surat, Leh, Shimla, Indore, and Udaipur – to improve procurement and tendering processes for e-bus implementation.

Powering Sustainable Mobility

- Developed detailed city profiles to inform procurement and planning.
- Supported deployment of 692 e-buses across five cities — Surat (450), Shimla (68), Indore (40), Rakjot (124), and Leh (10).
- Provided technical assistance for tendering of 1,287 additional buses in Udaipur, Bhopal, Himachal Pradesh/HRTC, Indore and Surat.
- Delivered deep-dive support for the development of a detailed roadmap and public transport electrification proposal for Leh and SOP guidebooks for e-bus depot operations in Bhopal and Rajkot.
- Facilitated TAP financing applications for Rajkot, Shimla, and Udaipur.

This work aligns with national programmes such as PM-eBus Sewa and the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan, and supports global climate action, and air quality and sustainable mobility goals, including SDGs 3, 7, and 11.

The Sustainable Energy Transition (SET) in South Asia project aimed to support local governments in achieving ambitious climate and energy targets and improving their energy resilience. The project focused on promoting the adoption of high levels of RE and EE integration at the city-scale and specifically for municipal infrastructure.

To this end, energy demand forecasting was completed for Ahmedabad's major end-use sectors, including residential, commercial, industrial, municipal facilities, and transport. Appropriate solutions and implementation mechanisms were identified for energy efficiency,

December 2024, Himachal Pradesh: ICLEI South Asia supported the installation of 60+ EV chargers, creation of 2,000+ km of green corridors, and Himachal Pradesh's record purchase of 297 electric buses under the Accelerating E-Mobility in Himachal Pradesh project.

energy management and renewable integration in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation's (AMC) utility infrastructure and facilities.

Five training modules, covering SET planning and roadmap development, and SET enabling factors such as policies, governance, financing, business models, green building principles and technologies were developed, along with case studies of best practices, in collaboration with ICLEI World Secretariat.

With Ahmedabad showing keen interest in implementing the actions, two concept notes were developed. The first note concerns conducting a pre-feasibility study on deploying green hydrogen-powered public buses in the city. The second note focuses on establishing a centralised energy management system for AMC to monitor energy consumption trends, track the energy performance of municipal assets, and plan and optimise RE and EE projects in a data-driven and informed manner. The aim is to decarbonise municipal operations using evidence-based techniques.

In line with its work on building EE, ICLEI South Asia contributed to a global initiative promoting sustainable building practices, **GlobalABC Subnationals Action Group Report** on "Local Solutions for Green Buildings and Construction - Accelerated through Multilevel Action and Partnership" (September–October 2024). Hosted by UN Environment, the GABC Subnational Action Group comprises 330 members from 42 countries, including ICLEI. Good practices from South Asia, including Nagpur city's Zero Carbon Buildings Action Plan and the promotion of fly-ash bricks in sustainable construction in Bihar, were featured through ICLEI South Asia's contribution.

Beyond South Asia:

ICLEI SA has extended its expertise through the **Green Cities Action Plan** (GCAP) programme (2022-2026) in 14 Malaysian cities. This is in partnership with ICLEI Southeast Asia and the IMT-GT Joint Business Council Malaysia. In GCAP

September 2024, Desaru, Malaysia: The Green City Action Plans for Penang Island, Langkawi Island, Kota Bharu, and Kuching-Padawan were handed over to the Government of Malaysia at the 30th IMT-GT Ministerial Meeting.

Subproject-1 (December 2022-November 2024), action plans were prepared for Penang Island, Langkawi Island, Kota Bharu, and Kuching (Padawan). The GCAPs in the four cities collectively support a reduction of 3.2 million tCO2e by 2030.These GCAPs include the baseline assessment of critical urban systems, CRVAs, GHG emissions inventories, and priority low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure investment projects. Interventions s identified across the four GCAP cities include installation of solar PV in residential, commercial and municipal buildings, smart streetlighting, establishment of biomethanation plants (for conversion of waste to energy) and material recovery facilities, augmentation and replacement of water distribution pipelines, procurement of EV buses, public bicycle-sharing system, flood early warning system and installation of green/cool roofs on residential and commercial buildings.

These GCAPs were presented to the Government of Malaysia and the Asian Development Bank on the sidelines of the 30th Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) Ministerial Meeting in September 2024.

Under GCAP Subproject-2 (February 2025-November 2025), work has been initiated on developing the GCAPs for the cities of Ipoh, Kangar, Manjung, Teluk Intan, and Kulim Hi-tech in Malaysia. Two training workshops and virtual meetings were organised to build the capacity of local government officials on the approach and process of GCAP preparation and implementation.

Funding Partners

CapaCITIES-II & III – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Mainstreaming Climate Action in Three Cities in Andhra Pradesh – C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, Inc.

Development of CRCAP for Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) – GHMC

Development of CRCAP for Surat - C40 Cities Corporation

Chennai City Biodiversity Index, Urban Heat Island Assessment and Strategic Guidelines for Urban Cooling, and investment-grade energy audit at Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital, Chennai— Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company

Consultancy service to Support Cities in Madhya Pradesh to Develop Climate Resilient Urban Infrastructure — World Bank

Asia LEDS Partnership – National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Competitive Procurement Centre — USAID

US-South Asia Mayoral Platform on Sustainable Cities — USAID

Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy-South Asia – European Commission (via DAI)

Sustainable Energy Transition (SET) in South Asia – USAID through the South Asia Regional Energy Partnership (SAREP) programme

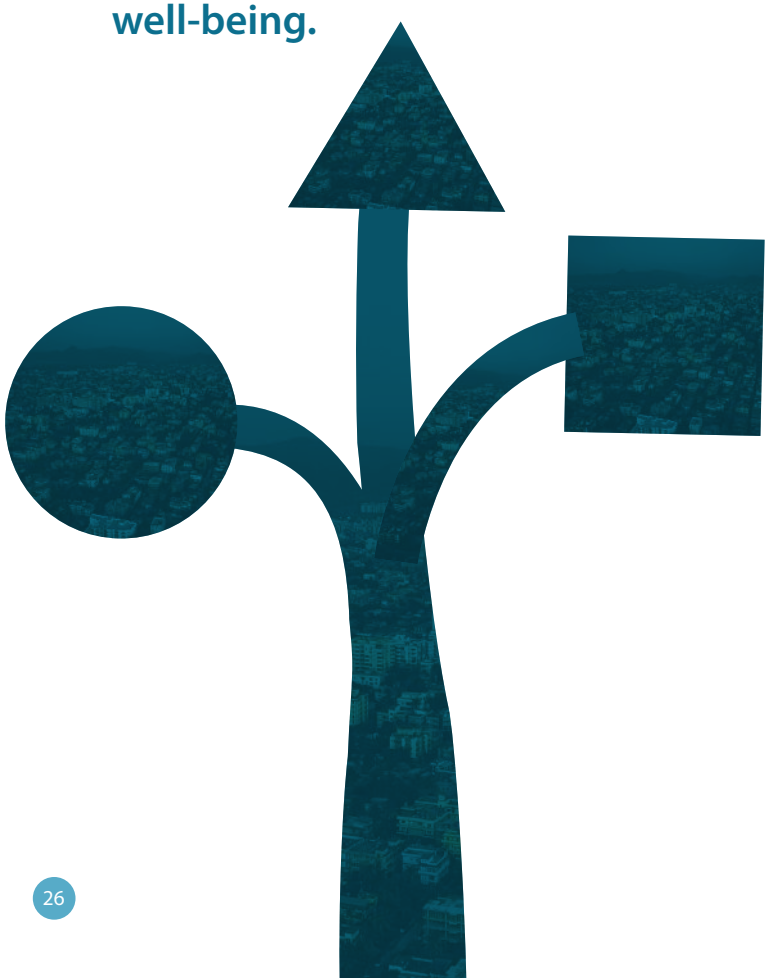
GlobalABC Subnationals Action Group Report on Local Solutions for Green Buildings and Construction - Accelerated through Multilevel Action and Partnership — GIZ

Malaysia GCAP Subprojects 1 and 2– Asian Development Bank

Source: unsplash

Equitable Development Pathway

Through this pathway, ICLEI South Asia assists local and regional governments in pursuing policies and strategies that prioritise well-being, empowerment, and participation of individuals and communities, strengthen social justice, and foster inclusive development for all. It helps cities improve the liveability of their natural and built environments to benefit public health and overall well-being.



ICLEI South Asia's work under the Urban95 programme was aimed at transforming Udaipur into a child-friendly city. The second phase of the programme was extended beyond January 2024, until June 2024. The focus during the extended period was on deepening the integration of Infant, Toddler, and Caregiver (ITC) principles into city systems, while also reinforcing the learnings from the three-year journey that began in 2021.

Two tools, namely the Infant, Toddler, and Caregiver (ITC) master checklist and Child Safety Guidelines' (CSG), were developed to inform the existing infrastructure frameworks, and act as a policy tool to strengthen child-centric city planning, respectively

A Detailed Project Report (DPR) was developed for retrofitting an Anganwadi Centre (AWC) into a Model Urban95 AWC, designed as a vibrant, inclusive, and engaging environment that fosters learning, safety, and joy. Similarly, a DPR was prepared for upgrading a Primary Health Centre (PHC), addressing gaps in caregiver comfort while creating engaging spaces for visiting children.

The Udaipur Municipal Corporation hosted its Annual Peer Learning and Exchange Workshop. With over 70 participants from across government departments, academia, NGOs, it served as a platform to share progress, challenges, and lessons from Urban95 Phase-II.

As a culmination of the programme, the Year 3 Assessment Report (Y3AR) — a reflection and a roadmap that documented project achievements and identified key challenges for the city towards achieving its vision of a child- and caregiver-friendly urban future was submitted.

The project officially concluded with a closure workshop in June 2024. Urban95 in Udaipur aimed

Source: unsplash

KEY OUTCOMES

- Developed ITC Master Checklist to integrate child- and caregiver-friendly elements into city infrastructure, strengthening existing state and municipal planning frameworks.
- Introduced Child Safety Guidelines to embed safety and caregiving considerations into urban design, supported by behavioural interventions and monitoring tools.
- Prepared detailed project reports for retrofitting an Anganwadi Centre and into a vibrant Model Urban95 facility with safe access, age-appropriate play spaces, and inclusive amenities.
- Prepared a report for upgrading a Primary Health Centre with child-friendly waiting areas, play features, improved access, and dedicated sanitation facilities.

at transforming the way infrastructure is perceived, shaping the city not merely as a space for movement, but as one for connection, nurturing, and belonging.

The ITC master checklist and Child Safety Guidelines were developed to inform the infrastructure frameworks, and to strengthen child-centric city planning, respectively.

Funding Partner

Urban95: Bernard Van Leer Foundation, Netherlands

Urban95's Annual Peer Learning and Exchange Workshop marked the closure of the programme.

Nature-based Development Pathway

Through this pathway, ICLEI South Asia works with local and regional governments to protect the natural environment, preserve and enhance biodiversity, and safeguard the ecosystem services that support urban life. Efforts focus on developing blue-green infrastructure and promoting nature-based solutions, contributing to global goals for biodiversity and ecosystem restoration. The pathway also highlights the integration of environmental considerations into policy-making and urban planning.

ICLEI South Asia supported more than 20 cities and towns across seven Indian states to mainstream biodiversity conservation and nature-based solutions into urban planning and governance. The work combined the use of tools, such as the City Biodiversity Index, People's Biodiversity Registers, and Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, alongside innovative pilots like the food garden initiative in New Delhi and urban greening projects. These efforts collectively enhanced local capacities, informed state and national biodiversity frameworks, and promoted inclusive, climate-resilient development.

The **Development of Urban Food Gardens in 75 Municipal Schools in 4 Mega-Cities in India** project (April 2024- April 2027) is a unique initiative that aims to improve nutrition for children and enhance biodiversity in municipal schools. It aims to set up 75 urban food gardens in municipal schools across Bengaluru, Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad to encourage and facilitate learning, and improve awareness about the importance of growing one's own food. These sustainable green spaces will give students firsthand experience with natural processes such as pollination and plant growth cycles, and will supply a greater variety of fresh produce for their midday meals.

Sixteen gardens have been developed in New Delhi, covering an area of 1148 sq. metre, and are producing 28 vegetable varieties. Such micro-habitats increase crop diversity, address the challenges of waterlogging and enhance overall produce availability. Quarterly biodiversity surveys have recorded a total of 499 species of birds, insects, mammals, reptiles in these gardens, emphasising the educational and ecological importance of the initiative.

Work will soon begin in municipal schools in Bengaluru, Kolkata, and Hyderabad. The food gardens are being established within municipal

Source: unsplash

school premises, directly integrating food production into the school environment, and are aligned with India's School Nutrition Garden Scheme.

In Ahmedabad, ICLEI South Asia provided technical support to **Urban Greening Policy Measures for a Greener Ahmedabad** project (December 2024- July 2025), a city-wide initiative to enhance and preserve green spaces, improve biodiversity, and build climate resilience.

A ward-wise assessment of Ahmedabad's existing green cover was conducted, supported by a 20-year timeline analysis, to identify the areas with the highest increase in greenery and those showing a decline. Extensive consultations with the city authorities and subject-matter experts were held. The policy guidelines focus on promoting tree plantation in public and private areas, conserving existing trees, improving biodiversity, adopting scientific greening practices, increasing tree survival rate, and developing diverse green spaces such as urban forests, rooftop gardens, and oxygen parks.

The initiative highlighted the need for governing tree-pruning and tree-felling activities, along with proper disposal and management of green waste. A key focus was on ensuring active community participation, with clear mechanisms proposed to encourage citizen involvement in urban greening initiatives.

The project aligns with Mission LiFE–*Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam*, the *Panchamrit* commitments, Ahmedabad's 'Mission Million Trees' campaign, and the Ahmedabad Net-zero CRCAP.

In Kochi, Kerala, canals have been identified as a critical ecosystem, and the city is undertaking several initiatives to plan, maintain and monitor their rejuvenation. ICLEI South Asia is supporting the city in this effort through two projects.

Under the **Kochi Smart Canal** project (October 2023-March 2026), rejuvenation work is being carried out in Fort Kochi's Pandarachirathodu canal to build climate resilience in the city. The project aims to design and implement a financing model for supporting and undertaking green-grey infrastructure for canal restoration. A feasibility report for restoration has been developed following a detailed field study and analysis of the canal.

Sixteen gardens have been developed in New Delhi, covering an area of 1148 sq. metre producing 28 vegetable varieties

November 2024, Kochi: View from Pandarachirathodu canal near Kochupally Road bridge. The Kochi Smart Canal project aims to design and implement a financing model for supporting and undertaking green-grey infrastructure for canal restoration.

Likewise, under the **INTERACT-Bio** project (December 2016- December 2024), ICLEI South Asia has established floating wetlands in the Thevera-Perandoor canal in Kochi for its restoration. Floating wetlands are artificial floating platforms planted with vegetation that help to improve water quality by absorbing excess nutrients, improving dissolved oxygen levels, and reducing the spread of algal blooms. Ten floating wetlands have been established in one section of the Thevera-Perandoor canal. Regular cleaning and maintenance are being carried out, while also monitoring water quality parameters in the area. Due to the low cost and high impact of the initiative, the city is planning to replicate this in other canals.

At the state and city levels, ICLEI South Asia advanced work also on several biodiversity assessment and planning tools in the central, southern and south-western regions of the country.

The **City Biodiversity Indexes (CBI) for the cities of Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Kadapa, and**

November 2024, Delhi: Students harvest produce from a municipal school food garden in New Delhi

Understanding Biodiversity, Ecosystem services, and Biodiversity Governance under CBIs help cities to assess and strengthen their biodiversity conservation efforts.

44 rural and five urban registers have been completed, with the remaining in the final stages of fieldwork and data compilation

Tirupati (February 2024- January 2025) in Andhra Pradesh were developed. The CBI will help the cities to assess and strengthen their biodiversity conservation efforts. Using 23 quantitative indicators, the CBI measures a city's native biodiversity, ecosystem services, and governance, enabling them to benchmark progress and set conservation priorities.

In Tamil Nadu, ICLEI South Asia's collaboration with the state's climate agency continues to expand. Through the Project Management Unit (PMU) with the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company (TNGCC), the **City Biodiversity Index (CBI) for Chennai** has been released, a first for Tamil Nadu, to help assess and improve its efforts to protect urban biodiversity. This document serves not only as a reference point for the Greater Chennai Corporation to monitor and track its progress, but also supports awareness creation, institutional coordination, and the integration of biodiversity conservation and ecosystem revitalisation within city-level policies and planning. This study can serve as a benchmark for other cities to undertake similar efforts.

The CBI of Bengaluru was developed under the **Sustainable Urban Development in the Backdrop of Climate Change in Bengaluru: Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Urban Planning** project (February 2023- July 2024), for integrating biodiversity conservation into Bengaluru's urban planning processes. ICLEI South Asia documented Bengaluru's existing biodiversity, mapped ecosystems and their health, and reviewed the status of biodiversity governance in the city. These findings formed the basis of its CBI, which included indicator-specific recommendations for strengthening biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming nature-based solutions into urban policies.

Similarly, the **Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans** (LBSAPs) for Bhopal and Indore (March 2023 – April 2024) were prepared through assessments of biodiversity governance systems, evaluations of the health of natural ecosystems, and stakeholder consultations. The initiative aimed to strengthen the cities' capacities to apply nature-based solutions for climate action. In line with India's recently revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the LBSAPs highlight critical ecosystems in the two cities and propose both "hard" and "soft" measures to improve the health of these ecosystems, while addressing the challenges of urbanisation and climate change. The plans offer a practical framework for mainstreaming biodiversity into urban planning, ensuring healthier ecosystems, greater resilience, and long-term ecological sustainability.

As the designated Technical Support Group (July 2017 – January 2026) selected for developing **People's Biodiversity Registers** (PBRs) in Goa, ICLEI South Asia has covered 56 villages and 11 municipalities in the state for the purpose. Mandated under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, PBRs are legally recognised documents prepared by Biodiversity Management Committees to record local biological resources and associated traditional knowledge.

So far, 44 rural and five urban registers have been completed, with the remaining in the final stages of fieldwork and data compilation.

ICLEI South Asia has also documented the diversity of grass species under the **Study to Document Diversity of Grasses in Grassland Ecosystems in the Protected Areas in Goa** project (October 2023-October 2024). Following detailed studies, 104 native grass species were recorded. To further understand their diversity, grass species have been classified site-wise into palatable and non-palatable categories, and also in accordance with the International Union for Conservation of Nature classification. This is essential to assess the floral composition, understand the extent of degradation, and develop effective and appropriate restoration plans for these unique ecosystems that provide a range of benefits.
In 2023, ICLEI South Asia had identified 48 species after studying nine grasslands, including Succoro, Pilerne, Sosogad, Collem, Nandran, Verna, Pale, Ram and Ravon Dongor, Surla, and Quitol over two seasons.

The three-year **Need for an Urban Policy on Khazans – Ensuring Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Urban Development** project (April

Goa, India: Khazans, with their embankments, canals, and sluice gates, exemplify how traditional knowledge sustains food security and biodiversity.

2021 – April 2024) concluded successfully, making a significant contribution to the state's ecological planning. As the first initiative of its kind, the project focused on safeguarding and integrating Khazans, Goa's ancient and unique traditional farmlands, into sustainable urban development planning, while recognising their vital role in addressing climate change and food security.

A 20-year time-series analysis revealed a significant decline in Khazans due to urbanisation and changes in land-use pattern. Pre- and post-monsoon biodiversity surveys across various species, including birds, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians, and insects, highlighted the rich biodiversity and vulnerability of these ecosystems. The findings reaffirm that traditional ecological knowledge remains highly relevant, offering modern applications for climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets.

Key outputs of the project include a map of current Khazan cultivation areas to support future planning and protection, a strategy and action plan for urban Khazan management, and a pictorial handbook illustrating their ecosystem services.

Khazans are characterised by intricate networks of sluice gates, embankments, and canals designed to control the flow of saltwater and freshwater, enabling rice cultivation and aquaculture in areas prone to tidal flooding. Beyond their agricultural and aquatic productivity, Khazans support biodiverse landscapes and serve as a vital nature-based solution, contributing to climate resilience, food security, and ecological preservation.

Funding Partners

Development of Urban Food Gardens in 75 Municipal Schools in 4 Mega-Cities in India – Amazon

Kochi Smart Canal - Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA)

INTERACT-Bio – BMUV through the International Climate Initiative (IKI)

City Biodiversity Indexes (CBI) for Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Kadapa, and Tirupati - Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board

Development of Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans and City Biodiversity Index of Bhopal and Indore – Madhya Pradesh State Biodiversity Board

Sustainable Urban Development in the Backdrop of Climate Change in Bengaluru – Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Urban Planning – Bengaluru Sustainability Forum

Goa People's Biodiversity Registers – Goa State Biodiversity Board

Need for an Urban Policy on Khazans – Azim Premji University

Study to Document Diversity of Grasses in Grasslands of Goa – Research and Utilisation Department, Goa Forest Department

Urban Greening Policy Measure for a Greener Ahmedabad - Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation

Source: unsplash

Resilient Development Pathway

Through the Resilient Development pathway, ICLEI South Asia helps local and regional governments, and the communities within, embed resilience into their strategies and lay the groundwork for recovery following shocks and stresses. Actions strengthen essential systems, enhancing cities' ability to safeguard citizens from man-made and natural hazards. A transparent and inclusive approach is promoted to build trust in institutions and processes.

ICLEI South Asia supported 15 cities across five countries to prepare adaptation and resilience plans, piloting inclusive and gender-responsive urban initiatives, strengthening institutional capacities, and advancing SDG localization, while also engaging in regional and global exchanges to align local priorities with national and international climate goals.

The third phase of the **Climate and Development Knowledge Network** (CDKN) programme (July 2022-February 2027) is strengthening locally led action by supporting eight cities in four countries. Led by ICLEI South Asia, the programme focuses on assessing disaster preparedness using Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and preparing gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) integrated disaster resilience plan in Kakinada and Vijayawada in India; Dhulikhel and Karjanha in Nepal; Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari in Bangladesh; and Nuwara Eliya and Kandy in Sri Lanka.

During the reporting year, the team supported the development of Local Adaptation Plans for Action (LAPA) for two Nepalese cities, climate-induced disaster risk reduction (DRR) action plans for two cities in Bangladesh, and Local Adaptation Plans for two Sri Lankan cities.

India: Urban Climate Resilience

ICLEI South Asia partnered with the Kakinada Municipal Corporation (KMC) and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) in Andhra Pradesh to assess their disaster preparedness using the Disaster Resilience Scorecard for Cities developed by UNDRR. This assessment is being used to formulate climate-induced DRR actions that integrate GESI and EbA principles, which will form the addendum to their existing CRCAPs.

Source: unsplash

CDKN: Encouraging ecosystem-based livelihood options in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

- In Kakinada, a stakeholder consultation workshop, led by the Commissioner of KMC, validated disaster resilience scoring and gathered local inputs. Focus group discussions (FGD) held with traditionally marginalised groups, especially women, fisherfolk and daily wage earners, highlighted preparedness, the role of such groups in disaster management, and the equity of relief mechanisms.
- These dialogues helped shift the city's focus from post-disaster response to anticipatory and inclusive planning.
- Sustained engagement with CDKN Asia increased capacity, understanding and greater adoption of inclusive and participatory approaches by KMC officials to disaster resilience.
- Likewise, sustained engagement with CDKN Asia strengthened VMC's institutional awareness and readiness to embed GESI in climate and disaster resilience planning. VMC asked CDKN Asia to lead a technical session at a multi-city workshop. Strong participation by senior VMC officials at the workshop signalled their commitment to gender-transformative urban climate action.

August 2024, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, India: Focus group discussions with traditionally marginalised groups, especially women, fisherfolk, and daily wage earners.

Nepal: Locally Led Adaptation Planning

In Karjanha and Dhulikhel, LAPAs are being developed using ICLEI's ClimateResilientCities Methodology and the LAPA framework of the Ministry of Forest and Environment (MoFE), Government of Nepal. Ward-specific CRVAs and discussions with women and marginalised groups informed challenges and adaptation needs, helping to shape a more inclusive and effective LAPA. Both cities have committed to co-fund selected initiatives through knowledge-to-action projects, aligned with the country's National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Climate Change Policy 2019, and NDCs.

Bangladesh: Climate-Induced DRR Planning

Nilphamari and Lalmonirhat are developing locally-led climate-induced DRR action plans. Two multi-stakeholder workshops and several ward-level focussed group discussions with municipal officials, NGOs, community groups, and women-led organisations revealed local adaptation practices, past hazard experiences, and institutional challenges. The plans align with the country's Disaster Management Act 2012, as well as SDGs 5, 6, 11 and 13.

Sri Lanka: Localised Climate Adaptation

Nuwara Eliya and Kandy are receiving technical support to prepare local climate adaptation plans aligned with the National Climate Change Policy and NAP. In January 2025, ICLEI South Asia, jointly with the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities, trained 70 municipal officials from both cities on plan development.

Beyond these country-level interventions, ICLEI South Asia also facilitated regional and global knowledge sharing under CDKN which is listed as under:

- Cross-Regional Peer Exchange: CDKN Asia and CDKN Africa organised a five-day peer exchange in Makueni County, Kenya, focused on devolved climate finance. Delegates from Nepal, including MoFE and municipal officials, interacted with Kenya's National Treasury and Council of Governors, and visited project sites to learn about Kenya's community-driven, decentralised climate finance models.
- Strengthening City Leadership:
  - Organised DRR and urban resilience training in Dhaka for 30 officials from urban local government institutions and the Municipal Association in Bangladesh under the Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030) initiative
  - Supported VMC's participation in the Regional Training on Enhancing Climate and Disaster Risk Resilience, Bangkok, hosted by Asian Institute of Technology–Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific under MCR2030.
  - Convened a technical session at World Urban Forum-12 in Cairo, showcasing Indian cities' climate action experiences

- Knowledge Outputs:
  - Training modules on climate adaptation in Sri Lanka, and local DRR planning
  - Inclusive LAPA methodology (Nepal) and inclusive DRR Strategy (Bangladesh)
  - Two blogs: *Better Urban Planning and Design to Build Heat Resilience and Implementing Locally-Led Adaptation in Bangladesh*

ICLEI South Asia also advanced knowledge uptake through the **Research for Impact Hub of Climate Adaptation and Resilience Programme of IDRC (CLARE R4I Hub)**, which promotes the use of existing knowledge, tools, and data for decision makers in Asia, and others supporting science-based climate action.

In Rajkot, a climate-resilient and gender-equitable plan for street vending zones is being developed, jointly with the Mahila Housing SEWA Trust, building on the city's Urban Cooling Action Plan and CRCAP. The plan—one of the first gender-inclusive street vending strategies in India—is based on a baseline assessment and FGDs across nine vending zones, and aligns with the national and state policies like Street Vendors Act, 2014, *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana*-National Urban Livelihoods Mission, PM Street Vendor's *AtmaNirbhar Nidhi* and the Gujarat Street Vendors Scheme.

Narayanganj's Heat Action Plan uses CDKN's Heat Resilience Toolkit, and is aligned with key policies of Bangladesh.

Narayanganj's Heat Action Plan (HAP) will be the first for a city in Bangladesh. The plan, being developed jointly with Narayanganj City Corporation, integrates local context, topography, socio-economic data, and community knowledge. It will be informed by 800+ community surveys, GIS-based hotspot analysis, and gap assessments of infrastructure, governance and financial resources. The HAP uses CDKN's Heat Resilience Toolkit, and is aligned with key national policies such as the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 and NAP 2023–2050, enabling the city to incorporate heat resilience strategies into its Annual Development Plan and budget proposals. The HAP creates a direct pathway for local governments to seek alignment with national climate finance mechanisms.

MuAN, in collaboration with ICLEI South Asia, developed a training manual and conducted a Training of Trainers programme to build the capacity of provincial municipal learning centres in developing inclusive LAPAs. The training, which emphasised integrating GESI, NbS, and EbA, also gathered participant feedback to finalise the training manual. The initiative is aligned with the Government of Nepal's target to ensure that all 753 local governments have LAPAs in place by 2030.

Complementing these regional initiatives, ICLEI South Asia also launched a milestone project in the Maldives, supporting its capital, Male City, in developing its first **Voluntary Local Review (VLR)** to track progress on the SDGs. As one of the most densely populated cities globally and hosting nearly half the country's 5.2 lakh population, Malé needs a VLR to drive national sustainability efforts to align local planning with the SDGs and inform its Strategic Action Plan (2026-2030). The VLR will help identify data gaps, progress and challenges, and strengthen collaboration with national and international partners.

In October 2024, the Malé City Council organised an inception meeting to officially launch the VLR process. The VLR Methodology is based on the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Regional Guidelines, and involves a consultative and participatory process being undertaken by the Malé City Council, jointly with the Ministry of Finance and Planning, and Maldives Bureau of Statistics, and with technical support from UNESCAP and ICLEI South Asia. The VLR is being developed with the active participation of civil society and other stakeholders to gather their feedback on recommendations and SDG targets.

Malé will become the first island city in South Asia, and one among three cities in the region to develop its VLR, all achieved with technical assistance extended by ICLEI South Asia and UNESCAP (October 2024–June 2025). This will be a milestone for the Maldives, which champions the interests of small island developing states (SIDS) in international climate negotiations, and for Malé

city, threatened by climate change risks such as rising sea levels, urban flooding and the heat island effect.

ICLEI South Asia also supports the **UrbanShift** project by organising and conducting capacity-building initiatives jointly with the project partners. The Indonesia City Academy, held in Jakarta in August 2024 under the project, addressed key challenges facing rapidly urbanising regions, and strengthened city capacities on nature-based solutions, city action planning and the circular economy. About 100 urban leaders, planners and sustainability experts from Indonesia, India, China, the Philippines and Malaysia participated in three days of intensive training sessions and workshops focused on these themes.

India was represented by delegates from the National Institute of Urban Affairs (including its Director), senior IAS officials, Government of Puducherry staff. Puducherry, an UrbanShift project city, shared its efforts to rejuvenate ponds and tanks to tackle water scarcity, with community participation. Groundwork also began for an UrbanShift Geospatial Lab, which will conduct GIS-based data analysis and strategy development, with ICLEI Global providing extensive data and technical support.

UrbanShift has strengthened institutional capacity in Puducherry, including building pathways for accessing climate finance, and developing comprehensive mobility plans to promote low carbon transport in the districts of Karaikal, Yanam and Mahe. These plans will directly inform their Comprehensive Development Plans.

In Chennai, the eco-restoration of Kadapakkam Lake began in August 2024, adopting a nature-based approach to mitigate the impact of flooding and drought, conserve biodiversity, provide a natural recreational space, and assess the economic benefits of the lake's restoration.

In its first year, the **Community Led Climate Resilient Water Security in Two Tea Garden Districts in Northern West Bengal** (CLAP) project (December 2023–November 2026) helped empower tea garden communities in North Bengal to tackle water scarcity through bottom-up, climate-resilient water security planning.

The project aims to build the capacity of local communities as barefoot hydrogeologists, and create a platform for local governments to engage with communities and other stakeholders, to co-create and implement water security plans, besides their scaling up and sustainability in North Bengal. To this end, the initiative successfully introduced hydrological literacy to the community, quantified the extent of water scarcity, and transformed the prevalent planning process from a top-down to a bottom-up, community-led approach.

CLAP particularly emphasises the integral participation of local women. By reducing the time and labour involved in water collection, enhanced access to sanitation, the project promises to lighten the physical burden on women for collecting water, offering them time to explore

August 2024, Jakarta, Indonesia: Gino Van Begin, Secretary General, ICLEI (L-R 3); Dr. Debolina Kundu, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs, India (L-R 4); and Emani Kumar (L-R 8), Executive Director, ICLEI South Asia and Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI, at the Indonesia City Academy of the UrbanShift project.

December 2024, Rihini Kothidara village, Kurseong, West Bengal, India: Focus group discussion with local women on water security under the CLAP project.

opportunities for further education, alternative income generation, and better quality of health.

Implemented across deep-dive remote tea garden hamlets of Daragaon, Bahidardhura, Godamdhura and Kothidara in Darjeeling and Kurseong, the community-led approach was backed by 15 focus group discussions, eight key informant interviews with government and tea estate officials, four participatory rural appraisals, several community-led transect walks, water source surveys, and household surveys. Our findings revealed water scarcity in all hamlets, caused by various local factors, as well as the minimal reach of government water supply schemes in the region. These findings have been documented in a baseline report on water security and climate change for the four hamlets, besides a list of potential interventions and resource maps.

The next phase of the project will focus on preparing water security plans, piloting interventions, and training community members as barefoot hydrogeologists. The initiative has linkages to sub-national, national, and international programmes such as *Jal Dharo Jal Bharo*, Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT, *Swachh Bharat* Mission, and WASH programmes of different international agencies. The outcomes of this project could serve as a blueprint for similar challenges in other tea garden regions in the Darjeeling Himalayas.

The **Enhancing Local Capacities in Socially Inclusive Resilience in Asia** (SIRA) project (May 2024-June 2026) aims to design and deliver tailored training modules to strengthen the capacity of local governments and climate practitioners to support inclusive climate-resilient urban development. It also seeks to empower disadvantaged groups, especially women, in local development planning and decision-making, and disseminate learnings across the Asia Pacific through regional or global networks and conferences

The project covers Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia and the Philippines, with ICLEI South Asia leading the implementation in Bangladesh and Nepal.

During the year, local governments in Nepal and Bangladesh were supported in integrating climate resilience in their budgets, with a focus on GESI, particularly in solid waste management, disaster risk resilience, inclusive urban planning, and nature-based solutions. These steps have laid a strong foundation for delivering impactful, needs-based training to strengthen the climate resilience capacity of local governments and communities.

Stakeholder consultations with municipalities, academia, NGOs, development partners and national government training institutes highlighted the need to engage youth and integrate gender perspectives into local-level climate resilience policy and planning. Strong linkages between academic institutions and municipal bodies were identified as important to ensure that research and evidence are effectively translated into actionable and inclusive local policies.

These efforts were supported by targeted interviews and assessments, stakeholder engagement, and training design. Comprehensive Country Needs Assessment reports were developed, mapping key national and local climate change policies, institutional actors, and the capacity-building needs.

High-level outreach at SIRA's launch events fostered early ownership and visibility, engaging 27 national and local stakeholders in Bangladesh, and over 40 experts and stakeholders in Nepal, helping to shape training priorities. Sixteen cities were then selected in each country for structured capacity-building on climate resilience.

Looking ahead, SIRA will introduce internships for up to 60 young professionals from underrepresented groups, including women, to support local adaptation planning and decision-making. The project aligns with national frameworks like the National Adaptation Plan and Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and contributes to SDGs 11, 13 and17, enabling local governments to access national funding mechanisms and influence local budget allocations in line with national climate objectives.

In addition to initiatives that mitigate disaster impact, ICLEI South Asia is also implementing the **Assessing and Managing Loss and Damage: Local-level Evidence to Inform Global-level Action in Gujarat State** project. The project, being implemented in Ahmedabad and Surat (March 2024–September 2025), is developing a framework to assess economic and non-economic loss and damage from extreme climatic events

October 2024: Online launch of the SIRA project in Bangladesh, engaging municipality officials, academia, development partners, and others.

such as floods, extreme heat and droughts, and to outline a management plan to address these impacts.

In India, loss and damage assessment is conducted at the district level through District Disaster Management Plans (DDMP). This project will be the first such effort at the city scale. Following the recent amendment to the Disaster Management Act 2025, Urban Disaster Management Authorities (UDMA) are being set up in capitals and large cities, chaired by the Municipal Commissioner, with the District Collector as vice-chair, to prepare Urban Disaster Management Plans.

The loss and damage assessment framework developed under this framework can dovetail with the Urban Disaster Management Plan, and can help bolster the case for funding disaster response and recovery efforts by aligning with the Loss and Damage Fund, established by the UNFCCC.

A comprehensive baseline report has been prepared, highlighting existing global, national, state and district-level frameworks for computing loss and damage (economic and non-economic) from extreme events, along with vulnerabilities of urban systems and communities in Ahmedabad and Surat.

A sub-component of the project is also being implemented in Udaipur, Rajasthan, which is assessing the impact of loss and damage on children across six critical areas essential to their well-being: health, education, WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene), nutrition, protection, and cultural identity. The assessment draws on policy plans, reports, and published literature, with a focus on extreme weather events such as floods and extreme heat.

Funding Partners

CDKN – Directorate-General for International Cooperation, The Netherlands and International Development Research Centre, Canada

Research for Impact Hub of Climate Adaptation and Resilience Programme of IDRC (CLARE R4I Hub), – The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom; International Development Research Centre, Canada

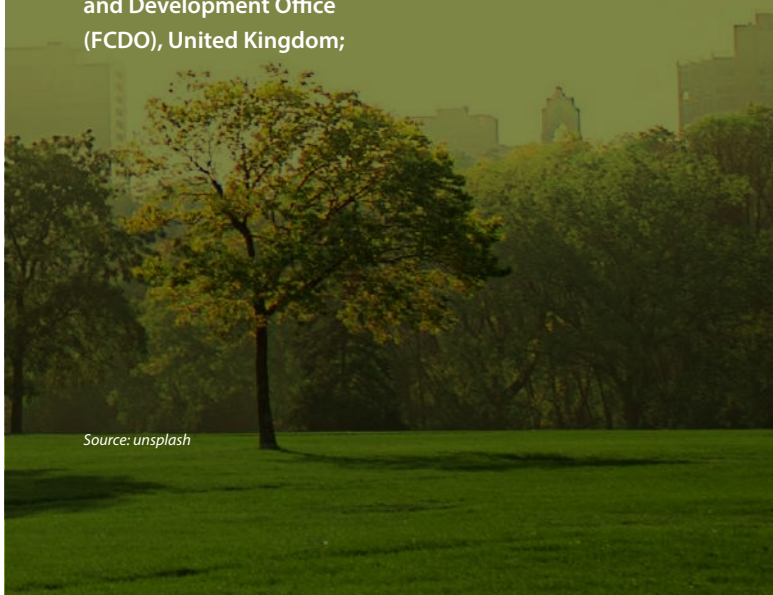
Maldives Voluntary Local Review - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Enhancing Local Capacities in Socially Inclusive Resilience in Asia (SIRA) - Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom; International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

UrbanShift - Global Environment Facility (GEF) via ICLEI World Secretariat

Assessing and Managing Loss and Damage: Local-level Evidence to Inform Global-level Action in Gujarat State - United Nations Office for Project Service

Community Led Climate Resilient Water Security in Northern West Bengal (CLAP) - Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Kingdom, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada



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Circular Development Pathway

Through this pathway, ICLEI South Asia supports local and regional governments in adopting resource looping, adaptation, and ecological regeneration. It encourages a shift away from the linear take-make-dispose model of production and consumption, advancing the decoupling of economic growth from resource depletion and environmental harm. Cities are guided to ensure equitable access to resources and to create closed-loop urban and peri-urban systems.

Under ICLEI's **City Food Programme**, ICLEI South Asia completed the first phase of the '**Strengthening Local Fresh Food Markets for Healthier Food Environments within Planetary Boundaries**' project in September 2024. The initiative leveraged food markets to promote healthier and more diverse diets, facilitate city-to-city exchange on best practices related to food markets, and support local governments in assessing food-related challenges and opportunities.

Rourkela city's 'Cold Room Project' in Odisha, which helps combat post-harvest food loss by installing solar-powered cold storage units, was developed into a case study. The study underscores smart solutions to strengthen food systems, and how the city has made significant strides in initiatives such as reshaping markets to prevent distress sales by farmers, ensuring food security for all, and promoting community participation and women's empowerment in food intervention planning. It also shows how the city is working towards achieving a healthy, safe, and sustainable food environment strengthened by strong institutional, social, and economic infrastructure.

The case study was published in the 'CityFood Market Handbook for Healthy and Resilient Cities', launched at the Climate Chance Europe-Africa Summit in Marseille, France. The handbook compiles 16 real-world case studies from cities across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. It provides concrete examples of how markets can be reimagined as inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered spaces, showcasing how food is accessed, consumed, and valued in cities.

As part of the project, ICLEI World Secretariat organised two city-to-city virtual exchange workshops in May and July 2024, titled 'CityFood Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Fresh Food Markets',

Source: unsplash

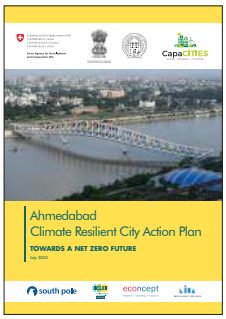
May 2024: CityFood Peer-to-Peer Exchange on Fresh Food Markets,' a city-to-city virtual exchange workshop, was organised to foster knowledge sharing across countries and regions.

to foster knowledge sharing across countries and regions.

Under the second phase of the project, launched in November 2024, ICLEI South Asia is inviting cities in the region that have implemented initiatives on healthy food practices and markets to share their experiences, exchange information on challenges and opportunities, and explore ways to strengthen local food markets to improve access to healthy and sustainable food. Based on this process, selected cities will develop case studies on food practices and markets, which will be featured under the CityFood Programme.

In another initiative, ICLEI South Asia developed the 'Handbook for Biomethanation, Composting, Material Recovery Facility and Low Value Plastic Recycling: Current Practices & Business Models' for urban local bodies, planners, decision-makers, and business developers. Several technology providers were interviewed to develop case studies on technology-based business models in India. The handbook highlights on-ground challenges and offers key recommendations for consideration when setting up plastic waste processing facilities.

Publications



Ahmedabad Climate Resilient City Action Plan

https://southasia.iclei.org/publication/ahmedabad-climate-resilient-city-action-plan/

Child Safety Guidelines – Udaipur 2024

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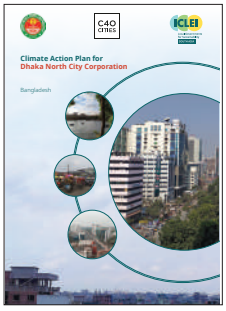

Climate Action Plan for Dhaka North City Corporation

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Rapid Behavioural Assessment Report - Udaipur

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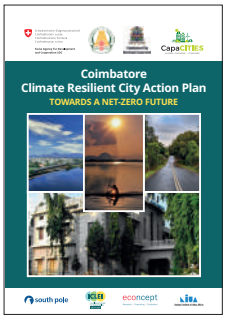

Coimbatore Climate Resilient City Action Plan

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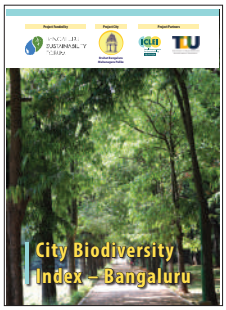
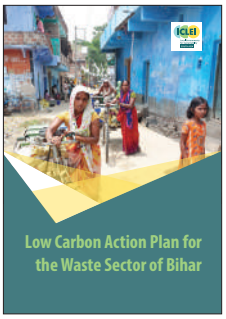


City Biodiversity Index - Bangaluru

https://southasia.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/City-Biodiversity-Index-Bangaluru.pdf



Low Carbon Action Plan for the Waste Sector of Bihar

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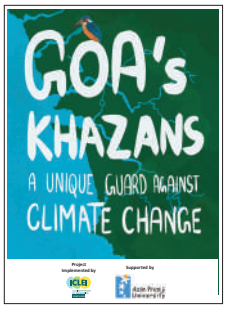

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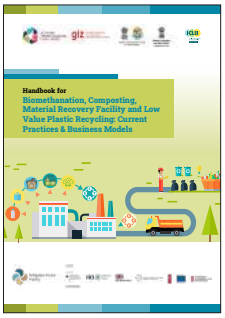

Handbook for Biomethanation, Composting, Material Recovery Facility and Low Value Plastic Recycling: Current Practices & Business Models

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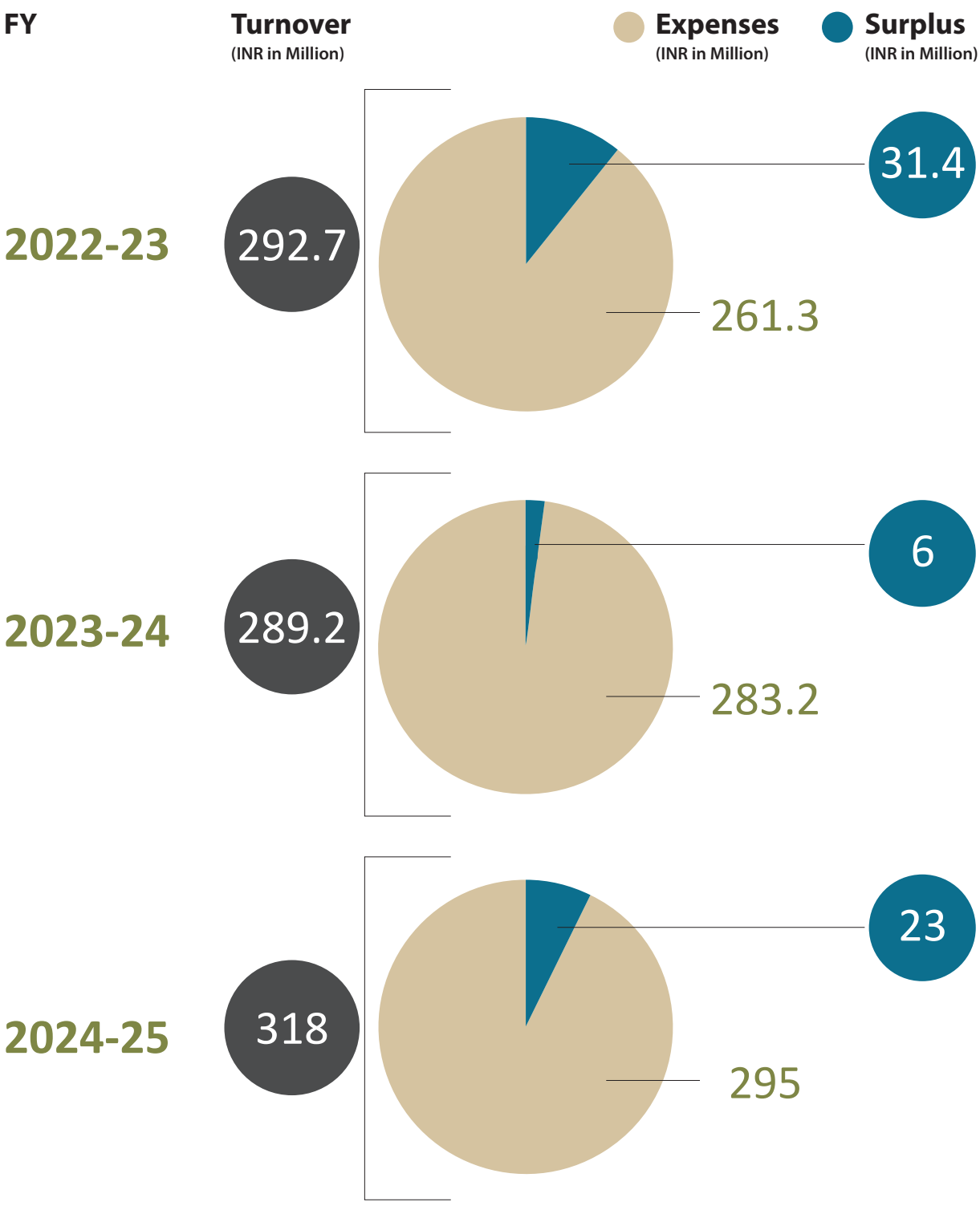
Three-Year **Financials**

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability South Asia



Making **Headlines**

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN BIODIVERSITY

'Major problem water bodies experience is encroachments'

DEEPIKA PASHAM
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HYDERABAD

The problems water bodies experience in most of the states is encroachments and lack of technical expertise, opined experts at a National Conference on Urban Biodiversity in Hyderabad. Musi River's pollution and State governments wing Hyderabad Disaster Response Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) remained the focal points in the conference.

It was hosted by the National Biodiversity Authority, Chennai, and ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability, South Asia.

It has brought together mayors, municipal commissioners, policymakers, environmental experts, forest officials, and urban planners from 35 cities in India, to discuss the pressing issue of biodiversity conservation in urban environments.

The knowledge exchange was on how cities across India can integrate biodiversity conservation into urban development.

Sanjay Prasad, Urban Planner, Kurseong Municipality and Dr Pranita Umredkar, General Manager, Environment Division, Nagpur Smart and Sustainable City Development Corporation has detailed that every State has common urban challenges, mostly encroachments near water bodies and open spaces, Invasive species plantation, lack of coordination between stakeholders, rapid urbanisation and lack of technical expertise.

Later, detailing about the initiatives taken by the State government for rapid urbanisation and its impact on the rivers, V Krishna, IFS, said,'Musi River flowing for 254 kms length is a major tributary of Krishna River and was the water source and lifeline of Hyderabad for over a century. However, the Musi has emerged as the 22nd most polluted rivers in the world in terms of cumulative concentration of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), which are harmful to human, animal and plant health.'

The State is working on creating thriving ecosystems, improving water quality and preserving natural habitats. In the first phase of the project, 20.5 km length will be taken up for development and construction of 39 sewage treatment plants (STPs) along the Musi River. The capacity of these 39 STPs is 969 million liters a day, he added.

The speakers highlighted thatpeople have got awareness due to the formation of HYDRAA and it is protecting the lakes in Telangana.

The inaugural session marked the participation of Nayanbea Peshadiya, Mayor of Rajkot and Chairperson of Regional Executive Committee, ICLEI South Asia; Sarfaraz Ahmad, Metropolitan Commissioner of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority, Raghu Kumar Kodali, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India and Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi.

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Urban Planning is Crucial, Say Experts at National Conference

Telangana

Nayanben Peshadiya, Chairperson, Rescom, ICLEI South Asia; HMDA commissioner Sarfaraz Ahmad, National Biodiversity Authority chairman C. Achalender Reddy, Mayor Vijayalakshmi Gadwal, Raghu Kumar Kodali, Central adviser, Dr B. Balaji, NBA secretary, at the National Conference on Urban Biodiversity in Hyderabad on Friday. — DC

Hyderabad: The integration of biodiversity into urban planning is crucial for sustainable development, said experts at the two-day National Conference on Urban Biodiversity that began here on Friday. The event highlighted the importance of creating urban spaces that balance growth with ecological preservation.

Organised by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, South Asia, the conference brought together leaders from 35 cities, including environmental experts, planners, and city officials. Participants explored collaborative measures to protect biodiversity while addressing the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation.

Similar Posts

Heavy Rains Cripple Telangana, Office-goers Face

हिमाचल भास्कर 13-11-202

मनाली में ईवी चार्जिंग इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर को बढ़ावा देने के पर लगी वर्कशॉप

मनाली। मनाली को सतत पर्यटन का एक आगी केंद्र बनाने के उद्देश्य से, आईसीएफआई साउथ एशिया, शिमला परिवहन निदेशालय और हिमाचल प्रदेश पर्यटन विभाग के सहयोग से एक जागरूकता कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया गया। कार्यशाला में मनाली के होटलों में इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन (ईवी) चार्जिंग इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर के विकास पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया गया, ताकि पर्यावरण मित्रवत यात्रा को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके और कार्बन-उत्सर्जन में कमी लाई जा सके। नायब तहसीलदार एवं कार्यकारी मजिस्ट्रेट निधि स्वकलानी ने राज्य की ईवी नीति के तहत ईवी अपनाने और चार्जिंग स्टेशनों की स्थापना के लिए तैयार एवं नियामक नीतियों पर प्रकाश डाला।

జీవ వైవిధ్య పరిరక్షణ అందరి బాధ్యత

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pioneer HYDERABAD | SUNDAY

'61% city lakes already encroached, the rest could disappear in 15 years'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Pioneer
New Delhi, 21 September 2024

Need 85,000 billion USD until 2070 for climate action projects in seven Indian cities: Report

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ahmedabad, Rajkot and Vadodara in Gujarat, Coimbatore, Tiruchirapalli and Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu, Udaipur in Rajasthan and Siliguri in West Bengal will require USD 85,000 billion until 2070, for varied climate action projects in various sectors to combat global warming threats.

This was the key highlight of a first of its kind document in South and Southeast Asia, seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070, for the seven cities released together here at the National Workshop on 'Multi-Level Action for Climate Resilient Cities' recently.

The report also noted that due to these climate change combat measures approximately 8 lakh green jobs are expected to be created as per plans which are in alignment with India's ambitious target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070 as committed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at the CoP26 in Glasgow, 2021.

The sectors included transport, buildings, biodiversity, water supply, SWM, wastewater, stormwater, renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors among others. In fact, Ahmedabad's early release of its Net-zero CRCAP 2070 last July set a precedent for other cities.

Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, Tokhan Sahu pointed out that the very high temperatures of 2024, extremely heavy rainfall experienced in Gujarat recently, and the extreme cold are all manifestations of climate change.

"The worst effects of climate change are more acutely felt by the elderly, children and the poor. It is crucial to address the adverse effects of climate change..."

The plans were also a major milestone for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) supported CapaCITIES project, said the officials here.

Philippe Sas, Head International Cooperation and Counsellor, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation agreed as he asserted, "Sustainable planning adopted by Switzerland focuses on engineering longevity, innovation & co-benefits. These best practices contribute significantly to India's national missions and subnational climate action planning."

Several innovative green projects are being implemented across these seven cities to combat climate change. For instance, Tirunelveli has established an urban flood early warning system to enhance disaster preparedness while Ahmedabad has set up solar-powered charging stations for electric buses, promoting clean transport.

At the same time, Tiruchirappalli is focusing on catchment area and watershed management, which aids in groundwater recharge through effective urban planning and water body restoration.

Udaipur has created a green mobility zone to encourage sustainable transportation options while Vadodara, Udaipur, and Siliguri are developing Miyawaki forests, which are dense, biodiverse urban forests that enhance green cover.

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'Conservation and restoration our goal'

THN / Dec 1, 2024, 00:45 IST

Hyderabad: Preserving water resources, vital for all life forms, and protecting biodiversity remains our key priority, HYDRAA commissioner AV Ranganath said during a national conference on 'Urban Biodiversity' organised by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) on Saturday.

The commissioner highlighted HYDRAA's focus on conserving and restoring urban lakes, ensuring they remain sources of clean water while enhancing the surrounding environment with plantation drives. Such efforts aim to create conducive habitats for biodiversity.

HYDRAA has also been actively working to safeguard public spaces, including lakes, parks, roads, and drainage channels, from encroachments. "We are committed to taking strict action against encroachments, irrespective of the perpetrators' social or political status," said Ranganath, citing a recent case where HYDRAA prevented the illegal acquisition of an acre of govt land near Lotus Pond in Jubilee Hills.

Ranganath noted increased public awareness about lake boundaries, buffer zones, and govt lands. People are now more cautious about verifying whether their properties fall within lake zones or protected areas. This change is attributed to HYDRAA's enforcement efforts and court directives mandating the demolition of unauthorised constructions in such zones.

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Seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans released at National Workshop on Multi-level action for Climate Resilient Cities

New Delhi. For the first time in South and Southeast Asia, seven Net-zero Climate Resilient City Action Plans 2070, for the cities of Ahmedabad, Rajkot, and Vadodara, Coimbatore, Tiruchirapalli, Tirunelveli Udaipur and Siliguri, were released together at the National Workshop on Multi-Level Action for Climate Resilient Cities, held on 18 and 19 September 2024.

These plans are in alignment with India's ambitious target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070 as committed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the CoP26 in Glasgow, 2021. The city of Ahmedabad released its Net-zero CRCAP 2070 earlier, in July 2021, during G20 Mayoral Summit, setting a precedent for other cities. This initiative underscores the commitment of Indian cities to combat climate change and enhance community resilience, marking a significant milestone in advancing urban climate resilience in India. This was also a major milestone for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) supported CapaCITIES project

January 2025, Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, Rajasthan, India

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