The LGMA Constituency's response to the COP31 outcomes

From Antalya to Addis Ababa: cities, states and regions ready to deliver what COP31 could not

23 November 2026 – As the UNFCCC observer constituency that represents cities, states and regions around the world, the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency (LGMA) is disappointed that this COP failed to send a clear signal that Parties can act together to limit the magnitude and duration of any overshoot of 1.5°C, follow the science like the Paris Agreement requires, prepare and adapt for its impacts, accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels in a just and equitable manner, and provide the necessary finance and technical support especially to the most vulnerable.

When floods hit, when extreme heat makes homes unsafe, when public services come under strain, people turn to their local and regional governments. Over the past two weeks, hundreds of local and regional leaders came to Antalya with deep experience of protecting communities and cutting emissions, ready to work with Parties.

Without a strong sign from Parties on the pace and scale of climate action, and finance and technical support to empower local, regional and subnational governments, protecting communities and cutting emissions becomes harder and more costly.

The time between Antalya and Addis Ababa must be used to resolve the differences that prevented agreement here. Communities on the front line cannot afford another moment like this one. This precious multilateral space deserves a stronger and braver political will.

The LGMA urges Parties to come to Addis ready to get the second Global Stocktake under way, make concrete progress on finance, adaptation and just transition, and accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. The LGMA calls for ambition, inclusive mechanisms, finance and technical assistance for all levels of government to turn national commitments into better protection for communities and faster cuts in emissions.

"Parties left Antalya without the overarching outcome our communities needed, but the foundations of the Paris Agreement and the science behind it remain intact. No country can solve this alone, and no level of government can either. The UNFCCC is where that cooperation is built, and local, regional and subnational governments will keep showing up in this process to help make it deliver. Cities, states and regions will keep taking steps to protect our communities now and in the future. The LGMA stands ready to work with Parties towards a constructive and ambitious outcome at COP32," said Ariel Dekovic, LGMA Focal Point.

LGMA response to the negotiated outcomes

Cover decision (not adopted): Throughout the two week consultation, the LGMA saw some of its strongest support and references both in consultation with Parties and in the texts. Successive drafts of the proposed cover decision called for stronger multilevel cooperation with local and regional governments, supported locally led adaptation and cooperation between all levels of governance on electrification, and recognized

the contributions of cities and subnational authorities. These drafts marked a significant step forward in the integration of subnational contributions and partnership into COP texts.

The discussions around the cover decision drafts reflected genuine concerns and unresolved differences over how strongly it should call for action to limit 1.5°C overshoot, accelerate a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels, and scale up finance. The discussions took place to prepare this version of the cover decision should be used as a basis to advance a constructive dialogue for COP32.

Adaptation: COP31 closes with no decision on adaptation finance. The goal to at least triple adaptation finance by 2035 still has no baseline and no delivery pathway. The work proposed in the draft cover decision - that was not adopted - on baseline options, an implementation pathway and an Antalya-to-Addis Ababa Roadmap now has no mandate. Predictable, multi-year contributions to the Adaptation Fund and increased grant-based support are essential to strengthen delivery without aggravating debt vulnerabilities. The LGMA calls on Parties to take this work forward without delay, on the road to COP32 in Addis Ababa, so that finance reaches the local level, where adaptation happens.

Climate Finance: The implementation momentum through the High-Level Event on Urban Resilience, Adaptation and Climate Action, and initiatives such as SURFF, requires a credible financing framework. Local and regional governments are ready to work with Parties and financial institutions to translate national adaptation priorities into investments that protect communities and essential services. Implementation also requires simpler access procedures, funded project preparation and stronger national and subnational financial institutions.

Many unresolved questions persist across the Climate Finance Work Programme, the Veredas Dialogue and the operationalisation of the tripling of adaptation finance continue to limit predictability. Progress requires clarity on their respective mandates and complementarity, while safeguarding developed country Parties' obligations under Article 9, which commits them to provide and mobilise financial resources to help developing countries cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts. The LGMA stands ready to contribute practical experience to these discussions and demonstrate financing arrangements that expand Parties' capacity to mobilize resources and implement their commitments. Restoring confidence depends on commitments that institutions can budget for, invest against and deliver to communities.

Just Transition Mechanism and Work Programme: Although multiple options for a Just Transition Mechanism were under consideration, consensus could not be reached. The LGMA remains committed to collaborating with Parties to find common ground and make the Mechanism fully operational and fit for purpose next year, while actively engaging in the strengthened Just Transition Work Programme. The recognition of multilevel governance and subnational leadership, however, is significant progress and creates a strong foundation to ensure that the upcoming outcome in Addis Ababa delivers practical, solution-driven results.

Mitigation Work Programme: Parties failed to agree on renewing the Programme's mandate. This leaves the Paris Agreement's dedicated Mitigation Work Programme without a renewed mandate, with COP32 in Addis Ababa offering another opportunity to agree on its continuation. The LGMA urges Parties to use the time before COP32 to resolve their differences and ensure that a renewed Programme draws on the experience of cities and regions in cutting emissions from buildings, transport, energy and waste.

Second Global Stocktake: While the outcome on the Stocktake was procedural, with the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities is expected in March 2027, we hope this key contribution to GST2 can be an important milestone for subnationals in the process. The LGMA Constituency will engage in the GST2

throughout 2027 to ensure that local, regional and subnational government contributions and barriers are reflected in the outcome.

The LGMA has further assessments on the Action Agenda, Urban Planning and Territorial Management, Loss & Damage, and UNFCCC processes in our full assessment of the negotiations outcomes.

Local and subnational governments move up the COP agenda

Beyond the negotiating rooms, COP31 marked a step forward in the place of local and subnational governments on the COP agenda. Australia, as President of Negotiations, worked closely with the Constituency throughout the year, culminating in receiving the LGMA Position at the opening of the Multilevel Action Pavilion.

The COP31 Presidency of Türkiye appointed a Special Envoy for Local and Regional Governments, made resilient cities a priority of the Action Agenda, and worked hand in hand with the High-Level Champions to bring local priorities into the heart of the summit. By elevating the High-Level Event on Urban Resilience, Adaptation and Climate Action into the World Leaders' Summit itself, the Presidency placed cities and regions directly before heads of state and government.

Other milestones and moments elevating subnationals included the CHAMP Steering Group and Subnational Advisory Council also spoke with one voice for the first time in their COP31 Joint Statement, complementing the LGMA's call for the second Global Stocktake to assess the contribution of cities, states and regions and draw directly on their evidence. The Subnational Investment Forum also brought government leaders, investors and financial institutions together at COP31 to help turn climate projects into lasting benefits for people and communities. Multiple press conferences highlighted the contributions of local, regional and subnational governments to the media at COP31.

LGMA COP31 Position, endorsed by 80 networks and organizations, guided the Constituency's advocacy

Ahead of COP, the LGMA published its COP31 Position, endorsed by 80 networks and organizations, including networks of local, regional and subnational governments from every continent. The Position called on Parties to recognize subnational governments as delivery partners across the implementation agenda, from the energy transition and the 1.5°C pathway to just transition and adaptation, all grounded in independent science. It also asked Parties to back that role with two structural shifts: institutionalized multilevel climate finance that local and regional governments can access, and a systematic, joint space for Parties and subnational governments to tackle barriers to implementation together.

The LGMA's Guidance for Negotiators on ten priority topics accompanied the Position, with detailed recommendations and proposed negotiating text on multilevel governance outcomes, climate finance, adaptation, loss and damage, just transition, territorial planning and management, zero waste and food, culture, gender equity, and children and youth. Together, they shaped the LGMA's advocacy and interventions throughout COP31.

Multilevel Action Pavilion was the home for the LGMA Constituency

The Multilevel Action Pavilion was co-convened by the LGMA Constituency, ICLEI (as the Constituency Focal Point organization), the Zero Waste Foundation and the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, with Bloomberg Philanthropies as an organizing partner.

Continuing a presence in the Blue Zone since COP26 in 2021, the Pavilion gave the LGMA Constituency a home in the Blue Zone, and local, regional and subnational governments a dedicated space to show their leadership and solutions, and to connect their voice to the negotiations. In addition to the daily LGMA Constituency Coordination Briefings, sessions showcased climate solutions, including on zero waste, and brought local, regional and national governments together to exchange and build partnerships.

Comments from LGMA Constituency organizations

Mr. Uğur İbrahim Altay, Mayor of Konya, COP31 Special Envoy for Local and Regional Governments, and President of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), said: "Enhanced climate action requires strong local governance. As COP31 Special Envoy for Local and Regional Governments, I am committed to ensuring that one of Antalya's lasting legacies is the institutionalization of multilevel climate governance. We must move from recognition to shared decision-making, placing universal public services and the needs of our communities at the heart of global climate action."

Miriam Badino, Mission Innovation - Urban Transitions Mission Coordinator, said: "As global climate priorities continue to evolve, the concrete work of the transition moves steadily forward on the ground. Cities and local governments remain the primary engines where climate solutions are actually built, tested, and delivered. Through the Urban Transitions Mission, we witness local leaders who are turning ambition into tangible infrastructure — modernizing local grids, advancing clean transport, strengthening community resilience and cooperating with local stakeholders. Our focus remains practical and connected with the UTM role as the broker of solutions to reach the goal of accelerating urban climate transition globally: empowering urban innovators, sharing proven models across our global network of cities, and accelerating the real-world implementation that communities depend on every day."

Kostas Bakoyannis, Head of the European Committee of the Regions delegation to COP31 and Athens Municipal Councillor, said: "National governments failed their people at COP31. They left without an agreement while the communities they represent were already confronting floods, fires and extreme heat. That failure is indefensible. As local and regional leaders, we will keep cutting emissions and protecting residents. We demand the same resolve from national governments. And because cities and regions are responsible for putting climate commitments into practice, we must have a say in shaping them.
The World Leaders Summit took at least a first step in that direction with a dedicated high-level dialogue on urban resilience, adaptation and climate action. We welcome that recognition of local and regional governments and the forthcoming IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities and hope that it will serve as a reality check. We call on national governments to give cities and regions a formal, permanent seat in global climate negotiations and direct access to the climate finance our communities need."

Elisabeth Belpaire, President International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) said:
"Urban and territorial planning is essential to translate climate commitments into coordinated decisions about land, housing, mobility, infrastructure and ecosystems. Local and regional governments need predictable finance, stronger planning capacity and a meaningful role in shaping national climate plans to deliver low-carbon, climate-resilient and inclusive development, and to ensure that climate action is just and equitable, so that the communities most exposed to climate risks are not left behind. ISOCARP calls for sustained collaboration between governments, communities, the private sector, and the academic and scientific community to turn ambition into lasting improvements in the places where we live."

Carlos de Freitas, Executive Director, FMDV, said: "COP31's failures to advance the Climate Finance Work Programme, the Veredas Dialogue and a clear pathway for tripling adaptation finance deepen the COP30 disappointment. COP32 now risks becoming a breaking point for trust in the process. Financial engineering offers a wealth of solutions. Our collective inability to agree on concrete funding sources, and to connect

climate finance with the commitments made at FfD4 in Sevilla, reflects a failure of political resolve. As we approach the next phase of the SDGs and undertake the second Global Stocktake, this disconnect is deeply alarming. We are asking countries and communities to plan their future around promises they cannot budget for. Restoring credibility means financing the institutions that turn the Paris Agreement into reality: national and subnational public development banks that translate climate priorities into long-term investment, and local and regional governments that deliver the infrastructure and public services on which a just and resilient transformation depends."

Carey Duncan, President of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), said: "We must lead with landscape, not end with it: landscape-led approaches break down silos and drive integrated climate action. Climate action must move beyond commitments to financed, locally led solutions, with meaningful participation of local and subnational governments in the Global Goal on Adaptation and the Mitigation Work Programme, as advocated by IFLA and the LGMA Constituency. Through inclusive multilevel governance, accessible climate finance and synergies across the three Rio Conventions, IFLA stands ready to help translate the COP31 Presidency's priorities and the second Global Stocktake into measurable adaptation, mitigation and ecosystem restoration on the ground."

Carola Gunnarsson, councillor in Sala Municipality (Sweden), spokesperson for the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) on international cooperation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) said: "We went to COP31 thinking that delivery was the challenge. But the lack of final agreement shows that ambition is also threatened. There is no time to lose. Climate change is affecting our citizens day after day. At COP31, we repeatedly stressed that local and regional governments are essential to delivering climate solutions through effective multilevel governance, a just transition, and adequate climate finance. We are still not formally represented in decision-making, but the growing recognition of subnational governments shows that the international community understands where climate action is actually delivered: at the local level."

Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh, Mayor of Malmö Municipality (Sweden) and President of ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability said: "COP31 fell short of what communities in a world overshooting 1.5c need in finance, adaptation, and just transition out of fossil fuels. But ICLEI, as the focal point organization of the LGMA Constituency, remains resolute in our commitment to the UNFCCC as the multilateral process that can advance our common action on climate. We welcome the elevation and recognition of local and subnational governments in the decisions of Matters Related to Least Developed Countries and the Just Transition Work Programme. On the road to Addis Ababa, ICLEI will keep building bridges between national, regional and local governments for a package that puts real finance and implementation where climate impacts hit hardest: in our cities, states and regions."

Champa Patel, Executive Director, Governments & Policy, Climate Group, on behalf of the Under2 Coalition said: "We should not confuse a failure of diplomacy with a failure of climate action, but nor should we underestimate the cost of what happened in Antalya. Governments failed to agree on a credible way forward on adaptation finance and the transition away from fossil fuels, leaving communities already facing devastating climate impacts without the certainty and support they need. Across the Under2 Coalition, states and regions are accelerating electrification, cutting methane emissions and investing in resilience, helping shift markets and demonstrating that the transition is already under way. International cooperation should build on that momentum, providing the political direction, finance and support needed to accelerate progress and ensure that those most vulnerable to climate change are not left behind."

Natalia Uribe, Secretary General of Regions4, said: "Subnational governments are not waiting for global consensus to act, nor are they settling for minimum ambition. Close enough to understand their territories' realities and opportunities, yet strategic enough to shape policies, investments and partnerships, they are

demonstrating what is possible and driving transformation at scale. As the world heads towards overshooting 1.5°C, we must fundamentally rethink adaptation, placing it at the heart of our policies and investments to build a safer, fairer and more resilient future. COP31's failure to agree on how to deliver the pledge to triple adaptation finance leaves those who have contributed least to the climate crisis even more exposed to its impacts. We will redouble our efforts to secure not only more climate finance, but better finance —finance that reaches frontline governments and enables them to turn climate priorities into investments that reduce vulnerabilities, create opportunities more fairly and deliver lasting benefits for people and nature."

Mark Watts, Executive Director of C40 Cities, said: "This is one of the darkest hours in the history of climate negotiations and COPs cannot go on like this. The world needs braver leadership and urgent action. The era of overshoot has no room for failed climate diplomacy anymore. Every COP must deliver collective action to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels and address the most severe impacts of climate breakdown. Today the COP of Antalya failed to do that. The lack of courage by too many at COP31 is not only undermining multilateralism, but, in the face of Super El Niño and worsening long-term climate conditions, it is costing lives. This precious multilateral space deserves better. All our futures depend on it. This is why C40 and its member cities will continue to show up. We will be there to pioneer ambition, deliver on the ground, and support this process and our allies. This moment needs local leadership more than ever."

Andreas Wolter, Former Mayor of the City of Cologne (Germany) and President of Climate Alliance said: "Sometimes action means saying no. At COP31 in Antalya, Europe and national governments from around the world held firm and refused a final agreement failing to mention fossil fuels. Instead, groups of nations banded together to forge a path forward, together. The refusal to continue ignoring the obvious is in many ways a refreshing show of climate commitment. It also underlines just how critical ambitious regional and local governments are as partners in the climate process."

Additional COP31 information

- More about the LGMA at COP31: https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop31
- LGMA interventions at COP31: https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop31/lgma-cop31-interventions/
- The LGMA COP31 Position: https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop31-lgma-position/
- The Multilevel Action Pavilion: https://www.cities-and-regions.org/cop31/multilevel-action-pavilion-at-cop31/

More information about the LGMA

About Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency
Since the Earth Summit in 1992, when nine stakeholder groups – including local authorities – were designated as essential partners in implementing the global sustainability agenda, the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency has represented networks of local and regional governments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The LGMA has served as the voice of cities and regions since the first Conference of Parties (COP) in 1995 and continues to achieve advocacy success for multilevel action in the climate, nature, and desertification processes. The LGMA has grown to more than 85 networks of local and subnational governments. The LGMA coordinates inputs to the global climate negotiations all year, influencing and informing outcomes toward meeting the Paris Agreement. For more information, please visit: www.cities-and-regions.org

About ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (known as "ICLEI") 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 zero 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 serves as the focal point organization for the LGMA Constituency. For more information, please visit: www.iclei.org

About the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments

The Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments is a coordination and consultation mechanism that brings together the major international networks of local governments to undertake joint advocacy work relating to global policy processes. It was set up in 2013 to bring the perspectives of local and regional governments to the SDGs, climate change agenda and New Urban Agenda in particular. The Global Taskforce convenes elected local and regional leaders from around the world in the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments, whose role in the follow-up of the New Urban Agenda is recognized in the Quito Outcome Document. For more information, please visit: https://www.global-taskforce.org/about-us