

What?	The Local Government Climate LOUNGE at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15): The base for local governments' activities at COP 15.
When?	7 – 18 December 2009
Where?	Copenhagen, Denmark
Website	http://www.iclei.org/cop15



A historic chance for change for local governments at COP15

The stakes are high at COP15, the biggest environmental meeting in history. National delegations and heads of state have gathered in an effort to hammer out a post Kyoto protocol climate agreement while ICLEI and other networks are engaged in a monumental advocacy effort with a single goal – to have the role of cities and sub-national governments to address climate change recognised.

Climate change is a huge issue for cities. By 2030, two thirds of humanity will live in urban centres, where currently more than 73 percent of all energy is consumed. Therefore local governments are key for the transformation to a sustainable energy economy. National governments must recognise the need for strong financial mechanisms that allow local governments to implement mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer and capacity building programs. Local governments are asking for just one sentence recognising their role to be included in the Copenhagen outcome, but to achieve this a lot of work is being done on the ground.

The Local Government Climate LOUNGE

Since COP15 opened on 7 December, the ICLEI facilitated Local Government Climate LOUNGE has been a hive of activity. As the world awaits the release of the expected document with bated breath, the advocacy work carried out in the LOUNGE is beginning to pay off.

The current draft text contains a reference to local governments and ICLEI Regional Director for Europe, Gino Van Begin, says the advocacy effort will continue to concentrate on the inclusion of this one single sentence. This would mean that national governments recognise the role, which local and sub national governments play in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

With the final day of the conference fast approaching the advocacy work is more crucial than ever. Follow the daily developments at <http://www.iclei.org/cop15>.

Highlights in the LOUNGE

On 14 December, the **City Climate Catalogue** was presented by ICLEI President David Cadman and Copenhagen Mayor for the Environment, Klaus Bondam to the Danish Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Lykke Friis. The catalogue contains the climate targets and achievements of over 3000 cities, towns, villages and counties recorded on the City Climate Catalogue website.

ICLEI President Cadman said, "The catalogue is proof that local leaders all over the world are taking the lead in the fight against climate change. I hope that the catalogue can inspire world leaders to sign an ambitious Copenhagen agreement." The catalogue will be further developed so it can be used as a tool for cities to co-operate on climate change issues.

See if your city is already included. Go to: <http://climate-catalogue.org/>

Time for Real Questions is a series of daily dialogues presented by Secretary General of ICLEI Konrad Otto-Zimmermann exploring the future of both cities and the planet. A number of high profile guests have graced the Real Questions hot seat. Kumi Naidoo, Chairman of the tck tck tck Campaign and Executive Director of Greenpeace International described cities as, "the central catalysts for changing human behaviour", while French Climate Ambassador, Brice Lalonde said "Cities are the engines of the progress to fight climate change, and we must work to empower them."

World famous photographer and filmmaker Yann Arthus-Bertrand has travelled the globe making films about climate change. When speaking with Mr Otto-Zimmermann he said, "In Europe we are suffering from climate change but not too much. We live in a world where we don't want to see the truth, we are completely in denial, everybody knows what is going to happen, but we don't want to believe. It's too late to be pessimistic, we have to move fast."

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More information:

<http://www.iclei.org/cop15>

Additional Background information on ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability:

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments and national and regional local government organisations that have made a commitment to sustainable development.

ICLEI provides technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. Our basic premise is that locally designed initiatives can provide an effective and cost-efficient way to achieve local, national, and global sustainability objectives.

In Europe, ICLEI counts more than 180 local authorities and municipal associations among its members.

For further information visit <http://www.iclei-europe.org>