

Item 5(d)-Annex III.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on Low Carbon Cities**

**6-8 December 2022  
Incheon, Republic of Korea**

### **Concept note**

#### **Background**

Cities are key contributors to climate change, accounting for three-quarters of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions but in the frontline of combatting its adverse impacts. Accounting for less than 2% of the Earth's surface, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68% by 2050, with many of this increase taking place in cities in Asia.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is imperative to have rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy use from urban transport, water use and sanitation, buildings and industrial systems to achieve the global goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C.

Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, more than 130 countries have now set or are considering net-zero/carbon neutrality targets by around mid-century,<sup>2</sup> and local governments as well have been announcing ambitious initiatives to prepare for the transition to low/zero carbon societies. For instance, all local governments in the Republic of Korea, including Incheon Metropolitan City, became the first in the world to participate in the 2050 Declaration of Carbon Neutrality at the P4G Summit in 2021. As such, cities are preparing their tailored plans and policies for low carbon cities, considering their unique circumstances and characteristics. At the same time, cities should work closely with the national governments and learn from others to effectively address the pressing issues of climate change with a coordinated approach and action plan.

Against this background, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office and Incheon Metropolitan City (IMC) jointly organized the 1<sup>st</sup> International Forum on Low Carbon Cities in November 2021, in collaboration with Incheon Climate and Environment Research Center, ICLEI, Innovative Green Development Program and Green Climate Fund, to expand the partnership for promoting climate action at city-level and create synergies among existing city initiatives pursuing low carbon/carbon neutral cities in and beyond North-East Asia. Bringing together local governments, international and regional organizations, national and regional city networks, experts and other stakeholders, the first Forum deliberated key issues on scaling up city-level climate actions and highlighted best practices of the city's climate action planning to low carbon solutions in energy, transport and building sectors, green financing and stakeholder engagement.

As a unique occasion to build a partnership with existing networks on low-carbon, sustainable, resilient cities and scale-up capacity building efforts and initiatives, the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on Low Carbon Cities will be organized in 2022 to discuss solutions and stakeholder engagement toward a low-carbon society, facilitating information sharing and strengthening partnership and peer-learning among cities and city networks.

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<sup>1</sup> 2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects, UNDESA

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/net-zero-coalition>

## Overview

- **Date:** 6-8 December 2022 (Field visit on 8 December)
- **Venue:** Sheraton Grand Incheon (Grand ballroom) - *hybrid*
- **Expected participants:**
  - Local governments
  - National and regional city networks
  - International and regional organizations
  - International and national experts
  - Other stakeholders
- **Hosted by** ESCAP and Incheon Metropolitan City
- **Co-organizing partners**
  - Climate Change Center (CCC)
  - Green Climate Fund (GCF)
  - ICLEI East Asia Secretariat
  - Incheon Climate and Environment Research Center (IC&E)
  - innovative Green Development Program (iGDP)

## Tentative programme

Tuesday, 6 December	
09:00-09:30	Registration
09:30-10:30	<p><b>Opening session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remarks by Executive Secretary, UN-ESCAP (TBC)</li> <li>• Remarks by Mayor, Incheon Metropolitan City (TBC)</li> <li>• Remarks by Executive Director, Green Climate Fund</li> <li>• Keynote speech(es) - TBC</li> <li>• Group photo</li> </ul>
10:30-10:50	Break
10:50-12:30	<p><b>Session 1 (Goals and institutions) Climate governance and roles/policies of cities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on the outcomes of UNFCCC COP27</li> <li>• Governments policies and roles of cities in climate governance, e.g.,               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ China: Low-carbon city initiative</li> <li>○ Japan: 2050 Zero Carbon Cities</li> <li>○ ROK: Alliance of Local Governments towards Carbon Neutrality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p><b>Session 2 (Solution 1) Nature-based and Innovative solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban green spaces</li> <li>• Integrated Grey-Green infrastructure</li> <li>• ICT/ STI (e.g., cases from STI report or beyond NEA)</li> </ul>

15:30-15:50	Break
15:50-17:20	<p><b>Session 3 (Solution 2) Circular economy and Cities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste management (wastewater and sponge cities)</li> <li>• Shift from unsustainable consumption to sustainable economic practices</li> <li>• Incheon landfill site (in connection with the field visit on Day3)</li> <li>• Circular economy for plastics (e.g., UNEP Resolution “No Plastic Pollution”)</li> </ul>
17:30-	Dinner (invitees only), hosted by TBC
<b>Wednesday, 7 December</b>	
09:00-09:30	Registration
09:30-11:00	<p><b>Session 4 (Solution 3) Green Financing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaps and available resources</li> <li>• Cases from cities</li> <li>• Support and opportunities from GCF, ADB, AIIB, etc.</li> </ul>
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15-12:30	<b>Networking session</b>
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	<p><b>Session 5 (Engagement 1) Citizen &amp; stakeholder engagement for sustainable cities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to meaningfully involve citizens in climate action</li> <li>• Policies to encourage sustainable consumption</li> <li>• Initiatives/ projects by city networks towards LCC</li> </ul>
15:30-15:50	Break
15:50-17:20	<p><b>Session 6 (Engagement 2) Roles of regional cooperation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should regional cooperation contribute to LCC?</li> <li>• Existing platforms to foster regional collaboration</li> <li>• How to synergize the work of city networks</li> <li>• Collaboration challenges and opportunities</li> </ul>
17:20-17:40	<p><b>Closing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key outcomes/recommendations of the Forum</li> <li>• Closing remarks</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday, 8 December</b>	
Field visit (invitees only)	