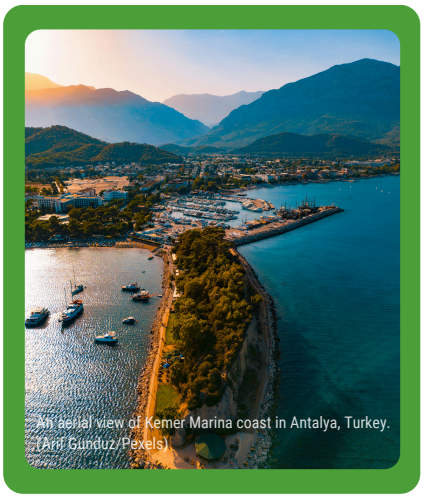
LOCAL 2030
LOCALIZING THE SDGS

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Recommendations for COP31

Localizing climate action to accelerate sustainable development


An aerial view of Kemer Marina coast in Antalya, Turkey. (Arif Gunduz/Pexels)

Context and key messages: Localization delivers

The 31st United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference (COP31) takes place at a pivotal moment for multilateral cooperation, as the international community works to advance implementation across the climate, biodiversity, and land agendas and build momentum toward the 2027 SDG Summit. Across these agendas, the challenges are interconnected, and their impacts are felt in communities and territories.

Localization brings a bottom-up, systemic approach to climate action, connecting global commitments and national priorities with locally defined needs and opportunities. **Embedding local leadership and inclusive, representative community ownership from the outset can build trust, address concerns, and improve the design and successful implementation of climate measures.** The participation of organizations of workers and employers through social dialogue can further strengthen local ownership and help ensure that climate action is rooted in a just transition and promotes decent work for all. Localization also strengthens policy and fiscal coherence across levels of government and helps align public and private investment around shared territorial priorities. As the UN system-wide coalition for SDG localization, the Local2030 Coalition aligns policy, finance, data, and implementation support to strengthen locally led action and connect local priorities with decision-making.

As countries accelerate implementation, local and regional governments, working alongside national governments, communities, and other local actors, are essential partners in translating climate, biodiversity, land, and sustainable development commitments into action. Recent assessments by UN-Habitat and partners show the growing recognition of this role in national climate planning, with 80 per cent of third-generation NDCs having well-developed urban content and 74 per cent addressing housing. **Building on COP30, COP31 provides an opportunity to strengthen localization as a systemic approach and core implementation mechanism through local ownership, multilevel governance, local data and accountability, integrated territorial approaches, and increased finance and implementation capacity for local climate action.**

Recommendations

1. Embed multilevel governance and localization in implementation frameworks

Formally integrate local and regional governments, communities, organizations of workers and employers, through social dialogue, and other local actors – including women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples – into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) implementation, as well as into climate risk management and reporting frameworks, with clearly defined responsibilities and corresponding resources for local implementation. As adaptation and resilience actions are largely planned and delivered at subnational levels, implementation systems should strengthen flexible, multilevel, and multisectoral governance that is responsive to emerging risks, including those associated with a temporary overshoot, alongside inclusive, gender-responsive, and human rights-based implementation, to ensure climate action reflects territorial priorities and reaches those most exposed to climate risks, including women, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, displaced populations, and people living in informal settlements, peri-urban areas, and other underserved communities.



2. Invest in local data, monitoring, and accountability

Invest in local capacities and data systems including sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data to inform climate risk assessments, planning, investment, and the monitoring of results. Build on Voluntary Local and Subnational Reviews (VLRs and VSRs), and place-based monitoring frameworks and local capacity to support implementation tracking, risk assessment, and adaptive decision-making. Where relevant, it is important to include employment, skills, social protection, occupational safety, and health indicators to better assess the impacts of climate change and climate policies on workers and enterprises. Science and technology, such as satellite and remote sensing, can be utilized to better understand and assess local climate impacts and hazards. Localized data should be integrated into national reporting, monitoring, and accountability systems across climate, biodiversity, land degradation neutrality, and sustainable development commitments.



3. Advance integrated territorial approaches across the Rio Conventions

Support place-based investments and policies that address climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation together, while advancing a just transition and sustainable development – including through integrated urban and territorial planning that aligns land use, adequate housing, infrastructure, energy, water, and other systems, while ensuring that the costs and benefits of climate action are shared equitably, protecting affordability, livelihoods, and access to essential services. Integrated territorial approaches can connect climate and extreme heat resilience; restore ecosystems; address land degradation; strengthen sustainable land management and sustainable food systems; promote adequate and affordable housing and people-centered upgrading strategies in informal settlements; improve building energy efficiency and access to clean energy; enable decent job creation and sustainable enterprise development; and deliver integrated mitigation, adaptation, and resilience approaches.[1] To advance implementation across the Rio Conventions, promote integrated territorial approaches to maximize co-benefits, reduce fragmentation, and accelerate local delivery while safeguarding livelihoods, community resilience, and the social and ecological functions of land.



4. Scale direct finance for local climate action

Increase direct and intermediary financing mechanisms accessible to local and regional governments, and strengthen pathways for climate, adaptation, and resilience finance to reach the local level, including through accessible financing for local women's organizations and women-led initiatives and through simplified access procedures and predictable, multiyear funding, including grants for adaptation measures that do not generate commercial revenue. Moving towards implementation, climate finance should prioritize investments that can be delivered rapidly in communities most exposed to climate impacts and socioeconomic inequalities. Support the capacities, partnerships, and project preparation needed to translate locally identified priorities into financeable solutions and investment opportunities. Financing mechanisms should also support locally identified just transition priorities, including decent job creation, skills development, social protection, and support for micro, small, and medium sized enterprises, among others. Initiatives such as the Seville Platform for Action on Localizing Finance can help connect territorial priorities with public, private, and development finance and can strengthen pathways from global commitments to local implementation.



5. Recognize localization as essential climate infrastructure

Recognize localization as a core implementation mechanism for achieving climate, nature, and sustainable development commitments across the triple COP agenda and translating global commitments into results in territories and communities. Local institutions, governance systems, planning processes, and delivery capacity, supported by adequate finance, data, and technology, should be treated as essential infrastructure for translating global agreements into local implementation. As the international community prepares for the 2027 SDG Summit, and in the context of the upcoming IPCC Special Report on Cities,[1] the Local2030 Coalition can help demonstrate how inclusive localization accelerates implementation connecting progress across the climate, biodiversity, and land agendas with the accelerated delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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[1] Including Beat the Heat and the Food Waste Breakthrough.

[2] The IPCC Special Report on Cities will be launched in March 2027 and will place greater emphasis on the role of cities to address climate change.