COP27
SHARM EL-SHEIKH
EGYPT 2022

SURGe
SUSTAINABLE URBAN RESILIENCE
FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

COP27 PRESIDENCY SUSTAINABLE URBAN RESILIENCE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION (SURGe)

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UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

SUMMARY

Cities are at the frontline of climate change. Though cities are a big driver of planet-warming emissions, they are also engines of climate action and at the forefront of delivering solutions. That's why we need effective multi-level governance to transform cities to be healthy, sustainable, just, inclusive, low-emission and resilient urban systems for a better urban future for all.

To achieve this vision, the COP27 Presidency has launched the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) Initiative – with the objective to enhance and accelerate local and urban climate action through multi-level governance, engagement, and delivery through five integrated tracks, contributing to achieving the Paris Climate Goals and Sustainable Development Goals.The SURGe Initiative is developed in collaboration with UN-Habitat and facilitated by ICLEI and has been endorsed by 100+ global partners.

INTRODUCTION

Cities are at the frontline of climate change. Climate change and growing urbanization are intertwined megatrends. Rising global temperatures have caused extreme weather events including flash floods, storms, droughts and heatwaves in cities. All of these have impacts on urban services, housing, infrastructure, livelihoods, urban ecosystems, cultural practices, as well as the health and wellbeing of city residents. Rising food and energy prices exacerbate these impacts, with the most vulnerable being hit the hardest. Today, more than three billion people live in hotspots that are highly vulnerable to climate change[4] and more than one billion urban dwellers live in informal settlements[5]. Climate change impacts both increase urban populations due to climate-driven displacement and migration and aggravate the underlying socio-economic challenges that come with urbanization. At the same time, cities are a key contributor to climate change, as urban activities are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

KEY FACTS

Cities are home to 55% of the global population[1]. This percentage is expected to grow by 2.5 billion people to 68% by 2050[2].

Urban areas account for approximately three-quarters of energy-related CO_2 emissions.

70% of cities worldwide are already dealing with the effects of climate change[3].

Though cities are a big driver of planet-warming emissions, they are also engines of climate action and at the forefront of delivering solutions. Many cities are committing to climate action, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change and passing targets to reach net zero emissions.

There is growing international awareness that the climate battle will be won or lost in cities. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report has highlighted the role of cities as critical. Their importance for climate action is mentioned in the Paris Agreement and the preamble of the COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact recognizes the need for multilevel and cooperative action. By 2021, 84% of updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) had a strong or moderate urban content, compared to 69% of the initial NDCs. More than 60 nations raised their climate ambitions by engaging local and regional governments and more than 1,000 cities and regions committed to climate neutrality by 2050 with ambitious targets for 2030[6]. In 2022, the G7, G20, Commonwealth and Belt-Road Initiative have included unprecedented references to sustainable cities, urbanization and multilevel action through their Ministerial or Heads of States Communiques.

There are key barriers that limit urban emissions reductions, adapting urban systems to climate change, and building urban system resilience including:

- **Multi-level governance:** There is an urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action. Current NDCs are not enough to respond to the climate emergency.
- **Finance:** In 2017/18, climate finance for cities reached an estimated USD 384 billion, less than 10% of the estimated need of USD 4.5 to 5.4 trillion annually[7]. Of the existing total climate finance, just 21% goes towards adaptation and resilience and only around 10% of these investments reach the local level[8].
- **Local capacity:** Local governments are often understaffed yet dealing with a wide range of agendas and priorities. Especially in the Global South, they have limited capacity for development planning and implementation, particularly with the integration of climate change.
- **Access to technology and innovation:** Greenhouse gas emissions in cities could be reduced by almost 90% by 2050 with technically feasible and available measures, potentially supporting 87 million jobs in 2030 and generating a global economic dividend of USD 24 trillion[9]. However, technological and process innovations do not reach all cities due to significant research and action gaps[10].
- **Equity:** The impacts of climate change are unevenly distributed. Urban vulnerable groups are disproportionately and adversely affected by climate change while they contribute the least to urban emissions.

To effectively address these challenges, the COP27 Presidency, in collaboration with UN-Habitat and with the facilitation of ICLEI is developing the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) Initiative. Under the umbrella of its 10 guiding principles, this Initiative aims to enhance and accelerate local and urban climate action through multi-level governance, engagement, and delivery through five integrated tracks, contributing to achieving the Paris Climate Goals and Sustainable Development Goals: Buildings and Housing, Urban Energy, Urban Waste and Consumption, Urban Mobility and Urban Water. It builds on existing work in this space, on commitments of local and regional governments, adds momentum to existing initiatives, and provides a holistic framework to achieve sustainable and resilient urban systems.

Urban resilience, climate-proof infrastructure and informal settlements must be turned into an economic, social and political opportunity for accelerating resilience to climate impacts and sustainable development. This is a critical opportunity for local, regional and national governments to work together and collaborate with key stakeholders and rightsholders to simultaneously advance decarbonization efforts while building resilient urban systems that allow residents to not simply survive but thrive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SURGE INITIATIVE

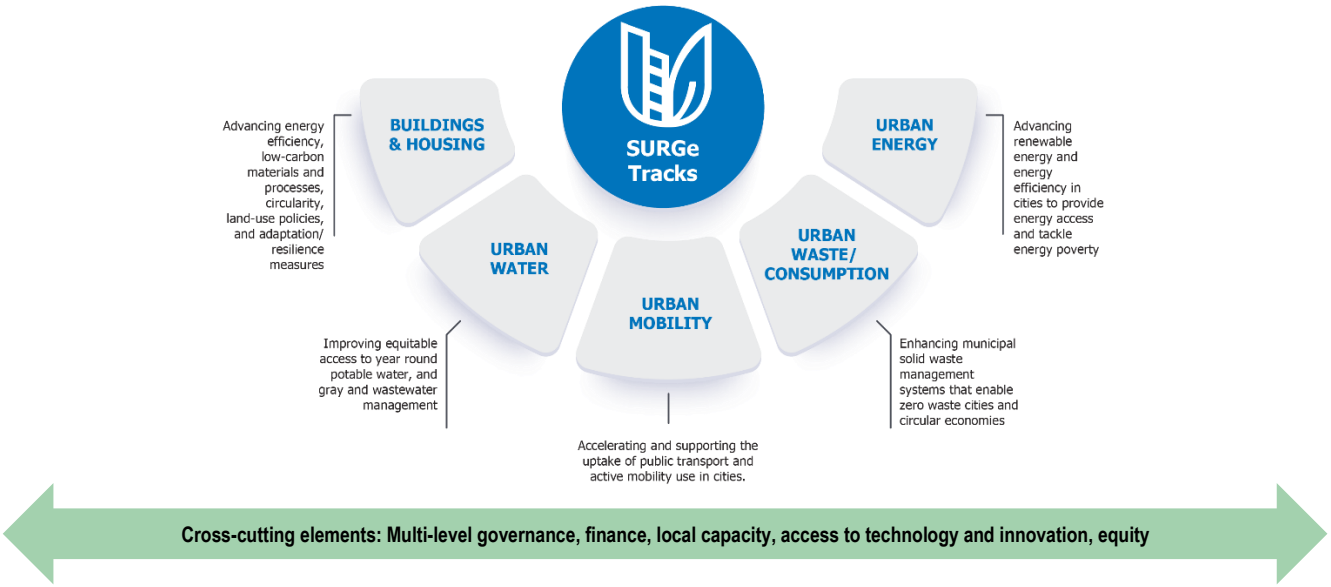
Overarching objective: enhance and accelerate local and urban climate action through multi-level governance, engagement and delivery through five integrated tracks, contributing to achieving the Paris Climate Goals and Sustainable Development Goals

Vision for 2030: Effective multilevel governance to transform cities to be healthy, sustainable, just, inclusive, low-emission and resilient urban systems for a better urban future for all

What is the current challenge?	What is needed and how will SURGe contribute to this?
Multi-level governance: insufficient recognition of local and urban climate action at the national and international level	**Strengthen the implementation of the climate agenda in and with cities:** ♦ Bringing urban issues to the global agenda: For the first time in COP history, national governments, local governments and non-state actors are establishing an COP initiative in support of sustainable cities, multi-level climate action and urban system resilience contributing to global efforts of climate change mitigation and adaptation. Progress of the SURGe Initiative will be reported at the planned annual Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at upcoming COPs. ♦ The SURGe Initiative builds on the momentum of the Glasgow Pact provides an entry point to use collaborative and multi-stakeholder move towards implementation at the local level. ♦ The SURGe Initiative will build on existing work to raise ambition of local governments, thereby contributing significantly joining forced and to achieving the targets of the Paris Agreement and raising the ambition of NDCs with commitments of local governments. ♦ The SURGe Initiative will facilitate local monitoring, reporting and verification of climate change impacts and action, contributing to existing platforms.

Finance: Not enough climate finance is reaching the local level	**Unlock urban climate finance:** The SURGe Initiative will work with 1) national governments to set up context-specific finance mechanisms; 2) work with multi-lateral development banks and other bilateral and vertical climate funds to facilitate access to finance; 3) work with city networks, finance facilities and other partners to implement projects in cities around the globe and 4) develop a pipeline of bankable projects across the five working groups.
Local capacity: Local governments often lack technical and human resources to address climate issues	**Build capacity:** Working with a city networks and partners to provide technical assistance to local governments and build up technical and human resources in cities across the five working groups. Tap into a global multistakeholder expert community to share and learn best practices and inspire city-to-city learning.
Access to technology and innovation: technological and process innovations do not reach all cities due to significant research and action gaps	**Accelerate technology and innovation in cities:** Work with city networks and other partners to support context-specific innovative solutions across the five working groups.
Equity: urban vulnerable groups are disproportionately and adversely affected by climate change	**Ensure equity:** Ensure that project design targets the most vulnerable communities and allows for broad participation.

SURGE WORKING GROUP TRACKS



	Building and housing	Urban energy	Urban waste/ consumption	Urban mobility	Urban water
Objective	Advancing energy efficiency, low-carbon materials and processes, circularity (including reuse of existing buildings), land-use policies, and adaptation/resilience measures to deliver solutions at scale for more sustainable, low-carbon or zero-carbon ready, resilient, healthy, and affordable housing, shelter, workplaces, communities, and settlements. Rallying national governments around a building breakthrough target which recognizes the importance of setting enabling frameworks for cities and businesses to implement sustainable, future-proof building solutions.	Advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency in cities to provide energy access and tackle energy poverty while reducing municipal energy costs, creating local jobs and building urban energy system resilience.	Enhancing municipal solid waste management systems that enable 'zero waste cities' and circular economies while ensuring an accelerated transition towards a 1.5-degree lifestyle that supports social equity, food security, resilience, sustainable economic development, a culture of sustainability, and job creation, supported by sustainable procurement policies and strong education, training, public awareness and participation programme.	Accelerating and supporting the uptake of public transport and active mobility use in cities. Reduce car use. Universalise early planning and coordination to achieve compact urban forms that enable public transport and active travel to thrive and trade to flourish.	Improving equitable access to year-round potable water, access to and management of water for households and public buildings, and grey and wastewater management, improving the health, well-being, and resilience of urban residents. Manage water demand and water pipe leaks to preserve the resource.

Guiding Principles

Contributing to building sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban systems, the work of the SURGe Initiative is guided by the following overarching ten principles:

1. **Low-carbon:** reducing emissions and benefiting from cost savings from decreased energy use and improved energy and resource efficiency.

2. **Resilient:** strengthening the capacity of city systems and their inhabitants to maintain continuity through shocks and stresses and recover faster, while positively adapting and transforming towards urban sustainability, taking into account the management of internal and international migration into cities.

3. **Nature-positive:** Harnessing the potential of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to improve cities' socio-ecological resilience and wellbeing.

4. **Fair, equitable, and inclusive:** needs to reach the most vulnerable communities to climate change impacts by establishing social dialogue and participatory processes for co-design and prioritized implementation.

5. **Multi-level climate governance and climate planning:** recognizing the importance of collaboration between local, regional, and national governments and harnessing the cross-scale and cross-discipline relationships necessary for climate action to raise the ambitions of the NDCs.

6. **Integrated:** Leveraging co-benefits of investment in adaptation and mitigation measures while building on existing support, initiatives, and partnerships to leverage their impact and lessons learned.

7. **Locally-led and culture-positive:** Customise approaches depending on local contexts of new, rapidly developing cities, while recognizing that culture and heritage represent both an asset to be protected from climate impacts and a resource to strengthen the ability of communities to pursue transformative change.

8. **Circular:** promoting a circular value chain in buildings and constructions, but also in supply and disposal infrastructure systems, that aims at reducing both emissions and waste drastically while promoting innovation, affordability, ensuring food security, energy efficiency, and local development.

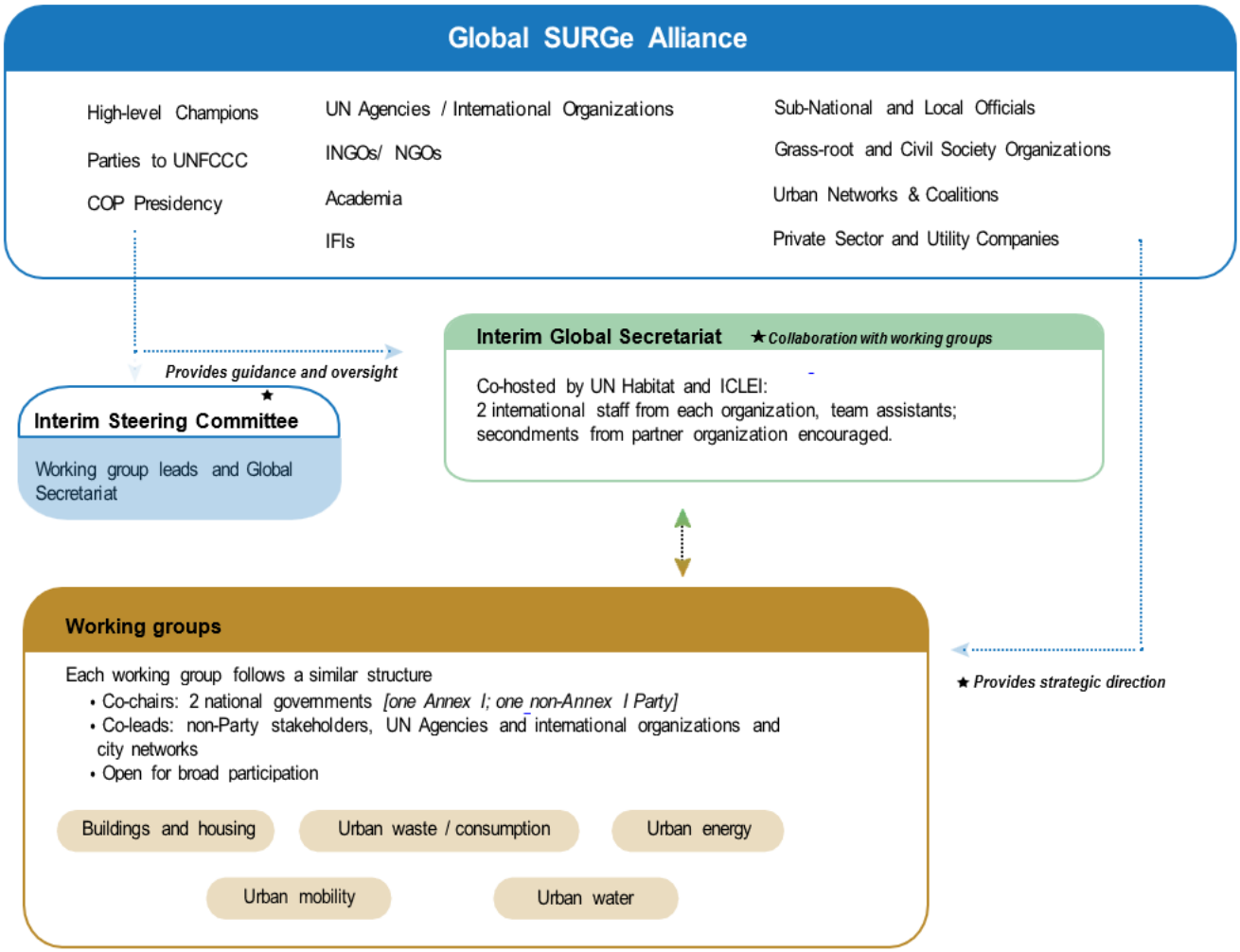
9. **Financing-enabling:** centered on capacity building, technology transfer, enabling frameworks and delivering solutions to support and enhance existing and innovating finance channels and mobilizing finance at scale while accelerating access for local and regional governments.

10. **Health-promoting:** recognizing the importance of health and wellbeing as an input to resilience, the power of health arguments to motivate change, and the significant economic and social co-benefits available from health-aware climate action.

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

To ensure the success of the Initiative and alignment of all stakeholders, a transparent governance structure has been developed around four different bodies:

- **Global SURGe Alliance,** which is open to participation by interested stakeholders. This Alliance provides an advisory function and will convene biennially at the margins of the World Urban Forum and present annual progress at the UNFCCC COPs with a view to providing inputs to outcomes of COPs. A current list of organizations committed to the initiative can be found in the table below, with a call for further interested stakeholders to join.
- **Steering Committee**, consisting of co-chairs and co-leads of each Track Working Group, the COP Presidencies, High-level Champions [tbc] and the Global Secretariat.
- **Global Secretariat,** which is co-hosted by UN-Habitat and ICLEI. It oversees the day-to-day operations of the Initiative, ensures alignment of work programmes between tracks in close collaboration with working group leads, upholds the overarching principles, keeps abreast of implementation progress including monitoring, reports (once per year to the proposed Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at UNFCCC COPs), verifies and secures high-level commitment to the Initiative from Members to the Global SURGe Alliance and external partners. The Secretariat is also tasked with ensuring close collaboration with existing programmes, partnerships, initiatives and campaigns by seeking synergy and avoiding duplication. The secretariat may be complemented with national secretariats to facilitate country-specific implementation.
- **Five Working Groups with track partners**, each compromising two co-chairs (one Annex; one non- Annex country) and two co-lead organization(s) (one UN agency or international organization and one network of local and regional governments and/or other non-state actors) that build on/consider existing work, initiatives, and commitments in the respective field, convene key stakeholders and existing networks relevant to the track. While working groups are sector-specific, they should all work on cross-cutting issues. The responsible entities report back to the Global Secretariat and present their progress at upcoming COPs and will designate a focal point to coordinate with other relevant presidential initiatives.



Global SURGe Alliance

[as of 16 November 2022]

National governments

Costa Rica - Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements
Egypt - Ministry of Local Development
Japan - Ministry of the Environment
Morocco - Department of Housing and City Policy
Nauru - Permanent Mission to the UN
Qatar - Planning and Statistics Authority
Syria - Ministry of Local Administration and Environment

Note: several governments also endorsed SURGe; not included here

Urban Networks

Benin Jeunesse Elite
C40 cities
Capital Cities of the Americas Coalition (CC35)
Commonwealth Association of Planners, Climate Action Working Group
Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) / PLATFORMA
Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance (CCFLA)
Climate Heritage Network
Eurocities
European Committee of the Regions
Global Building Network
Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GcoM)
ICLEI
Mayors Migration Council
Kwazulu Natal Government
Polis Urban Mobility Network, the Netherlands
Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA)
United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
Urban Climate Nexus

Grassroot and civil society

Association for the Protection of the Environment (APE)
Haiti Cholera Research Funding Foundation Inc. USA HCRFF
Inspirator Muda Nusantara (Inspiring Youth of the Indonesian Archipelago)
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)
SPARC
Ukombozi Heritage Foundation
Youth Green Society

Local and regional governments

Abasan Al-Kabira (State of Palestine)
Ahome (México)
Ambato and Esmeraldas (Ecuador)
Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam (The Netherlands)
Athens (Greece)
Barcelona (Spain)
Bogota and Tópaga (Colombia)
Bonn (Germany)
Bristol (UK)
Chefchaouen (Morocco)
Comas (Perú)
Copenhagen (Denmark)
Des Moines (Iowa, USA)
Despeñaderos, San Justo (Argentina)
Ekurhuleni (South Africa)
Florence (Italy)
Glasgow (Scotland)
Glasgow City Council
Independencia, Peñalolén (Chile)
Makati City and Manila (The Philippines)
Makindye Ssabagabo Municipal Council (Uganda)
Miami Dade (Florida, USA)
Oreamuno (Costa Rica)
Paris and Marseilles (France)
Phoenix (Arizona, USA)
Quelimane (Mozambique)
Regional Council of Nouakchott (Mauritania)
Salvado, São Paulo, Serra Talhada (Brazil)
San Francisco, San Jose (California, USA)
Turku (Finland)
Warsaw (Poland)

UN Agencies & International Organisations

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
IOM
IRENA
UN Water
UNCDF
UNEP / Global Alliance for Building and Construction
UNESCAP
UNESCO
UNFCCC
UN-Habitat
UNICEF
WHO
YOUNGO Constituency to the UNFCCC

INGOs & NGOs

Africa Place & Equity Cities Foundation
Aprodea, DRC
Association Nigérienne des Scouts de l'environnement
BENAA Foundation
CDP
Build Change
Centre of Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)
Children's Cancer Charity Club (Indonesia)
CItiesWithNature
Clim-Eat
Climate Chance Association
Destiny Africa
Eastern Regional Organisation for Planning and Housing (EAROPH)
ECOSOC – Kathak Academy
Eziodu Initiative for Sustainable Environmental Development, Nigeria
Egypt Green Building Council
FMDV – Global Fund for Cities Development
Habitat for Humanity International
Mainstreaming RSA Practitioners Network MPN
Munansi Green Initiative, Uganda
National Park City London
Impact Circles
Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)International Association of Public Transport (UITP)
International Union of Railways (UIC)
Planners for Climate Action
REFADD-RDC/MUT-REDIT ASBL
RegionsWithNature
Research Triangle Consortium (Uganda)
Resilience Rising
Resilient Cities Network
Saving Our Sons & Sisters International (SOSSI)
SeforAll
Sons and Daughters of Africa, Uganda
Urban Transitions Mission
World Green Building Council
World Resources Institute / Ross Center for Sustainable Cities
WWF International

Financial institution

Climate Investment Funds

Academia

Young Academics Network of Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP)
Biosonar Services - Strategic Water Resilient Development
Cairo University
CGIAR (Resilient Cities Initiative)
Climate Reality Project / Sierra Club (Atlanta Chapters)
Destination EMEA
Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association
Georgia Institute of Technology
Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation
InAfrika
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey
Kennesaw State University
Kenyatta University
Malaviya National Institute of Technology Jaipur (Department of Architecture)
NCTE
New York University
Penn Institute for Urban Research, University of Pennsylvania
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
University of agriculture Faisalabad
University of Oxford Earth Sciences
University of politecnico di Torino
University of Southern Denmark
Urban Imaginarium
Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology
World Talent Economy Forum

Private Sector and Utility Companies

Biophilic Private Limited, Singapore
BuildingtoCOP Coalition
BUMAS
Cassava Industry, Portugal
Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
Claudia Dutra Consultoria
Custom Built, Ghana
Diagonal
ECOCONSTRUCT BRAZIL
GIGANTESQ CONNEXION
GV&DEP7 Consultoria Relações Institucionais e Assuntos Governamentais
Majesty Business Utvikling
MAUA et Associés
Plan Rite Consult
Platforms for sustainable cities and regions
ROCKWOOL Group
Shanghai Yangtz Delta Human Eco- tech Development Center

NEXT STEPS

The SURGe Initiative was developed in a collaborative process, building on a first stakeholder meeting at the World Urban Forum in Katowice in June 2022, a stakeholder consultation workshop in Cairo in July 2022, bringing together over 120 participants. The draft concept note also underwent open peer review. For more information about the Initiative development process, consult the background information.

To evaluate the gaps that need to be closed to achieve the objectives of the SURGe Initiative, between the briefing of the Initiative and COP27, working groups will be convened and provide an assessment of priority actions to be taken. Based on this information, next steps include the development of a roadmap and key success criteria for each working group as well as for the entire SURGe Initiative. This will be developed collaboratively by all stakeholders. Moving forward, all stakeholders are invited to express their interest in joining this initiative by filling out the registration form.

REFERENCES

REGISTRATION FORM

COP27 Presidential Initiative in collaboration with UN-Habitat and facilitated by ICLEI

Interim Co-leads and Steering Committee members of the Initiative

100+ Members of the Global SURGe Alliance, including: