

CLIMATE ACTION FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA

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About CDP

CDP is a global environmental non-profit that helps investors, companies, cities, states, and regions assess their environmental impact and take action to build a sustainable future. Close to 1,000 cities, states and regions disclose their environmental data through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System to manage their emissions, build resilience and reduce their climate impact. Our open-source cities, states and regions datasets can be downloaded for free from our Open Data Portal at <https://data.cdp.net/>. For more information about annual disclosure, please email citiesemea@cdp.net.

About UCLG-MEWA

As one of the nine sections of UCLG World Organization, representing more than 100 years of experience in building cooperation among local governments and gathering the local governments of the world under one roof, United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and West Asia Section (UCLG-MEWA) continues its efforts to ensure the effective representation of local governments at international platforms, to establish strong governance structures, and to follow up the localization of international agendas in the MEWA region. UCLG-MEWA also operates as the helpdesk of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy in the region. For more information, you can visit <http://uclg-mewa.org/en/>.

Disclosure Drives Action

Despite facing significant challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 15 local governments from across the MEWA region disclosed their environmental data through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System in 2020, demonstrating a commitment to transparency and to working towards a resilient and low carbon future.

These local governments understand the hazards they face and are starting to take action to increase their resilience and reduce their emissions. However, more action is needed to address the urgency and scale of the climate risks faced by the region, and local governments have a crucial role to play in this challenge.

Disclosure is the first step towards climate action. By compiling and reporting their environmental data, local governments in MEWA can understand their vulnerability to climate change, access peer learning resources, best practice case studies, and expert knowledge on climate action, enabling them to build a safe and secure future for their citizens.

Cities can take the first step towards disclosing their environmental data by emailing citiesemea@cdp.net.

Important Notice

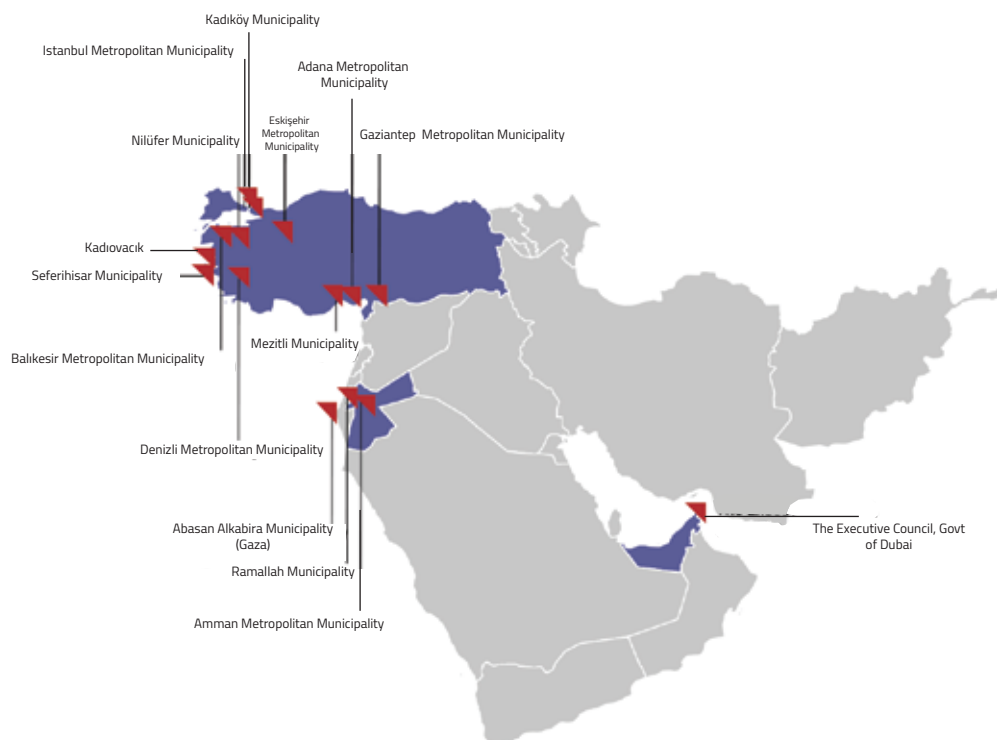
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LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TAKING ACTION

With global average temperatures increasing year on year, the impacts of climate change are being felt across the world.¹ Middle East and West Asia (MEWA), **one of the most water-scarce regions in the world**, is particularly vulnerable to climate change, with **extreme precipitation, heat and drought** events increasing across the region.² As the region becomes increasingly urbanised - with an estimated 96 million people living in cities by 2030³ - local governments in MEWA will be at the forefront of adapting to and fighting climate change.

In 2020, **15 cities and local governments** across the region disclosed their environmental data through the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System.⁴ These local authorities cover a range of government tiers, ranging from sub-district level to provincial level, which determines their mandates and the scope of their powers. This factsheet summarises the progress these local governments are making towards a resilient and low-carbon future.

Cities reporting their environmental data to the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System in 2020



¹ IPCC (2018). Global Warming of 1.5°C https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/10/SR15_SPM_version_stand_alone_LR.pdf

² The World Bank (2017). Beyond Scarcity: Water Security in the Middle East and North Africa. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/water/publication/beyond-scarcity-water-security-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa>

³ UCLG-MEWA (2020). GOLD V Report. The Localization of the Global Agendas. How local action is transforming territories and communities. Middle East and West Asia region. <https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/eng-mewa-region-web.pdf>

⁴ This data was collected in partnership by CDP and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability.

MIDDLE EAST AND WEST ASIA: KEY FIGURES



10 cities

incorporate sustainability targets into the master planning for the city



7 cities

have a climate risk and vulnerability assessment



8 cities

have an adaptation plan



10 cities

have a city-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory



9 cities

have a city-wide emission reduction target



7 cities

have a mitigation plan



11 cities

foresee a risk to their water supply from climate change



3 cities

have a water resource management strategy



7 cities

have a renewable energy target

Challenges cities face when taking climate action:

- ▼ Lack of information sharing and communication between different levels of government.
- ▼ Limited resource availability and capacity of local governments.

CITIES IN THE MEWA REGION ARE FACING MAJOR THREATS AS A RESULT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Understanding climate hazards

Regardless of future emissions, certain climate change impacts are unavoidable. Climate risk and vulnerability assessments are important to identify and manage threats related to climate change. Globally, cities with vulnerability assessments are more than twice (2.7x) as likely to report long-term hazards, and are taking almost 6 times (5.7x) the amount of adaptation actions compared to those cities that have not taken vulnerability assessments. Seven cities in the MEWA region reported a climate risk and vulnerability assessment.⁵

Commonly identified social risks:

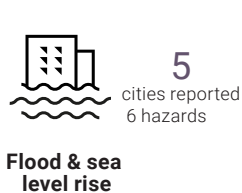
- ▼ Increased risk to vulnerable populations, particularly low-income populations and the elderly
- ▼ Increased demand for public services, including health services

Sectors that will be the most impacted by climate hazards:

- ▼ Food & agriculture
- ▼ Water supply & sanitation
- ▼ Environment, biodiversity & forestry

13 cities
reported they were facing
46 climate hazards

Commonly reported climate hazards:



⁵ CDP (2018). Cities at risk: dealing with the pressure of climate change. <https://www.cdp.net/en/research/global-reports/cities-at-risk>

Dubai, UAE | Ensuring Future Water Security

Dubai, located in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) - **one of the most water-scarce countries** in the world – understands the risks it faces from climate change. The emirate is taking action to generate a stable supply of water to meet current and future demand by developing an improved **Seawater Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) desalination plant** that requires 90% less energy.⁶ The aim is to obtain 100% desalinated water using clean energy and waste heat by 2030. To ensure water supply, Dubai Electricity and Water Authority is also building an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) system, designed to store desalinated water in groundwater aquifers for long periods of time during emergencies.

⁶ DEWA (2018). Sustainability Report 2018.

https://www.dewa.gov.ae/~media/Files/Custom/Sustainability%20Reports/DEWA%20Sustainability%20Report%202018_EN.ashx

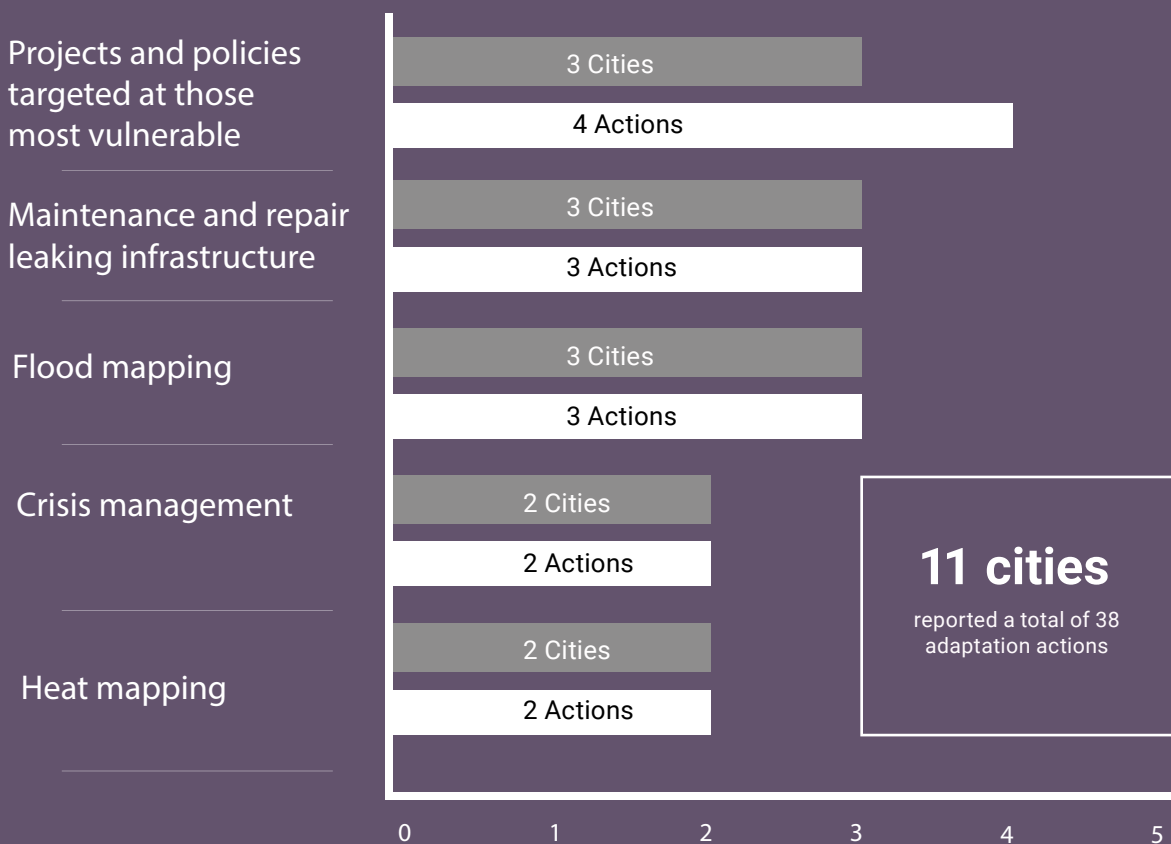
BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Climate adaptation is critical to manage the risks and vulnerabilities posed by climate hazards. Eight cities in the MEWA region reported an adaptation plan.

Most adaptation actions focused on the buildings & infrastructure and public health & safety sectors.

Funding for current adaptation projects are international sources, followed by local funding.

Commonly reported adaptation actions



Challenges cities face when implementing adaptation actions:

- ▼ Rapid urbanization
- ▼ Access to basic services
- ▼ Government and infrastructure capacity

Denizli, Turkey | Adapting agriculture to climate change

In the city of Denizli, located in southwestern Turkey, extreme heat is threatening agricultural productivity. The city is taking multiple adaptation actions to reduce risks posed by climate variability in the agriculture sector.⁷

Projects include:

- ▼ Prevention of soil erosion by **changing ploughing techniques, terracing and afforestation.**
- ▼ Increasing support mechanisms for **sustainable land management** and sustainable agriculture.
- ▼ Increasing incentives to improve irrigation and **supporting the shift to efficient irrigation systems.**
- ▼ **Training farmers** on suitable crop varieties and sustainable agriculture.

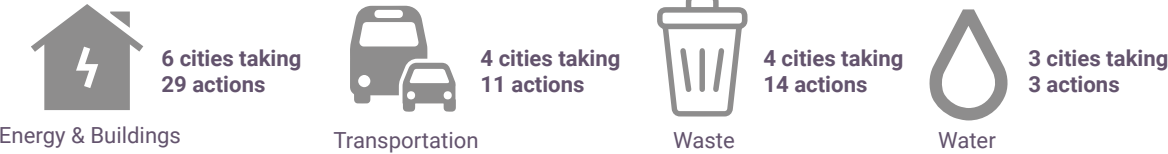
⁷ Regional Environmental Center Turkey (2019). Denizli Climate Change Action Plan. <https://bit.ly/3dVCXDW>

TAKING ACTION TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

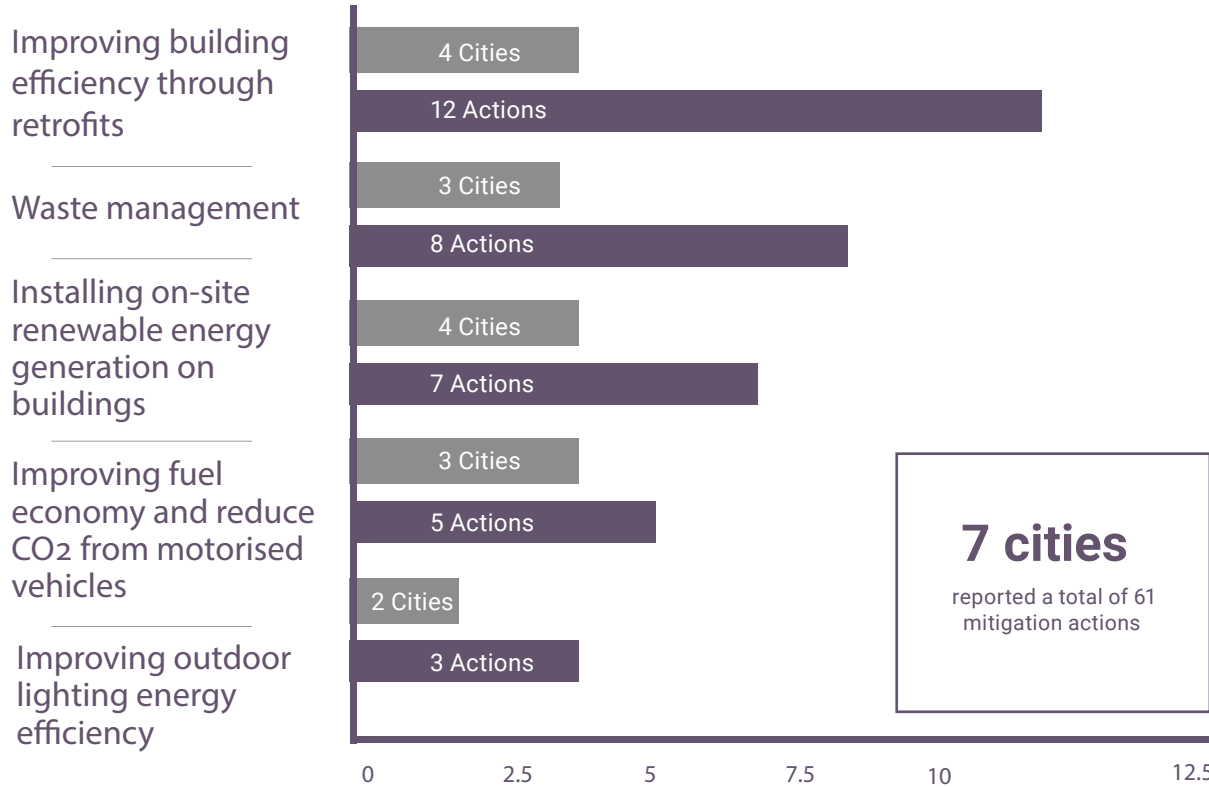
Global emissions need to halve by 2030 and reduce to net zero by 2050 to stay in line with the 1.5°C mitigation pathway and avoid catastrophic climate change. Local governments in MEWA are taking actions to reduce their emissions.

The main sources of funding for mitigation projects include local sources, international donors, and public-private partnerships (PPP).

Mitigation actions by sector:



The 5 most reported mitigation actions



Kadıköy, Turkey | Improving energy efficiency across the district

Kadıköy Municipality, a central district in the city of Istanbul, is one of the leading local governments in Turkey with innovative climate action projects. Their commitment to achieve a **40% reduction in emissions by 2030** has led them to develop multiple energy efficiency projects across the district, supported by the necessary changes in financial and regulatory frameworks.⁸ The Municipality engaged with multiple stakeholders throughout the strategy development phase to ensure they met their needs and expectations. An important focus area is the **retrofitting of buildings**, which has the potential to improve energy efficiency by 35%.

Projects include:

- ▼ Improved **thermal insulation** for existing buildings to reduce energy and coal consumption.
- ▼ Heating 25% of residential buildings with a district heating system using **alternative fuels** (e.g. biomass, waste heat).
- ▼ **Energy efficient lighting systems**.

⁸ Kadıköy Municipality (2018). Sustainable Energy Action Plan. <http://iklim.kadikoy.bel.tr/Content/Images/KadikoySECAP.pdf>

Greater Amman, Jordan | Increasing citizens' access to renewable energy

Greater Amman Municipality, located in Jordan, is making regulatory changes to encourage wide-spread distribution of **renewable energy**. This allows businesses, public institutions and individuals to take control over their own energy production. The city has shared design guidelines for **rooftop solar PV systems** with the community, with 3,000 applications received to install solar PV panels across the city between 2015-2018.⁹ Institutions and individuals can sell excess output back to the national grid, supporting a local transition to clean energy whilst reducing dependence on the national grid.

⁹ Greater Amman Municipality (2019). The Amman Climate Plan. A vision for 2050 Amman. https://www.amman.jo/site_doc/climate.pdf

DRIVING ACTION AND AMBITION

Investing in a resilient future

Climate and environmental projects reported by local governments in MEWA are currently at different levels of technical and financial development. Cities require support throughout project planning, and in accessing financing.

- ▼ **29.4% of total projects reported are in early stages of development.** The **City Climate Gap Fund** provides both technical support and financing for early stages of project identification and preparation.¹⁰
- ▼ **6 cities reported 14 projects seeking full or additional funding.** Projects include increasing renewable energy generation, improving energy efficiency, improving waste and water management, and urban planning projects.

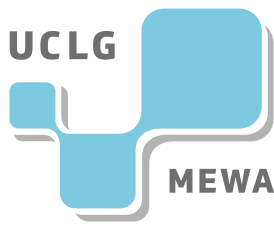
Collaboration

- ▼ **5 cities** collaborate in partnerships with businesses.

Developing partnerships and active collaboration between governments, businesses, multilateral institutions, and civil society is essential to tackle climate change. These partnerships may result in further opportunities for local governments to increase the number of climate projects that are planned, financed, and implemented.



¹⁰ City Climate Gap Fund (2020). <https://www.citygapfund.org/>



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