



**ICLEI  
Local Governments for Sustainability**

**Strategic Plan 2007-2012  
(The Cape Town Plan)**

**As approved by the ICLEI Council  
in Cape Town, South Africa on 3 March 2006**

## Function of the Strategic Plan

Through the Strategic Plan, ICLEI's membership sets the direction for the Association's policies and programs. According to ICLEI's Charter, the Strategic Plan is adopted by ICLEI's membership at the Council Meeting, which takes place every three years.

The Strategic Plan has a six-year scope. It is revised and renewed every three years.

It is the Secretary General's duty to ensure the implementation of the Strategic Plan through annual work programs and budgets, which are to be approved by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee members in each region shall regularly meet with the Secretary General's regional representative(s) for consultation on how they can politically support the regional implementation of the Strategic Plan and annual workplans.

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The Strategic Plan 2007-2012 maps out ICLEI's strategy for implementing its mission for a six-year period leading up to the 2012 World Congress, which will coincide with the Johannesburg +10 United Nations World Summit.

## **1. ICLEI – MISSION, VISION, MANDATE**

ICLEI (hereafter referred to as the Association) was founded by local governments as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in the year 1990. The launch of the Association took place under the auspices and with the support of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Center for Innovative Diplomacy (CID).

### **1.1 MISSION STATEMENT**

ICLEI's mission is to build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions. (Article 1.3 ICLEI Charter)

### **1.2 VISION**

We see ICLEI as:

A growing *Association* of local governments dedicated to sustainable development with worldwide presence, which has challenging positions, whose voice is heard, and which is attractive to be a member of, work for and partner with;

A high-energy, flexible *Movement* of local governments working together in networks for performance, supported by campaigns and programs, and strategic alliances;

An effective sustainability and environmental *Agency* demonstrating creativity and excellence both in developing cutting-edge solutions and in program design and execution.

## **1.3 MANDATE**

### **GENERAL MANDATE**

ICLEI's general mandate is to build an active and committed municipal membership of local spheres of government (local and regional governments and authorities, hereafter referred to as local government) as well as international, regional, national and sub-national local-government associations.

### **WORK MANDATE**

To support its members, ICLEI's work mandate is to:

- mobilize and provide support to local-level initiatives that address specific priority problems of local and global significance;
- help develop and strengthen local capacity and expertise;
- support networking among and exchange of experiences between local governments, especially between developing and industrialized countries;
- work with groups of local governments and partner organizations in order to research, develop, pilot and implement local initiatives for sustainability;
- function as an information clearinghouse, and as a training center, for local sustainable development and environmental policies and programs;
- provide technical support services and consultancy to aid the implementation of local sustainable development and environmental policies and programs;
- evaluate and report on the impacts of local actions;
- develop and exchange environmental knowledge and appropriate environmental technologies;
- promote the role of local government as a necessary innovator and implementer of sustainable development and environmental policy,
- campaign for meaningful policy making authority for, and adequate resourcing of, local governments; and
- raise and dispense funds to fulfil the purposes of the Association.

In order to implement its work mandate, the Association will develop and implement a range of campaigns and programs; research, development and pilot projects; information services; training programs; conferences; technical and consulting services; and facilitate local government networks.

### **REPRESENTATION MANDATE**

ICLEI's representation mandate is to serve as an international representative for its members and campaign participants by providing advocacy before national and international governments, agencies and organizations and multilateral bodies to increase their understanding and support for local sustainable development and environmental protection activities. Through such advocacy, the Association will work to achieve an effective division of responsibilities and resources for sustainable development and environmental protection between the various spheres of government. (Article 1.4-1.6 ICLEI Charter)

## 2. ICLEI – THE ASSOCIATION

ICLEI functions as a democratic, international association of local governments. As an association, ICLEI

- provides *membership services*;
- maintains a transparent organizational *governance structure*;
- pursues a balanced *regional development*;
- builds and fosters *alliances, partnerships and cooperation* with relevant organizations that support the implementation of ICLEI's programs;
- carries out *advocacy* on behalf of its municipal members and campaign participants and occasionally local government in general, and links local to international and multilateral policy processes;
- organizes its *operations* effectively;
- manages its *finances* carefully.

### 2.1 MEMBERSHIP

#### VISION

ICLEI's municipal membership forms a worldwide association and network of local governments dedicated to work in concert and solidarity towards local and global sustainability.

#### STRATEGIC APPROACH

ICLEI's approach to membership services shall be a balance between being demand driven and pro-actively offering services and opportunities.

ICLEI is an open association and shall welcome any new member that subscribes to ICLEI's mission, vision and mandate. At the same time, the Association shall build networks of performance-oriented local governments dedicated to advancing policies, practices and achievements in all areas of municipal management.

#### GOALS

- (a) maintain and further build an active and committed membership;
- (b) secure and strengthen ICLEI's existing membership base;
- (c) introduce ICLEI to local governments in China; West Africa; Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia; North Africa, Middle East and West Asia in order to raise interest in ICLEI membership
- (d) build members' municipal capacity and political local leadership;
- (e) facilitate and respond effectively to member input, with special emphasis on meeting regional needs;
- (f) facilitate member-to-member solidarity, cooperation and exchange;
- (g) support, document and recognize member local sustainable development strategies and achievements in key performance areas;
- (h) institute mechanisms through which ICLEI members' and campaign participants' contributions are regularly quantified, aggregated and reported to the global community.

### 2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE

#### VISION

ICLEI is a democratic membership association of local governments; its governance supports an effective partnership between its municipal members, governing bodies and staff.

#### STRATEGIC APPROACH

ICLEI shall pursue a democratic, transparent and efficient approach to its organizational governance.

ICLEI is committed to continuous improvement through periodic reviews in all areas of its activity, including governing bodies and procedures and routines, especially in the area of strategic planning, policy, and management.

### **GOALS**

- (a) improve consistency of and between ICLEI's Charter, By-Laws and statutes of its corporations;
- (b) achieve more coherence and integration of ICLEI's global governance framework, especially concerning the links between the world association and the affiliated corporations
- (c) create a network of senior advocates and ambassadors, drawn from past Executive Committee members, the Advisory Council and friends of the Association, which will become an internationally powerful and influential group.

## **2.3 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **VISION**

ICLEI is present, and works with member local governments, in all world regions, through the establishment of regional operations that are fully integrated with ICLEI's worldwide governance, strategy and standards of activity.

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

The Association shall maintain and strengthen its existing membership base and direct its attention to regions with a high need of local sustainable development where it is not yet adequately present. The establishment of an operational structure in a region requires that the membership has reached a critical number and that a multi-year, funded program base exists.

### **GOALS**

- (a) continue developing its operations in Europe, North America, Oceania, Japan and Korea;
- (b) consolidate its offices and operations in Africa, Latin America, South Asia and Southeast Asia;
- (c) lay foundations for building membership, programs and operations in China.

## **2.4 ALLIANCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION**

### **VISION**

ICLEI maintains strategic alliances and symbiotic partnerships at local, country, regional and international levels, with other organizations that will concretely support the achievement of the ICLEI mission.

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

Such alliance or partnership requires that ICLEI and its partner have defined common aims and objectives, strategy and outcomes, have determined the share of tasks and responsibilities, and have identified resources.

### **GOALS**

- (a) enter into a symbiotic partnership with the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments and be recognized as the local government agency specialized in sustainable development and the environment;
- (b) renew and implement Memorandum of Understanding with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- (c) maintain and enhance institutional partnerships with other local government associations, national governments, United Nations agencies, academic institutions, businesses and non-governmental organizations to secure synergy where mandates meet;

## **2.5 ADVOCACY**

### **VISION**

ICLEI is an effective advocate of its member local governments in support of its existing campaigns and programs.

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall serve as an international representative for its members and campaign participants by providing advocacy before national and international governments, agencies and organizations and multilateral bodies as well as to other local government associations to increase their understanding and support for local sustainable development and environmental protection activities.

### **GOALS**

- (a) serve as Local Government Major Group Organizing Partner to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 14<sup>th</sup> session (2006) and 15<sup>th</sup> session (2007)
- (b) serve as Observer to, and organize local government involvement in and advocacy at, the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) manage the World Mayors Council on Climate Change (WMCCC) as its Secretariat;
- (d) advocate Millenium Development Goal 7(Environmental Sustainability);
- (e) review the effectiveness and benefits of ICLEI's holding Organizing Partner and Observer roles and determine if ICLEI shall continue serving in this role;
- (f) provide further advocacy in support of its campaigns and programs.

## **2.6 OPERATIONS**

### **VISION**

ICLEI impresses by the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations.

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall develop and maintain effective working structures that allow for both efficiency and flexibility to adapt to a changing policy and funding environment. This requires financially stable World Secretariat, regional secretariats and country offices covering all regions of the world, with multi-term funding arrangements, long-term staff and well-resourced host arrangements. Globally coordinated, strong regional activities shall the backbone of ICLEI's achievements.

### **GOALS**

- (a) develop financially stable World Secretariat, Regional Secretariats and Country Offices covering all regions of the world, with multi-term funding arrangements, long-term staff and well-resourced host arrangements – and where strong regional activities have become the backbone of ICLEI's achievements;
- (b) form cohesive and consistent operations through contractual network between headquarters, regional secretariats and country offices, and harmonize and standardize policies, procedures and tools;
- (c) establish and ensure effective global coordination functions for all programs and services;

- (d) develop capacity centers by further developing ICLEI's International Training Centre, and by creating capacity centers operated through ICLEI offices or symbiotic partnerships with academic institutions or non-governmental organizations offering specialized services and additional resources.

## **2.7 FINANCE**

### **VISION**

ICLEI is financially healthy and dynamic through sufficient core funding for its Association functions and program development, and success in securing project funds for its programs and campaigns.

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall develop a diversified financial base in terms of both funding sources and modalities.

### **GOALS**

- (a) continue exercising solid financial management and standardize financial management policies, procedures and tools for all affiliated corporations;
- (b) take up new funding opportunities through Local Action 21 strategies; in particular, for R&D and model communities projects on Just, Peaceful & Secure Communities as well as on Resilient Communities & Cities.
- (c) with support from the Advisory Council, identify new mechanisms of resourcing its campaigns and programs, especially through an endowment fund.



### **3. ICLEI – THE MOVEMENT**

As a *Movement*, ICLEI develops and runs a range of campaigns and programs that address local sustainability issues while protecting global common goods, and that link local action to internationally agreed goals and targets such as Agenda 21, Rio Conventions, Habitat Agenda, Millenium Development Goals and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

As a Movement, ICLEI runs campaigns, programs and projects that promote Local Agenda 21 as a participatory, long-term, strategic planning process to help local governments develop and implement local action programs to address local priority concerns, i.e. to work with their communities and local stakeholders to address the interrelated challenges of poverty; injustice, conflict and insecurity; vulnerability to extreme events; and unhealthy environments.

Local Action 21 was launched at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development Local Government Session in Johannesburg. Local Action 21 is a motto, mandate and movement of local governments for an implementation-oriented phase of Local Agenda 21 in the post-Johannesburg decade. ICLEI shall offer its members the opportunity of joining pilot projects and receiving support and guidance for their actions to implement their Local Agendas 21 (sustainable development plans & policies) through local specialized agendas and their implementation in selected priority program areas.

- Building sustainable communities and cities by addressing key barriers to sustainability such as poverty; injustice, conflict and insecurity; vulnerability to extreme events; and environmental degradation;
- Protecting global common goods such climate and freshwater at the same time achieving local benefits;
- Establishing principles, policies & practices, mechanisms and tools for unwavering implementation of sustainable development.

ICLEI shall look into how the protection of other global common goods addressed by Local Action 21 such as land/soil and biodiversity can be meaningfully supported and activities resourced.

ICLEI shall encourage its members to adopt commitment frameworks for action such as the Urban Environmental Accords or, at regional level, the Aalborg or MAPES commitments.

### **3.1 BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND CITIES**

#### **3.1.1 RESILIENT COMMUNITIES & CITIES**

##### **VISION**

ICLEI leads the development of Local Resilience Agendas.

##### **APPROACH**

ICLEI shall capitalize on its expertise and experience in Local Agenda 21 planning when developing a *Resilient Communities & Cities* initiative, which is to engage local governments in participatory action planning for increasing the resilience of both their city and community to extreme events.

##### **GOAL**

- (a) develop and test a methodology and tools, and implement reference pilot cases for the development and implementation of Local Resilience Agendas, which address local vulnerability to extreme events such as natural and industrial disasters, environmental emergencies or economic crises.

### **3.1.2 JUST, PEACEFUL AND SECURE COMMUNITIES**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI leads the development of Local Agendas for Peace and Security.

#### **APPROACH**

ICLEI shall capitalize on its expertise and experience in Local Agenda 21 planning when developing a *Just, Peaceful and Secure Communities & Cities* program, which promotes Local Agendas for Peace & Security that address local injustice, conflict and insecurity.

#### **GOAL**

- (a) develop and test a methodology and tools, and implement reference pilot cases for the development and implementation of Local Peace & Security Agendas.

### **3.1.3 VIABLE LOCAL ECONOMIES**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI leads the development of Local Viable Economy Agendas.

#### **APPROACH**

ICLEI shall capitalize on its expertise and experience in Local Agenda 21 planning when developing a *Viable Local Economies* program, which addresses poverty by promoting Local Viable Economy Agendas drawing on the unique strengths and opportunities of each community.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) develop and test a methodology and tools, implement reference pilot cases for the development and implementation of Local Economy Agendas which address local poverty.

### **3.1.4 ECO-EFFICIENT CITIES**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI members stand out by concertedly applying management instruments to systematically increase the efficiency in their use of scarce environmental resources.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall develop an *Eco-Efficient Cities* program that addresses the scarcity of, and unequal access by local communities to, environmental resources.

#### **GOAL**

- (a) partner with the Global Footprint Network to engage ICLEI's membership in calculating, and monitoring the development of, its Ecological Footprint based on the footprints of all member cities, towns and counties, who report about their footprints at the triennial World Congresses;
- (b) encourage members to introduce *ecoBUDGET*<sup>®</sup> as a system for the ongoing management of environmental resources.

## **3.2 PROTECTING GLOBAL COMMON GOODS**

### **3.2.1 CITIES FOR CLIMATE PROTECTION™ (CCP) CAMPAIGN**

#### **VISION**

CCP maintains its role as the largest and most effective movement of local governments focused and empowered to act on climate change.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall continue using its performance-oriented campaign methodology for local governments to arrive at tangible reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by concerted, multi-local action. In addition, ICLEI shall engage local governments in adaptation to climate change. Local climate protection plans and policies shall both improve community livability and contribute to the protection of the other global common goods upon which people's lives depend (including air, water, soil, biodiversity and health).

#### **GOALS**

- (a) consolidate the worldwide Cities for Climate Protection™ (CCP) Campaign;
- (b) establish effective campaign governance, strengthen the political voice through the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, and enhance the international coordination function;
- (c) facilitate city-to-city cooperation on climate change;
- (d) promote renewable energy through a model communities program;
- (e) facilitate and lead municipal participation in the global carbon market;
- (f) identify financing mechanisms and negotiate funding arrangements for local governments participating in the CCP Campaign to support the implementation of greenhouse gas and air pollution reduction activities.

### **3.2.2 WATER CAMPAIGN**

#### **VISION**

The Water Campaign helps local governments improve water quality and access to water through good water governance and integrated water resource management.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall use its performance-oriented campaign framework and methodology for local governments to develop and implement a local strategic agenda to improve water quality, availability and access.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) build and consolidate the Water Campaign in Africa, Asia and Oceania while establishing effective campaign governance and strengthening the international coordination function;
- (b) link the methodologies of performance oriented campaigns to sustainable development planning, and create tools and reference pilot cases for the development and implementation of Local Water Agendas;
- (c) maintain and strengthen strategic alliances with governments, non-governmental organizations, associations of professionals, and the business sector.

### **3.2.3 BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE**

#### **VISION**

A vision for ICLEI's role in the promotion of a local government biodiversity initiative shall be developed within a conceptual phase.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall facilitate the participation of interested members in the conceptualization of a Local Action for Biodiversity initiative as proposed and led by the City of Cape Town.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) identify opportunities for the creation of an inter-regional local government network for biodiversity, which would promote a greater understanding of urban biodiversity issues and the implementation of actions.

## **3.3 PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT**

#### **GENERAL STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall support local governments to institute principles, policies and practices, and mechanisms in local governance as well as state-of-the-art systems and tools in municipal management that ensure unwavering implementation of local action programs, effective monitoring and continual improvement of conditions.

ICLEI shall contribute advocacy; research, development & piloting; capacity building networks; and training and guidance.

### **3.3.1 LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI's merits and track record in the area of Local Agenda 21 are honored by keeping a lead role in promoting a participatory sustainable development planning process (LA21).

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall continue promoting Local Agenda 21 as a locally based participatory sustainable development planning process, and further support the LA21 movement, with an emphasis on processes to address key barriers to sustainability and mechanisms to ensure implementation.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) continue running and cooperating on national and regional Local Agenda 21 programs and sustainable cities campaigns, by facilitating networks and providing guidance and training;
- (b) extend the application of the LA21 self-assessment tool to other regions, and develop a web based LA21 evaluation facility.

### **3.3.2 SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI members consider *eco*BUDGET with Triple Bottom Line reporting as useful management mechanisms. This will allow for reporting on aggregated targets and achievements for ICLEI as a whole.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall design, promote and apply sustainability management mechanisms to function as the heart of “ensuring unwavering implementation” of local sustainable development.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) promote the *eco*BUDGET<sup>®</sup> system to local governments worldwide, run pilot applications in more countries, and offer related consultancy services;
- (b) to promote Triple Bottom Line reporting to local governments, in particular ICLEI members, and offer related consultancy services;
- (c) promote integrated long term planning for community sustainability.

### **3.3.3 SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI shall be the globally leading local government association in promoting sustainable public procurement.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall motivate local governments worldwide to advance sustainable production and consumption by directing their procurement budgets and purchasing power to environmentally and socially sound products and services, as a means to implement sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) consolidate the Sustainable Procurement Campaign and expand it to other regions;
- (b) expand the European network of municipal procurement professionals and offer similar networks in other ICLEI world regions;
- (c) provide guidelines, tools and information to ICLEI members;
- (d) promote sustainable procurement to local governments worldwide as a means to implement sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

## **4. ICLEI - THE AGENCY**

As an international *Sustainable Development and Environmental Agency* for local governments, ICLEI provides information services, delivers training, organizes conferences, facilitates networking and city-to-city exchanges, carries out research, development and pilot projects on methodologies and tools, offers technical services and consultancy.

### **4.1 INFORMATION SERVICES**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI provides rich, reliable and topical information resources to inform its Members' sustainable development strategies.

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall document and transfer the experiences of local communities worldwide in achieving sustainable development in order to build municipal capacity, and to provide information tools to local leaders and managers that will support their efforts towards sustainable development.

ICLEI shall contribute an interactive website, case studies, handbooks and manuals, reports, fact sheets, and periodical publications.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) strengthen ICLEI's knowledge management systems to meet the information needs of members and staff;
- (b) enhance website to make it an always up-to-date source of information and facility for dissemination and exchange;
- (c) maintain and upgrade publications series;
- (d) establish a best practices capacity center function as a partnership project.

### **4.2 TRAINING, CONFERENCING, NETWORKING AND EXCHANGE**

#### **VISION**

ICLEI shows excellence in delivering high-quality training to local government officials to enhance their sustainable development capacity

#### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall strengthen the capacity of elected officials and senior officers within local government and their partners to drive a process of change towards sustainable development, through training, conferencing, networking and exchange services.

#### **GOALS**

- (a) develop and offer a multitude of capacity building and training services especially in support of Local Action 21 strategies, and to develop incentive and commitments frameworks for implementation;
- (b) organize in all regions regular members conferences for capacity building and exchange;
- (c) design and offer innovative e-learning solutions aligning with ICLEI's campaigns and programs;
- (d) further develop the International Training Centre as ICLEI's capacity center for curricula and training methods, in particular its web training facility.

## **4.3 RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT & PILOTING**

### **VISION**

ICLEI shows excellence as a research & development agency specialized on local sustainable development issues

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall continue building its campaigns and programs upon methodologies developed through action research projects and experiences gained through pilot projects.

### **GOALS**

- (a) foster its research & development capacity across all offices and form interdisciplinary scientific teams for relevant subject areas;
- (b) conceptualize and carry out R&D and pilot projects to support programs and campaigns.

## **4.4 TECHNICAL SERVICES & CONSULTANCY**

### **VISION**

ICLEI Agency makes the unique expertise of ICLEI staff available on fee-for-service basis

### **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

ICLEI shall develop products and services that support the implementation of sustainability goals of local governments, in particular ICLEI members, and that are strongly linked to ICLEI's work mandate. The methodologies, products and services developed will be transferable and supportable across all regions.

### **GOALS**

- (a) foster its technical services and consultancy capacity across all offices and form a consultants' network that includes affiliated external experts;
- (b) market consultancy services based on its methodologies, instruments and software tools in the fields of energy management, water management, environmental management systems and others.