

Vienna Declaration

ACT NOW Mayors' Conference 2025

Just transition: Local Action for a Sustainable Future

We, the undersigned mayors, representatives, civil society and individuals, acknowledge the urgent need for decisive action in the face of the climate crisis and the loss of biodiversity. The time for bold local leadership is now, as cities, towns, and villages are central to driving innovation, implementing impactful policies and transforming our systems. These communities are uniquely positioned to mitigate the devastating effects of climate change and build a more sustainable and equitable future for all residents. Democracy, peace, the rule of law and fundamental rights, especially equality of women and men, are prerequisites for this transition to be successful, which is why we must continue to support them globally.

In this spirit, we underline our commitment to achieving climate neutrality and restoring biodiversity in our communities, as we want them to be green and healthy for everyone. We will ensure that our processes are inclusive, fostering participatory and deliberative decision-making to guarantee that no one is left behind. We will continue to expand the circular economy, prioritize sustainable energy solutions, and reshape mobility and heating and cooling systems to reduce our environmental impact and increase air quality. Our cities will take decisive steps to reduce soil sealing and support de-sealing initiatives, improving climate resilience as well as biodiversity outcomes, and create and expand green and blue spaces to combat urban heat islands and enhance the quality of life for residents.

The urgency of the ecological crisis leaves us no time to waste. We must act now, together, to safeguard our communities and the planet for future generations.

We call upon the European Commission and national governments to support these efforts by providing sufficient, simplified and direct funding to cities, and by involving them in shaping future cohesion policy. We urge investments in blue-green infrastructure, sustainable energy solutions, and nature restoration, while ensuring that cities and municipalities are granted the necessary autonomy and resources to implement these transformative solutions effectively.