

ICLEI World Congress 2006: Frequently asked questions and answers

What does ICLEI do?

ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments and national and regional local government organizations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. More than 470 cities, towns, counties, and their associations world-wide comprise ICLEI's growing membership. ICLEI works with these and hundreds of other local governments through international performance-based, results-oriented campaigns and programs.

ICLEI provides technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. Our basic premise is that locally designed initiatives can provide an effective and cost-efficient way to achieve local, national, and global sustainability objectives.

Why was ICLEI established?

ICLEI was conceived in 1989, with the idea that one municipality could have a measurable effect on a global scale. This led to the realization that the cumulative effect of cities working in partnership would be profound.

ICLEI was officially founded in 1990 as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. More than 200 local governments from 43 countries convened at our inaugural conference, the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future, at the United Nations in New York. ICLEI was recognized as the international environmental agency for local governments.

What is the focus of the organization?

ICLEI is a democratic, international **association** of local governments and national and regional local government organizations that have made a commitment to sustainable development.

As a **movement**, ICLEI develops and runs a broad range of campaigns and programs that address local sustainability issues while protecting global common goods (such as air quality, climate, water), and link local action to internationally agreed goals and targets. We help local governments generate political awareness of key issues; establish plans of action towards defined, concrete, measurable targets; work towards meeting these targets through the implementation of projects; and evaluate local and cumulative progress toward sustainable development.

As the international sustainable development and environmental **agency** for local governments, ICLEI provides information, delivers training, organizes conferences, facilitates networking and city-to-city exchanges, carries out research and pilot projects, and offers technical services and consultancy.

Which of the ICLEI programs are best known?

The **Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP)**, active since 1993, enlists cities to adopt policies and implement measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. Over 665 local governments participate in this program representing approximately 12% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and the numbers are growing. Our

Cities for Climate Protection Campaign has been publicized in journals, reports, and media around the world. Many cities use their success in the campaign as a tool for community development, city-to-city partnerships, and international recognition.

Following the endorsement of **Local Agenda 21** at the Rio Earth Summit as Chapter 28 of Agenda 21, ICLEI developed its **Local Action 21** implementation process. ICLEI campaigns, programs, and projects promote Local Action 21 as a participatory, long-term, strategic planning process that addresses local sustainability while protecting global common goods. It supports good local governance and mobilizes local governments and their citizens to undertake such multi-stakeholder process. The Local Agenda 21 process leads to the preparation and implementation of a long-term, strategic plan that addresses priority local sustainable development concerns.

What does the ICLEI organizational structure look like?

ICLEI Members form the constituency of ICLEI. Members are cities, towns, metropolitan governments, counties and their associations that are committed to sustainable development and join ICLEI in a formal process, normally decided by the local councils. Full Members of the Council have power to elect the ICLEI Executive Committee, revise the ICLEI Charter and establish policy direction for the organization.

The **ICLEI Council** is the general assembly made up of ICLEI Full Members. The Council meets every three years on the occasion of an ICLEI World Congress. The Council elects the Executive Committee, approves the six-year Strategic Plan, which is updated every three years, and receives the Triennial Report.

Every three years, concurrent with the ICLEI World Congress, ICLEI Members elect the **ICLEI Executive Committee** that consists of 21 elected local government representatives, plus the Immediate Past President and Immediate Past Vice President. Executive Committee representatives come from all nine ICLEI regions worldwide and oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan and ICLEI operations.

The **ICLEI Secretary General** serves as the chief executive officer of ICLEI. The Secretary General's office is at the ICLEI World Secretariat in Toronto, Canada.

The **ICLEI Advisory Council** consists of between three and 12 esteemed persons who are appointed by the Executive Committee to assist in raising funding for ICLEI's programs, in fostering partnerships and generally to offer strategic and business advice.

Who qualifies for ICLEI membership?

Local governments and their national and regional associations may become **Full Members** in the Council with powers to govern the organization internationally. Membership rates are based upon the population of the local government and its national per capita income. The payment of dues is made on an annual basis.

ICLEI also offers non-voting **Associate Member** status to state and national government agencies, non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and individuals who wish to be involved in the organization's ongoing efforts.

Who are ICLEI's partners?

Right from ICLEI's origins in 1990 when ICLEI was set up under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), we have worked together with a wide variety of international, regional and national

partners, including global agencies, national and regional governments, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and other associations.

Where does ICLEI funding come from?

ICLEI is supported first and foremost by our Members, not only through our very modest membership fee, but also through hosting offices and events, and through active participation in ICLEI activities. The City of Toronto has generously hosted our World Secretariat since 1991.

In order to successfully multiply our membership revenue, ICLEI has successfully attracted core and project funders to effectively deliver our programs and campaigns worldwide. Our funders include national and subnational governments, international organizations, foundations and associations, and municipal governments.

One of the key forms of support we receive is through our core program funders who provide unrestricted funding in support of ICLEI's mandate and strategic plan. We would especially like to thank the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which is providing core support to ICLEI in 2004 and 2005.

What is ICLEI's role in implementing international conventions?

ICLEI has "Special Consultative Status" with the UN Economic and Social Council and continues to co-ordinate local government representation in several UN processes related to Agenda 21, the Habitat Agenda and the Rio Conventions. ICLEI was responsible for facilitating all local government input and participation in the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in an active and extensive partnership that encompassed all of the major international and regional associations of local governments.

ICLEI is the official co-ordinator of the Local Authorities Major Group at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UN-CSD). We are also the lead organization representing local governments at the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), having introduced the concept of local governments' participation in the world-wide effort to halt climate change, showing that domestic GHG emission reductions are achievable and that local action can help meet national and international reduction targets. ICLEI organizes local government delegations to report on local action and advocate for local concerns.

How does ICLEI fit into NEPAD?

NEPAD is the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development. Local governments, especially those with the special commitment ICLEI Members make, can provide the most relevant contributions to implementing NEPAD's goals. We are separate organizations, but our goals are not mutually exclusive.

What is ICLEI's role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals?

Local governments are key stakeholders in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Local governments are providers of basic services such as water, sanitation, public health, energy, and housing. The Millennium Development Goals are key objectives for many of ICLEI's sustainable development initiatives, including our Water Campaign.

The World Congress

When was the first ICLEI World Congress held?

The first World Congress took place in Toronto, Canada in 1992. For other World Congresses, see: www.iclei.org/worldcongress

How often is the World Congress held?

The congress is held every three years. The last World Congress was held in Athens, Greece, in November 2003.

What are the expected outcomes of the World Congress 2006?

The congress aims to increase local government awareness of key sustainability issues through information exchange, best practices, city recognition, and brainstorming mechanisms through tools sessions and workshops. This type of exchange is one important mechanism to assist local governments to work together towards achieving sustainability goals.

The workshop structure of the conference will support peer exchange, knowledge sharing and capacity building among the participants by providing an opportunity for partnership building and cooperation among local governments and with key partners. Local governments will also be introduced to the tools, mechanisms and practical support necessary to systematically implement local action plans.

How will congress results be monitored?

Results will be monitored as an element of ICLEI's ongoing campaigns and programs.

Has the World Congress ever been held in the Southern Hemisphere before?

Cape Town is the first city in the Southern Hemisphere to host the World Congress. The congress host cities provide a fundamental part of the congress budget and a lot of good practice examples and input to the congress program.

Cape Town was selected after an international bidding process out of which Cape Town was chosen as the most appropriate location and after a convincing presentation during the bidding procedure.

This is not the first international local government event in the Southern Hemisphere though: ICLEI organized the Local Government Session at the World Summit in Johannesburg with strong attendance from ICLEI members as well as the regional follow up for Latin-America in Nunoa, Chile.

What is the cost to attend the congress?

The fee structure is adjusted according to ICLEI membership status and country of origin. Reduced fees apply to cities located in countries that fall into GNP group I or Group II, calculated according to Gross National Income per capita.

Full fee for ICLEI Members	500 Euro per person
Reduced fee for ICLEI Members	400 Euro per person
Full fee for Non ICLEI Members	600 Euro per person
Reduced fee for Non ICLEI Members	500 Euro per person

Participants from South Africa

Host country fee for ICLEI Members 3200 ZAR per person

Host country fee for Non ICLEI Members 4800 ZAR per person

How many delegates are expected to attend?

Over 500 representatives from local governments, international agencies, national governments, and donors will exchange ideas and identify opportunities to strengthen and advance the achievements of local governments in the area of sustainable development.

The last World Congress in Athens (November 2003) attracted approximately 500 participants from 135 local governments from 59 countries around the world, and a similarly wide-spread presence is expected in Cape Town.

What are the main issues of the ICLEI World Congress 2006?

Among the main issues are climate protection, sustainable water management, sustainable transportation, viable local economy, sustainability management instruments, local biodiversity strategies and Local Agenda 21.

How many local cases will be discussed?

The purpose of the event is to foster the exchange among innovative and leading local governments and to help them forming their strategies. We expect some 30-50 local cases to be presented in sessions, and many more informally exchanged amongst participants.

How many plenary sessions are envisaged?

About 5 plenary sessions are to set the course for the 5-day-event. Initially, crosscutting issues such as poverty alleviation, the Millennium Development Goals and gender issues will be introduced, to be monitored by experts during the entire congress, which will then be consolidated at the end of the congress. An award ceremony at the end will celebrate ICLEI members with outstanding activities.

What is the role of the technical Site Visits in Cape Town?

One full conference day is dedicated to technical site visits to local sustainability projects in Cape Town. The goal is to make the international participants known to good practice in Cape Town and to provide international expertise to the visited projects at the same time. For the themes of the visits, please visit the congress website.

What are the further program elements?

Presentations by ICLEI members on their best practices and experiences in various fields are completed by interactive small-group discussions, regional meetings, roundtables, the "ICLEI cinema". In addition there will be an interactive exhibition space showcasing ICLEI members' sustainable development achievements.

Is this just another 'talk shop'?

No, with a focus on concrete action and measurable results the World Congress will provide local government participants with the tools, mechanisms, and practical support necessary to overcome barriers to sustainability and implement Local Action 21 strategies to create sustainable communities and cities while protecting global common goods. New and expanded campaign and program activities will be initiated at the World Congress on priority issues such as Responsible Purchasing; Sustainability Management; Resilient Communities and Cities; and Just, Peaceful and Secure Communities.

Participants do have the opportunity to discuss their city's initiatives, but they also have the opportunity to learn about other best practices through site visits, plenary sessions, and workshops and to learn about some of our new programs and initiatives.

How do I find out more about the World Congress?

Web site: www.iclei.org/worldcongress2006
Email: world.congress@iclei.org