



Kyoto Declaration for Cultivating a Culture of Sustainable Cities

1. The significance of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement

The Kyoto Protocol is a momentous accord in the history of humankind, established for the purpose of passing on a healthy and productive global environment to future generations. Adopted in December 1997, it represents the cornerstone of a post-Cold War, new world order full of hope, that addresses global security and peaceful prosperity through multilateral cooperation. Citizens played a significant role in fostering momentum toward this international agreement, and Kyoto's unique urban environment and local culture that have coexisted with nature for more than 1,000 years contributed to the consensus building.

In December 2015, the Kyoto Protocol made a significant leap forward to the Paris Agreement, making climate change a matter for people all over the world and committing nations to achieve carbon neutrality in the second half of this century.

To encourage the adoption of the Paris Agreement, leaders of cities and regions around the globe gathered at Paris City Hall and pledged to strengthen their climate actions alongside with nations, which led to the unanimous endorsement of the Paris City Hall Declaration.

2. The state of cities around the world

Cities today account for only 2% of the planet's land area, but are home to about half the world's population. They account for 60-80% of global energy consumption and three quarters of carbon emissions. With further urbanization, projections indicate that people living in urban areas will account for two thirds of the world's population by 2050.

As can be seen in the ever-growing megacities in Asia, for instance, where environmental pollution, traffic problems, poverty and disparity are often considered more urgent issues than global warming, cities face different policy issues depending on characteristics such as their size and stage of economic development. Therefore, priorities given to global warming can vary from city to city. However, urban activity is a major cause of global warming, and cities are suffering enormously from its consequences, such as sea level rise and frequent disasters caused by extreme weather.

Furthermore, in today's world where signs of national particularism can be observed and can pose challenges in cooperation among states, collaboration between cities is becoming ever more important.

3. Our commitment towards a culture of sustainable cities

Taking into account the Paris Agreement and the Paris City Hall Declaration, we believe that cities play an important role in cultivating a culture of sustainable cities that is in balance with the environment to achieve carbon neutrality in the second half of this century. To achieve this, we recognize that cities need to realize the “**Vision for cities of the world in 2050**” by strengthening cooperation with one another and performing their fullest potential. We believe that in today’s world, it is our duty to make this commitment.

To this end, we believe that rather than merely leaving it to nations and market principles, cities, which are directly involved in the lives of its citizens and governed by their proactive participation, have the vital role of leading the way by appropriately delivering authority and financial resources.

We recognize that it is essential that cities strengthen city-to-city collaboration and also build mechanisms capable of resolving various problems, through the sharing of goals and the dissemination of policies, best practice and know-how.

Vision for cities of the world in 2050

- Coexistence with nature is realized, acknowledging its function as a source of life and carbon sink.
- Change in people’s values and lifestyle is advanced, by revisiting the culture of daily life that admires the mindful and wise use of goods based on the spirit of “*mottainai*” (regretting wastefulness) and “*shimatsu*” (being frugal; making full use of things).
- Leaders for building a sustainable society are nurtured through promotion of environmental education and learning. The leaders are able to perceive various problems as their own and act proactively.
- Strategies for adapting to the impacts of climate change are in place, in parallel with technological innovation for decarbonization.
- Resource-efficient and circular economy is realized, for example by utilizing urban mines, recovering useful metals and other resources contained in waste.
- Energy autonomy of cities is realized, through the promotion of energy savings and the use of renewable energy.
- Urban mobility with low environmental impact is achieved through advancement of urban transport systems.
- Peaceful resolution of social problems, such as poverty and disparity, is well advanced, through efforts to shift to a sustainable society.

We declare that we will implement efforts according to our respective positions and encourage cities around the world to join us in cultivating a culture of sustainable cities that is in balance with the local and global environment.

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City of Kyoto

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