



## The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

### Introduces Innovate4Cities: A Cities-Driven Research and Innovation Agenda and Partnership with Google to Empower Cities Tackling Climate Change

*Innovate4Cities defines and addresses cities' knowledge and innovation opportunities and creates partnerships between the scientific and academic community, businesses, and governments to deliver more ambitious urban climate action.*

*New partnership with GCoM, Bloomberg Philanthropies and Google demonstrates the power of Innovate4Cities to mobilize resources and create innovative tools to respond to the identified needs of cities*

**New York, USA, 26 September 2018 – The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM)**, the largest international alliance of city leaders and their networks committed to raising the global ambition for climate action, announced today a new partnership with Google and Bloomberg Philanthropies. The partnership channels **Google's proprietary data and technological capabilities** through **GCoM's global network of cities and city networks** together with **Bloomberg Philanthropies' leadership on cities and climate change to drive global action at the local level**. These efforts will provide cities with critical information about their environmental data and develop new tools that will **empower cities** to access new city-level climate data, yield significant cost and time savings, and drive ambition **to meet the Paris Agreement**.

This partnership is one of the first outcomes of the **Innovate4Cities global climate action accelerator** – also announced today, which sets city research and innovation priorities based on specific opportunities identified for collaboration with business, academic and government communities. Building from the [Environmental Insights Explorer \(EIE\)](#), a new tool released in beta with 5 global pilot cities by Google and GCoM last week at the Global Climate Action Summit, the partnership announced today, plans to serve thousands of cities globally through the EIE platform to help with their policy making process.

Innovate4Cities is a global, **cities-driven, research and innovation agenda** that integrates cities' implementation priorities into national, academic and private sector research, innovation and development portfolios and accelerates cities' abilities to meet their climate commitments. It is galvanized **by the [Edmonton Declaration](#)**, a call-to-action already signed by thousands of cities around the world and **illustrates the enormous urban appetite for science-based climate action**. Innovate4Cities calls upon:

- **National Governments:** to allocate at least one-third of their Research & Development budgets to address city priorities;
- **Academia:** to recruit 10 million new students and adopt new models of interdisciplinary learning, knowledge creation and problem solving;
- **Private Sector:** to generate economic, environment and institutional capacity, by, for example, unlocking proprietary data as Google has done, in ways that provide a public benefit;



- **Cities and Local Governments** to signal and share their additional research, data and technological needs, working iteratively with all stakeholders and sending a collective market signal for additional investment in cities.

**The *Environmental Insights Explorer (EIE)***, announced as beta two weeks ago at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, is **the first result of the new long-term partnership between GCoM, Bloomberg Philanthropies and Google through the Innovate4Cities Accelerator, and will empower cities in tackling climate change.** Today, the 9,100+ cities committed through the Global Covenant of Mayor’s represent potential emissions reductions of 2.8 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e on an annual basis by 2050, but 65% of the cities have yet to take the first step of developing a GHG emission inventory. The **EIE tool** will eliminate that roadblock and **expand its coverage** from the current set of beta cities to thousands of cities globally, **effectively allowing local governments to instantly and freely access the data they need to develop city greenhouse gas emissions inventories** – a process that used to take a city between \$250,000-\$700,000 and anywhere from 1-2 years.

Through the partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies and GCoM, **Google will work collaboratively with GCoM’s network partners and committed cities to devote in-kind resources to develop tools and insights based on its proprietary data**, providing cities with high quality and action-oriented information around areas such as transportation and buildings emissions, weather forecast models, and rooftop solar potential.

This partnership **builds upon existing commitments from Mike Bloomberg, UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Climate Action, and Bloomberg Philanthropies, recognizing that access to data is a critical lynchpin to climate action.** Bloomberg chairs the FSB Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures, which seeks to bring transparency to the marketplace and serves as Chair Emeritus of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board, which aims to create a global data standard for ESG reporting; and Bloomberg Philanthropies has **partnered with Google since 2016 to create Global Fishing Watch, which compiles data to track global industrial fishing practices for better sustainability enforcement.**

#### QUOTES:

**Michael Bloomberg, Co-Chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors, UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Climate Action, former Mayor of New York City:** “This new collaboration will make it easier, faster, and cheaper for cities to measure their carbon emissions, by giving them access to a wealth of new data. A major focus of the One Planet Summit is supporting new public-private partnerships that can cut emissions, and this shows the important role the private sector plays in fighting climate change.”

**Maroš Šefčovič, Co-Chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors, Vice President of the European Commission, responsible for the Energy Union:** “Cities are continually experimenting with innovative solutions, but a lack of urban-focused climate knowledge, technology, and data present real limitations. If we can address the specific data and technology gaps that cities have prioritized in this research and innovation agenda, we will be able to create a pathway to channel existing funding commitments around research and innovation and develop a new research pipeline that will mobilize resources and knowledge generation for cities.”



**Tri Rismaharini, GCoM Board Member, Mayor of Surabaya, Indonesia:** “To overcome the gap cities face between their climate ambition and full-scale implementation, we must mobilize all the resources and knowledge already available to provide cities with the tools, information and partnerships they need. The Innovate4Cities agenda is a starting point for the Global Covenant of Mayors and all the cities it represents. By working together, we can make significant progress in securing a climate safe world and meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.”

**Don Iveson, Mayor of Edmonton, Canada:** “This Innovate4Cities agenda seeks to harness the momentum that has been building since we launched the Edmonton Declaration in the framework of the CitiesIPCC Cities & Climate Change Science Conference. Governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society are following this bold call to action from cities. Google’s innovative new tool is an initial response to this call and will provide cities of all sizes with the data they need at no cost – saving cities valuable time and money and enabling them to redirect those resources toward further actions.”

**Rebecca Moore, Director and Founder of Google Earth Outreach and Google Earth Engine:** “Data-driven solutions are key to unlocking the climate challenge, and many cities lack the resources to gather the data on their own. When it became clear to us that Google’s comprehensive global mapping data and computing technology could be used to derive critical new climate-relevant knowledge for cities, we committed enthusiastically to this effort. The Environmental Insights Explorer provides cities with easy access to estimates of local building and transportation emissions data, as well as renewable energy potential, leading to more globally-consistent baselines from which to build policies, guide solutions, and measure progress. Our launch with GCoM and pilot cities is one step on a journey to accelerate global action toward a low-carbon future.”

—END—

#### Note to editors

#### **About the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy**

The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy is the largest global coalition of cities and local governments voluntarily committed to actively combatting climate change and transitioning to a low-carbon and climate resilient economy. Led by UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Climate Action, Michael R. Bloomberg, and European Commission Vice President, Maroš Šefčovič, in partnership with local, regional and global city networks, the Global Covenant has thousands of city signatories across 6 continents and more than 120 countries, representing over 700 million people or nearly 10% of the global population. Learn more at: [www.globalcovenantofmayors.org](http://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org)

#### **About Bloomberg Philanthropies:**

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in 480 cities in more than 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg’s charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$702 million. For more information, please visit [www.bloomberg.org](http://www.bloomberg.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Twitter](#).

**About Google:**

Google LLC is a publicly traded U.S. multinational technology company, and a subsidiary of held by Alphabet, Inc. Google's mission is to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." In practice, this has led to the development of a wide array of primarily internet-related products and services, from its signature search engine to online advertising systems, cloud computing, software (e.g. Google Maps and YouTube), and hardware. We strive to build sustainability into everything we do. The path to a cleaner, healthier future begins with the small decisions we make each day. That's why we're committed to making smart use of the Earth's resources, and creating products with the planet in mind. We constantly look for ways to be even more responsible in our use of energy, water, and other natural resources -- and to empower others to do the same. For more information about the Google tool, please visit: [insights.sustainability.google](https://insights.sustainability.google)

**Media contacts:**

Badia Berrada - [media@globalcovenantofmayors.org](mailto:media@globalcovenantofmayors.org) | +32 492 46 52 62