

# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>List of contributors</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1 Introduction: Cities and climate governance</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1 Background .....	7
1.2 Aims and scope.....	8
1.3 Analytical approach and methodology .....	9
1.3.1 Analytical approach .....	9
1.3.2 Methodology and approach.....	12
1.4 Introduction to the cities .....	13
<b>2 Cape Town: Facilitating coalitions for climate change?</b> .....	<b>14</b>
2.1 Background to urban climate governance .....	14
2.1.1 Political system, administration and organization of climate governance .....	14
2.1.2 Municipal finances and engagement of key actors.....	15
2.1.3 Social and eco-climatic conditions .....	15
2.2 Main climate governance approach: climate goals and organizational structure.....	17
2.2.1 Climate goals and strategies.....	17
2.2.2 Evolution in climate goals and strategies.....	19
2.3 Creation of partnerships and governance networks .....	20
2.4 Preliminary observations on the emergence of collaborative governance and co-creational leadership .....	22
<b>3 Copenhagen: Fading international star?</b> .....	<b>24</b>
3.1 Background to urban climate governance .....	24
3.1.1 Political system in Copenhagen .....	24
3.1.2 Economy and business .....	25
3.1.3 Population, climate change and geography.....	25
3.1.4 Socio-eco-technical conditions of the city .....	27
3.2 Main climate governance approach: climate goals and organizational structure.....	27
3.2.1 The first Climate Action Plan launched in 2002: “CO2 plan for Copenhagen 1990–2010” .....	28
3.2.2 The Second Climate Action Plan launched in 2009: The Copenhagen Climate Plan	29
3.2.3 The third Climate strategy “CPH2025” .....	31
3.2.4 Other plans relevant for achieving the aims formulated in climate plans .....	33
3.3 Moving towards co-created planning and implementation in Copenhagen .....	35
<b>4 Gothenburg: Bold goals – fragmented governance?</b> .....	<b>37</b>
4.1 Background to urban climate governance .....	37
4.1.1 Population, socio-economy and geography.....	37
4.1.2 Governance and political system in Gothenburg .....	38
4.1.3 Socio-eco-technical conditions: key climate mitigation and adaptation issues .....	38
4.2 Main climate governance approach: climate goals and organizational structure.....	39
4.2.1 Climate goals, strategies and visions.....	40
4.2.2 Main actors and organizational structure .....	43

4.3	Chronology of key events: evolution in climate strategies and institutions .....	45
4.3.1	Adaptation .....	45
4.3.2	Mitigation, energy and transport programs .....	46
4.3.3	Links to other strategies and programs.....	47
4.3.4	Key governance and leadership approach, tools and measures.....	48
4.3.5	Collaboration and coordination with other internal actors for implementation.....	49
4.3.6	Key networks and partnerships on climate change .....	50
4.4	Preliminary observations on the emergence of collaborative governance and co-creational leadership .....	51
<b>5</b>	<b>Oslo: Narrow CO2 fixation – strong governance .....</b>	<b>54</b>
5.1	Background to urban climate governance .....	54
5.1.1	The governance system in Oslo.....	54
5.1.2	Socio-economic context .....	55
5.1.3	Key climate mitigation and adaptation issues .....	56
5.2	Main climate governance approach: Climate goals and organizational structure.....	57
5.2.1	The key climate goals and (political) ambitions and visions .....	57
5.2.2	Climate mitigation .....	57
5.2.3	Climate adaptation .....	59
5.2.4	A new, coherent strategy combining mitigation and adptation .....	60
5.2.5	Climate governance approach .....	61
5.2.6	Organizational institutionalization of climate mitigation and adaptation .....	63
5.3	Creation of partnerships and governance networks .....	65
5.3.1	Civil society and citizen involvement.....	65
5.3.2	City networks .....	66
5.3.3	National networks.....	66
5.3.4	Partnerships with civil society .....	66
5.3.5	International networks .....	66
5.4	Preliminary observations on the emergence of collaborative governance and co-creational leadership .....	67
<b>6</b>	<b>The evolution in approaches to climate governance in Cape Town, Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Oslo .....</b>	<b>69</b>
6.1	Scope of the comparative analysis .....	69
6.2	Context variables: Characteristic features of the four cities .....	69
6.2.1	Socio-economic features and main climate risks.....	69
6.2.2	The cities' political system – balancing between efficiency and representativeness .	70
6.3	The evolution of climate strategies and institutions .....	73
6.3.1	Evolution and change in climate strategies and policies .....	73
6.3.2	Evolution in climate goals and strategic content of policies.....	77
6.3.3	Evolution in climate-related organizations and institutions .....	81
6.3.4	Interaction and international networks .....	85
<b>7</b>	<b>Assessments, lessons and conclusions from four city cases.....</b>	<b>87</b>
7.1	Introducing the comparative framework.....	87
7.2	Comparative framework for assessing climate strategic work .....	88
7.3	Diverging climate goals: Possible implications .....	91
7.4	Significant factors influencing urban climate governance .....	93
7.5	Conclusions: Take away lessons for practice.....	95
7.5.1	Lessons from comparing climate responses.....	95
7.5.2	A distinct Scandinavian model of urban or urban climate governance?.....	98

7.5.3 Conclusions: 'Eight essentials for effective, sustainable and fair urban climate governance' .....	101
<b>References .....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Appendix 1 Copenhagen .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Appendix 2 Socio-economic and climate context .....</b>	<b>110</b>

# Tables

Table 2.1: Overview table of key socio-political and climate context factors in the case cities.....	16
Table 2.2: Chronology of key climate policy events – institutional design and strategies.....	19
Table 3.1: Key socio-political and climate context factors in Copenhagen .....	26
Table 3.2: Evolution in climate-relevant plans in Copenhagen.....	34
Table 4.1: Overview table of selected key socio-political and climate context factors in Gothenburg .....	39
Table 4.2: Key climate policies, programs and related sector strategies, Gothenburg .....	47
Table 5.1: Key socio-political context factors in Oslo .....	55
Table 5.2: Climate-relevant risks of Oslo .....	56
Table 5.3: Evolution in climate policies and strategic plans, Oslo and the Oslo Region.....	57
Table 5.4: Climate governance: Direct and indirect measures (adjusted from Hofstad and Torfing 2017).....	62
Table 5.5: Evolution in the administrative institutionalization of climate change in Oslo.....	64
Table 5.6: Key local, national and international climate networks by year .....	67
Table 7.1: Qualitative assessment of the cities' climate policy responses to critical dimensions of the climate policy agenda (major, medium, small changes). .....	94

# Figures

Figure 1.1: Analytical approach: Climate governance and co-creation (authors' own construct)..	10
Figure 5.1: The development in Oslo's climate goals under shifting governments (from Hofstad and Torfing 2017). .....	58
Figure 6.1: First generation climate strategy/action plan adopted.....	74
Figure 6.2: Thematic evolution in the climate strategies.....	78
Figure 6.3: Institutionalization of dedicated climate entity in the city administration .....	82

## Summary

This study provides an outline and comparative analysis of the evolution in climate policies and governance systems of four cities with ambitious climate goals and strategies; three Scandinavian cities, Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Oslo; and one South African city; Cape Town. In each city, we explore the evolution in climate goals, strategies, policy and institutional designs over two decades and how these materialize in distinct approaches to urban climate governance and co-creation. The aim is to compare diverse paths to urban climate governance among forerunning cities with bold climate goals in terms of embracing a coherent climate policy for mitigation, adaptation, climate equity and sustainable urban futures and understand the role of co-creation in urban climate governance.

The analytical approach of the study is inspired by theories of city climate governance and theories of collaborative and polycentric governance (multilevel/multi-actor). The basic hypothesis for the study was that new forms of urban climate governance and capacity for climate action emerge from the choice of institutional and policy design by city leadership in response to certain contextual factors inherent in politico-institutional, socio-economic and climate-environment factors.

The empirical findings from the four city case studies are based on reviews of key climate change-relevant policy documents and websites (through 2019), institutional analysis, and a set of key informant interviews.

In each of the cities, we find that urban climate governance is manifest in a mix of traditional governance mechanisms, and new, more innovative co-creational instruments through hybrid forms of governance. Various tools and instruments are employed in order to mobilize and align both internal departments and entities and a multitude of external non-state actors for shared approaches to governance and climate action. Distinct partnerships and networks with private business, civil society and academia are found in all the cities. And each city engages actively in and adopt policies from many national and transnational city-to-city climate-related networks.

The many similarities observed across the four cities in urban climate governance is a strong indication that governance responses to complex, unruly, collective action problems, such as climate change, typically evolve along similar trajectories and spur specific mixes of integrative and co-creational governing responses. While climate strategies tend to be led by the city municipalities, each city also embodies spontaneous and distinct institutional innovations and actions from the bottom up by various private and civic entities, reflecting local circumstances, which produce a diverse, dispersed, yet also connected, multilevel pattern of governing across actors and scales. These findings are in line with what Elinor Ostrom described as 'polycentric' approaches. The study brings up some distinctive and important differences in the urban climate policies and governing approaches between the three Scandinavian cities and Cape Town, but the study also reveals many similarities in approaches across all the four cities.

Drawing upon the comparative experiences of urban climate governance all these forerunning cities, the study suggests '*eight essentials for effective, sustainable and fair urban climate governance and leadership*' that might bring cities onto pathways towards climate transformation.

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