The 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference (I4C24)

Co-hosted by the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) and UN-Habitat from 10-12 September 2024 in Montreal, Canada, the 2024 Innovate4Cities Conference (I4C24) is the premier convening of leaders from academia, government, civil society, and industry at the intersection of cities, climate science, and innovation to synthesize the latest knowledge and solutions that can inform the Seventh Assessment Report Cycle (AR7) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and address critical sustainability gaps through cross-sector action.

Aiming for diverse, inclusive, and science-led perspectives, I4C24 provides a creative space to discuss and exchange views on challenges, solutions, and pathways forward – inclusive of the regional sensitivities crucial to fair and inclusive climate action. I4C24 is the flagship event of GCoM's Innovate4Cities initiative, built to accelerate city climate action. I4C 2024:

- **Identifies, assesses, and summarizes** the collective research, knowledge, and innovation generated - across business, academia, and others - to measure progress against the priorities within the GRAA and the City Research and Innovation Agenda (CRIA);
- **Highlights emerging global and regional trends** related to existing GRAA and CRIA priorities and evidence-based opportunities for their evolution; and
- **Channels cross-sector research, knowledge, and innovation** centred around city climate and sustainability action towards local action implementation mechanisms

While grounded in all of the practitioner-led priority gaps deemed necessary to meet Paris Agreement goals via the Global Research Action Agenda (GRAA) and the City Research and Innovation Agenda (CRIA), I4C24 is anchored in four themes that offer strategic entry points for impactful, evidence-driven, and cross-sectoral discussion and knowledge generation: *Biodiversity and Resilience*, *Finance*, *Governance*, and *Digitalization*.

Opportunities to showcase progress

I4C24 seeks to explore and unpack challenges, knowledge gaps, and opportunities through the following list of *non-exhaustive* topics:

- **Improvement of crucial urban infrastructure functions** - including water, waste, and energy - and the risks/benefits for emissions reduction, adaptive capacity, and other domains
- **Data and measurement**, especially where advanced AI, machine learning, and geospatial data can streamline evidence gathering at local level
- **Finance**, where innovative solutions can strengthen investor/funding confidence in the bankability and creditworthiness of local climate actions - and estimate planned projects
- **Action selection and prioritization** for city stakeholders - especially local governments - that span evidence-based criteria and apply across the city climate action journey
- **Identification of critical gaps** in knowledge, for investment from research, government, and industry - to address and action city climate priorities relevant to digitalization

With around 65% of the 169 targets of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals requiring the engagement of local and regional governments, I4C24 is going to be a crucial forum for dialogue and insight – with a focus on sharing regionally-grounded knowledge needed to inform the global discourse on climate change and cities, regardless of the language of publication.

Find out more information by reaching out to the team: innovate4cities@gcomprojectsupport.org