

## Press Release

**Embargoed until: 09:30 CET Paris time – 18 March 2021**

### **Cities can change the game in the fight against emissions and air pollution. Fossil fuel bans jump fivefold in 2020.**

**The pandemic has thrown into stark relief the global battle of cities for cleaner air and a better future. The 2021 edition of REN21's *Renewables in Cities Global Status Report*, the only stock-taking of cities' energy transition efforts worldwide, shows that one billion people live in cities with a renewable energy target or policy,<sup>i</sup> The number of cities that have enforced partial or complete bans on fossil fuels jumped fivefold in 2020.<sup>ii</sup>**

For the second year, REN21 takes the temperature of how cities worldwide use renewable energy to battle emissions to prevent air pollution and climate change.<sup>iii</sup> More than half of the global population lives in cities, which account for three-quarters of global final energy consumption.

“With their impact at scale, cities are our best bet to plan, develop and build a renewable future. But all too often their potential for transformation remains massively underused,” says REN21's Executive Director, Rana Adib. “It's a tough job to turn low-carbon ambitions into reality in built and densely packed environments. National governments must put money, capacity and above all legislative powers into the hands of local authorities.”

#### **Cities must transition to renewables and set end dates for fossil fuels in all sectors**

A critical factor for the success of cities' climate strategies is to rapidly replace fossil fuels with renewable energy in heating and cooling as well as in transport. These sectors are responsible for the biggest share of global emissions, and they are best addressed at the local level.

The report shows that often, purchasing renewable electricity for the city's own operations is one of the first steps local leaders take. But according to Adib, this is not enough. “Cities like Hamburg, San Francisco and Shanghai show, the more ambitious they are, the more they think of renewable energy everywhere. They impose strict building codes and renewable energy obligations. But most importantly, they set an end date to the use of gas, oil and coal.”

By 2020, 43 cities had done so and enforced fossil fuel bans in heating and/or transport, five times as many as in 2019.<sup>iv</sup> In total, one billion people - about one quarter of the global urban population - live in cities with a renewable energy target or policy.<sup>v</sup> “But as inspiring as these examples are,” says Adib, “we are still a far cry from what is needed to curb climate change in time.”

#### **A flavour of clean air and clear skies**

Last year's lockdowns with the sudden disappearance of traffic, the complete alteration of lifestyles

resulting in cleaner air and less noisy environments, have given citizens a flavour of how alternatives to packed roads and polluted skies could look.

City leaders are now building on this momentum, moving away from polluting fossil fuels and building clean and resilient energy systems in their place. “Growing citizen support gives Santiago a real mandate to take action against climate change. Our residents demand that the government take bold measures,” explains Isabel Aguilera, Environmental Director for the city of Santiago (Chile).

### **The race towards renewables is an obstacle course**

The *Renewables in Cities 2021 Global Status Report* also shows that besides emission reductions, many other local benefits await those who take their energy future into their own hands: from the creation of local jobs and welfare to greater quality of life and healthier citizens. “The transition to a zero-carbon economy presents tremendous economic development opportunities for Orlando and the Central Florida region, some that we are already beginning to see stimulate our local economy, improve public health, reduce environmental impacts, and create meaningful high-wage jobs for our residents,” says Mayor Buddy Dyer of the City of Orlando (Florida, USA).

Sometimes, like in recent examples from Japan and the Republic of Korea, city governments can even push national governments to be more ambitious.<sup>vi</sup> But, while the report features encouraging stories from all regions of the world,<sup>vii</sup> the large majority of cities have not yet figured out how to take ambitious action, or they lack the power and resources to do it.

### **“Provide cities around the world with support”**

Even those who seem ready and willing to move forward, run into obstacles. All too often, powerful fossil fuel interests put a stop to cities’ decarbonisation plans. “It’s a sad fact that wherever in the world cities seek to phase-out fossil fuels, the industry puts a lot of resources into fighting back. They take local authorities to court or, as seen recently in the US, convince state policymakers to make it legally impossible for cities to take such decisions at all,” says Adib.

Martina Otto, heading the cities work at the United Nations Environmental Programme, concludes: “There is huge untapped potential. We can both increase the level of ambition and progress in meeting national climate commitments if national and regional governments around the world provide cities with support well beyond the creation of better financial conditions. Getting over territorial boundaries to empower cities means unleashing the power of our strongest allies.”

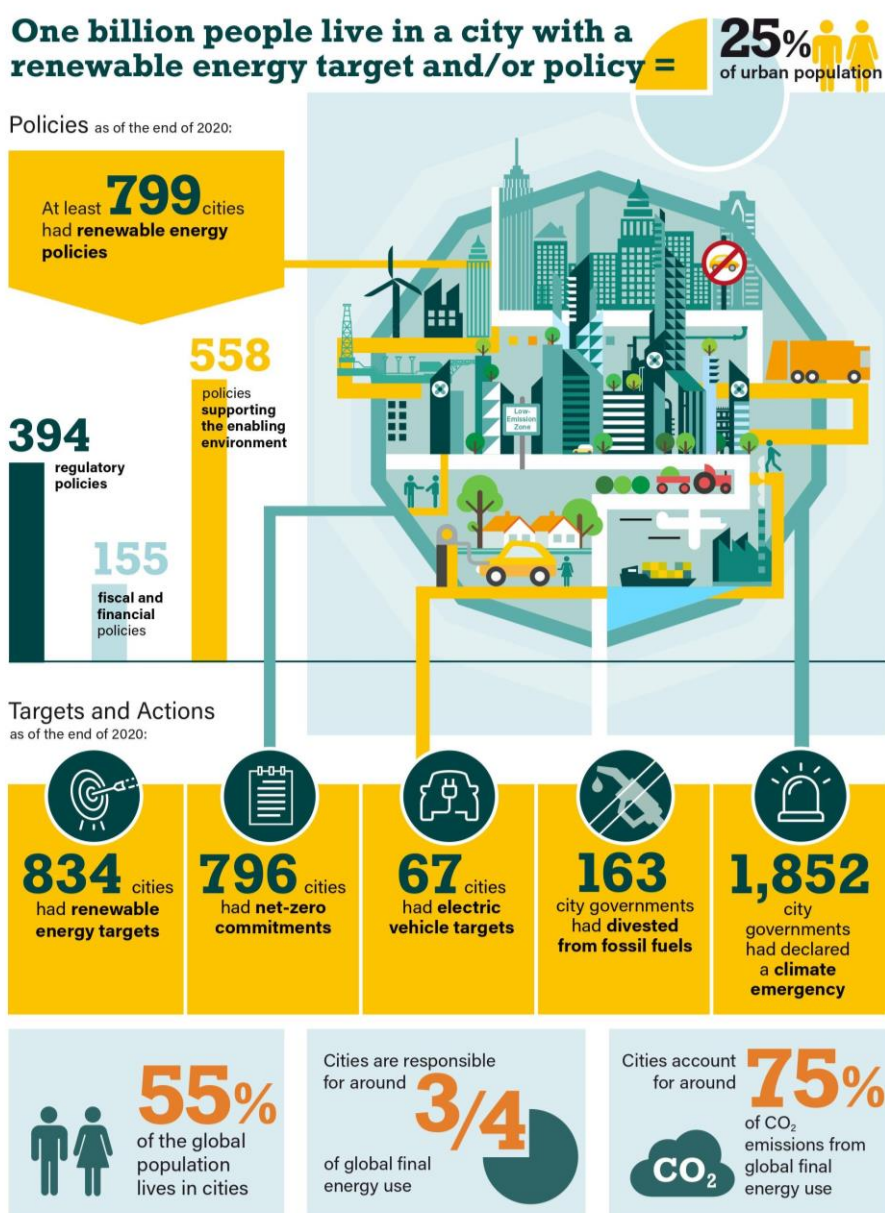
### **About REN21 and the *Renewables in Cities Global Status Report***

REN21 is the only global renewable energy community of actors from science, governments, NGOs and industry. We provide up-to-date and peer-reviewed facts, figures and analysis of global developments in technology, policies and markets. Our goal: enable decision-makers to make the shift to renewable energy happen – now.

The *Renewables in Cities Global Status Report* is an annual stock-take of the global transition to renewable energy at the city-level. The 2021 edition has been co-authored by over 330 experts and is endorsed by an Advisory Committee of 20 organizations including city networks.

Financing was provided by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). This report is co-financed by the Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa, an initiative supported by financial contributions of the European Union, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID).

Figure 1. Key Facts and Trends in Cities, 2020



Source: See endnote 1 for this chapter.

## Additional Materials

*\*All materials are embargoed until 09:30 CET 18 March 2020.*

- **Full report PDF**
- **Summary** for decision makers
- **Press release** in multiple languages (see list below)
- PDF of all report **figures**
- Complete **data pack** (excel) of all report statistics
- **Country fact sheets** (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, UK, USA – to be uploaded by 12 March 2021)
- **City case studies** (see list in endnote (vii) – to be uploaded by 12 March 2021)

Materials can be download here: <http://ren21.net/rec2021press>

The previous edition of the *Renewables in Cities Global Status Report* can be found here:

<https://www.ren21.net/cities/>

## Languages

This Press Release is also available in Bahasa, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Korean, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish.

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## Press event

18 March 2021, 08:30-9:30 CET Paris time

Join confirmed speakers, **Nigel Topping**, High Level Champion for Climate Action (COP26, UK); **Rita Schwarzelühr-Sutter**, Parliamentary State Secretary, German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU); **Marjeta Jager**, Deputy Director-General for International Partnerships at the European Commission; and **Rana Adib**, Executive Director of REN21 for brief statements and questions from the press. Also invited: Clover Moore, Lord Mayor of the city of Sydney (Australia). Register: <https://www.ren21.net/rec-press-register>

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> 1,300 cities worldwide have either a renewable energy target or policy in place. Globally, over 830 cities in 72 countries have binding renewable energy targets and around 800 cities have implemented policies to help advance renewables in their cities. See table below for more details.

### Selected countries with renewable energy targets, net zero targets and/or policies in cities

Country	Cities with renewable energy targets		Cities with net-zero targets		Cities with renewable energy polices		Cities with renewable energy targets and/or policies		Share of urban population with renewable energy targets and/or policy (%)
	(#)	(% of global total)	(#)	(% of global total)	(#)	(% of global total)	(#)	(% of global total)	
United States of America	337	40.4%	112	14.1%	357	44.7%	479	36.17%	28%
Italy	59	7.1%	47	5.9%	97	12.1%	150	11.30%	47%
Germany	61	7.3%	13	1.6%	90	11.3%	140	10.55%	40%
United Kingdom	94	11.3%	45	5.7%	24	3%	106	7.99%	73%
Spain	15	1.8%	17	2.1%	62	7.8%	72	5.43%	34%
South Africa	7	0.8%	5	0.6%	31	3.9%	34	2.56%	40%
China	6	0.7%	8	1%	21	2.6%	25	1.88%	38%
Sweden	24	2.9%	24	3%	8	1%	25	1.88%	46%
Netherlands, The	8	1%	8	1%	20	2.5%	22	1.66%	43%
Canada	15	1.8%	25	3.1%	2	0.3%	16	1.21%	36%
Japan	10	1.2%	103	12.9%	3	0.4%	11	0.8%	40%
Republic of Korea	5	0.6%	2	0.3%	1	0.1%	5	0.4%	55%
<b>GLOBAL TOTAL</b>	<b>834</b>		<b>796</b>		<b>799</b>		<b>1327</b>		<b>25%</b>

<sup>ii</sup> See data on fossil fuel bans below.

<sup>iii</sup> More than 10,500 cities globally had adopted CO2 emission reduction targets, and around 800 cities have committed to net-zero emissions in 2020 – up sharply from the 100 cities with such commitments in 2019.

<sup>iv</sup> See data on fossil fuel bans below.

<sup>v</sup> See endnote (i) above.

<sup>vi</sup> Local governments in Japan have been instrumental in pushing the national governments to commit to carbon neutrality and/or adopt net-zero targets. As part of the Korean Local Governments' Action Alliance for

Carbon-Neutrality, 226 local governments that had already declared a climate emergency by September 2020, pushed the national government to commit to carbon neutrality by 2050.

<sup>vii</sup> Data has been collected on hundreds of cities, ranging from mega-cities to small and medium size cities and towns. The report features specific case studies on: Adelaide (Australia); Palmas (Brazil); Recife (Brazil); Yaoundé IV (Cameroon); Cocody (Côte d'Ivoire); Rajkot (India); North Lombok Regency (Indonesia); Jakarta (Indonesia); Seoul (Republic of Korea); Dakar (Senegal); Cape Town (South Africa); Malmö (Sweden); Tsévié (Togo); Kampala (Uganda); Oxford (UK); Orlando, FL (USA).

Additional case studies that will be provided as supplements are: Vancouver (Canada) and Heidelberg (Germany).

### Data about city-level fossil fuel bans

Note: the entire data set for the report is available in the online Press Folder (<http://ren21.net/rec2021press>)

**Summary:** There are **66 cities worldwide** with a proposed and/or passed fossil fuel bans for heating and cooling and/or transport. In total these **66 cities have 67 bans** as 1 city has both a ban for buildings and one for transport. (Note: not all of them have been enforced yet). **Regarding enforcement:** 4 went into force before 2019, 4 went into force into 2019, and 35 went into force in 2020; for a total of **43 enforced in 2020**. 20 will go into force in the future. Plus 4 for which there is no known enforcement date. **Date of enactment:** 11 were voted before 2019, 37 were voted in 2019, and 13 were voted in 2020. Plus 6 for which we have no date; for a total of 67.

#### Raw data:

Country	City	Banned technology/fuel	Bans and restrictions in buildings	Vehicle bans and restrictions	Policy status	Year of enactment	Year of entry into force
Australia	Sydney	Coal	X		Proposed	2018	2035
Australia	Australian Capital Territory (Canberra)	N/A	X		Passed	2020	2025-2045
Austria	Vienna	Oil and gas heating	X		Passed	2020	2020
Canada	Montreal	Oil furnaces	X		Passed	2016	2017-2021
Canada	Vancouver	Natural gas	X		Passed	2016	2030
China	Handan	Coal	X		Passed	2017	2017
China	Taiyuan	Coal	X		Passed	2017	2017
China	Xingtai	Coal	X		Passed	2017	2017
France	Paris	oil	X		Passed	2020	2022
Germany	Hamburg	Oil	X		Proposed	2020	2021
Netherlands, The	Amsterdam	Natural gas	X		Passed	2020	2020-2040
Poland	Krakow	Coal boiler, fuelwood in boilers, stoves and fireplaces	X		Passed	2013	2019
Sweden	Stockholm	Coal	X		Passed	2019	2022
United Kingdom	London	Natural gas ban	X		Passed	2019	2019

United States	Alameda, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Albany, CA	Natural gas ban	X		Passed	2016	2020
United States	Berkeley, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Brisbane, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Brookline, MA	Oil and gas	X		Passed	2019	2021
United States	Burlingame, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Cambridge, MA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2019	N/A
United States	Campbell, CA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2020	N/A
United States	Carlsbad, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Cupertino, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Davis, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Hayward, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Healdsburg, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Los Altos Hills, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Los Gatos, CA	Storage; natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Menlo Park, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Mill Valley, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Millbrae, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2019
United States	Milpitas, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Morgan Hill, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Mountain View, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Newton, MA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2019	N/A
United States	Oakland, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Ojai, CA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2020	2020
United States	Pacifica, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Palo Alto, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Piedmont, PA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Redwood City, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2020	2020
United States	Richmond, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	San Francisco, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2020	2020
United States	San Jose, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	San Mateo, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Santa Cruz, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Santa Monica, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Santa Rosa, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
United States	Saratoga, CA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2019	N/A
United States	Seattle, WA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2020	2021

United States	Sunnyvale, CA	Natural gas	X		Proposed	2019	2020
United States	Windsor, CA	Natural gas	X		Passed	2019	2020
China	Shanghai	Diesel trucks		X	Passed	N/A	2022
China	Xi'an	ICE Vehicles		X	Passed	2018	2019
France	Strasbourg	ICE Vehicles		X	Proposed	2020	2025
Germany	Stuttgart	Diesel vehicles		X	Passed	N/A	2020
Greece	Athens	Diesel Vehicles		X	Proposed	2016	2018
India	Delhi	Diesel Vehicles		X	Passed	2015	2020
Italy	Rome	ICE Vehicles		X	Proposed	N/A	2024-2030
Korea, Rep.	Seoul	Diesel and gasoline vehicles		X	Proposed	2020	2035
Netherlands, The	Amersfoort	ICE Vehicles		X	Passed	N/A	2021
Netherlands, The	Groningen	ICE Vehicles		X	Passed	N/A	2022
Spain	Barcelona	ICE Vehicles		X	Passed	N/A	2020 - 2021
United Kingdom	Bristol	Diesel Vehicles		X	Passed	2019	2021
United Kingdom	York	ICE Vehicles		X	Passed	2020	2023
United States	San Francisco, CA	ICE Vehicles		X	Proposed	2019	2030