

**ITEM 2. CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, PARIS – DECEMBER 2015****FILE NO: S050647****SUMMARY**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will convene in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015.

The United Nations (UN) has requested that national leaders announce targets before COP21 starts so that they can use the time during COP21 to negotiate a binding agreement. The 2015 COP, will, for the first time in over 20 years of UN negotiations, aim to achieve a binding and universal agreement on climate, with the aim of keeping global warming below 2 degrees Celsius – the threshold that scientists warn we must stay below to avoid dangerous climate change.

COP21 will be one of the largest international conferences ever held in France and is expected to attract close to 50,000 participants including 25,000 official delegates from government, intergovernmental organisations, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society.

There will be a number of organisations at COP21 trying to influence that final agreement – city leaders will be there to show national leaders that higher targets are achievable.

Cities have a crucial role to play in addressing climate change. More than half of the world's population live in cities (more in Australia) and cities are responsible for 75 to 80 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.

The draft Paris Climate Package will finally recognise the role of local and subnational governments.

To showcase the role of cities, a number of organisations, including C40, 100 Resilient Cities and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), have organised key meetings in Paris while COP21 is being held. The Lord Mayor has been asked to participate at a number of these, including:

**Wednesday 2 December**

**Resilience Day** – 100 Resilient Cities together with UN Habitat and the World Bank will be showcasing Mayors, especially those who have released or will soon release their strategies.

**Thursday 3 December**

**C40 Awards Ceremony** – the City has been nominated for our Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan.

**Friday 4 December**

**Climate Summit for Local Leaders** – this includes a Forum held by C40 which includes sessions that highlight the successes of city to city collaboration, information on how Mayors are driving change in the market place, the need for increased finance to support cities and the future of low carbon cities. Over 200 delegates are expected to attend including other Mayors, city leaders and the media.

The Lord Mayor has been invited to speak on a session with three Chinese cities – Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Wuhan.

It also includes a Summit Plenary Session presented by Anne Hidalgo (Mayor, City of Paris) and Michael Bloomberg (the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change). The aim of the Summit is to highlight the efforts and solutions delivered by global cities and local government, to feed into a day of action being organised by the UN on Saturday, 5 December and to ultimately impact on the outcome of COP21.

**Sunday 6 December**

**Renewable Energy: Energising the Future' conference** – being held by the International Renewable Energy Agency, the leading advocacy/information group for worldwide renewables with 143 member states including Australia.

The Lord Mayor has been asked to deliver a keynote speech at this event, which is billed as the 'premier' public event on renewable energy at COP21. Other speakers expected include Ban Ki-Moon the Secretary General of the United Nations, Francois Hollande the President of France, and Jean-Claude Juncker the President of the European Commission.

Further invitations have been received in recent days and the program will need to be finalised closer to the date.

There are 80 cities attending including Bogota, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Durban, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, London, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Philadelphia, Portland, Rio de Janeiro, Rotterdam, Seoul, Shenzhen, Stockholm, Toronto, Vancouver, Warsaw and Wuhan.

It is proposed that the Lord Mayor travel to Paris to participate and represent the City of Sydney. It is proposed that the Lord Mayor will be accompanied by two staff members from the Office of the Lord Mayor, as the visit will include significant international engagement and media commitments and presents an opportunity to promote the City of Sydney's work and achievements in taking action against climate change.

It is anticipated that the C40 will cover most of the travel and accommodation costs for the Lord Mayor and some costs for accompanying staff.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the Lord Mayor and two staff members' international travel to participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties; and
- (B) note the Lord Mayor will provide a report to Council after the travel.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Invitation from C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group

**Attachment B:** Invitation from Anne Hidalgo (Mayor, City of Paris) and Michael Bloomberg (the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change)

**Attachment C:** Invitation from the International Renewable Energy Agency

**BACKGROUND**

1. The 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will convene in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015. The Conference of the Parties is the governing body for the UNFCCC.
2. The ultimate objective is to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions to levels that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.
3. Ahead of the COP21, nations are submitting their proposed greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for 2030 (or Intended National Determination Contributions). Following the COP21, nations will finalise their commitments ahead of 2020 when the agreement will take force.
4. There are enormous expectations around this Conference because of the growing evidence that strong action is needed to limit increases in global temperatures to two degrees Celsius – the threshold that scientists warn we must stay below to avoid dangerous climate change.
5. As of July 2015, over 60 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions were covered by a post-2020 target, but the pledges are not considered sufficient to meet the goal of keeping global temperature increases beneath two degrees Celsius. The COP21 is a crucial event to establish a framework that will lead to stronger commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**ROLE OF CITIES AT COP 21**

6. More than half of the world's population live in cities and cities are responsible for 75 to 80 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Active participation and leadership from cities is an essential part of the solution to climate change.
7. The UN has made additional efforts to include and engage with sub-national parties such as states, regions and cities as part of the COP21.
8. The draft Paris Climate Package will finally recognise the role of local and subnational governments.
9. As nations move ahead with their climate commitments, local and subnational governments are becoming increasingly important in raising national and international ambitions.
10. There will be a number of organisations at COP21 trying to influence the final agreement – city leaders will be there to show national leaders that higher targets are achievable.
11. Local and subnational governments will arrive at COP21 with tremendous potential to display. Cities have already committed to one gigatonne of greenhouse gas reductions through the carbonn® Climate Registry, which will be presented at the Climate Summit for Local Leaders on 4 December at Paris City Hall.

12. The C40, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and United Cities and Local Governments have developed an international Compact of Mayors. The objectives of the Compact of Mayors include to:
  - (a) enable recognition of new and existing city-level commitments through the Compact by making annual reporting data on local climate action publicly available;
  - (b) commit to common reporting processes for local climate action that allow for consistent and reliable assessment of progress towards meeting emissions reduction targets;
  - (c) create an evidence base of the greenhouse gas impact of city action to enable capital flows into cities to support city governments taking further action and to be held responsible for that action and the associated investments;
  - (d) demonstrate the commitment of city governments to contribute positively towards more ambitious, transparent, and credible national climate targets by voluntarily agreeing to meet standards similar to those followed by national governments; and
  - (e) encourage national governments to actively support additional city action by recognising local commitments, establishing more enabling policy environments and directing resources to cities to limit any further increase in global warming and to appropriately resource both mitigation and adaptation local climate action.
13. Signatories to the Compact of Mayors voluntarily agree to make commitments equivalent to those of national governments by agreeing to a 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target, a plan to achieve the target and a carbon inventory compliant with the GPC (Global Protocol for community emissions).
14. The City of Sydney was announced as compliant with the Compact of Mayors on 24 September 2015. The City of Sydney has a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70 per cent on 2006 levels for its own operations and the Local Government Area, and a plan for its achievement underpinned by Master Plans for trigeneration, renewable energy, energy efficiency and waste.
15. The Compact of Mayors is a global coalition of 165 mayors and city officials representing 234 million people pledging to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience to climate change and track their progress transparently.
16. The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group is made up of 75 cities, contributes 25 per cent of the global GDP, represents one in 12 people worldwide and has taken over 8,000 actions to combat climate change.

**PROGRAM OF EVENTS**

17. To showcase the role of cities, a number of organisations, including C40, 100 Resilient Cities and ICLEI, have organised key events in Paris while COP21 is being held. The Lord Mayor has been asked to attend and speak at a number of these including:
- (a) **Resilience Day** – 100 Resilient Cities together with UN Habitat and the World Bank will be showcasing Mayors, especially those who have released or will soon release their strategies.
  - (b) **C40 Awards Ceremony** – the City has been nominated for our Residential Apartments Sustainability Plan.
  - (c) **Climate Summit for Local Leaders** – this includes a Forum held by C40 which includes sessions that highlight the successes of city to city collaboration, information on how Mayors are driving change in the market place, the need for increased finance to support cities and the future of low carbon cities. Over 200 delegates are expected to attend including other Mayors, city leaders and the media. The Lord Mayor has been invited to speak on a session with three Chinese cities – Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Wuhan. It also includes a Summit Plenary Session presented by Anne Hidalgo (Mayor, City of Paris) and Michael Bloomberg (the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change). The aim of the Summit is to highlight the efforts and solutions delivered by global cities and local government, to feed into a day of action being organised by the UN on Saturday, 5 December and to ultimately impact on the outcome of COP21.
  - (d) **Renewable Energy: Energising the Future' conference** – being held by the International Renewable Energy Agency, the leading advocacy/information group for worldwide renewables with 143 member states including Australia. The Lord Mayor has been asked to deliver a keynote speech at this event, which is billed as the 'premier' public event on renewable energy at COP21. Other speakers expected include Ban Ki-Moon the Secretary General of the United Nations, Francois Hollande the President of France, and Jean-Claude Juncker the President of the European Commission.
18. Further invitations have been received in recent days and the program will need to be finalised closer to the date.

**KEY IMPLICATIONS****Strategic Alignment – Sustainable Sydney 2030**

19. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 1 – A Globally Competitive and Innovative City; and
  - (b) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer.

20. The objectives of the Conference align closely with those of *Sustainable Sydney 2030* to become a sustainable global city, and one of the world's leading green cities, which is strongly endorsed by the City of Sydney's community.
21. Participation in the Conference will enable Sydney to demonstrate environmental leadership and advocate for commitment to more ambitious emissions reduction targets at Paris, together with a focus on city action.
22. Participation in the Conference will strongly reinforce and enhance the benefits already flowing from the City's membership of the C40 and ICLEI, and advocate for urgent action on climate change initiatives, locally, nationally and internationally.
23. The opportunity to view innovative climate change programs in Paris and exchange information with Mayors from around the world will also be of significant benefit to the City.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

24. It is anticipated that the C40 will cover most of the travel and accommodation costs for the Lord Mayor and some costs for accompanying staff.
25. It is proposed that the Lord Mayor and two staff members travel to Paris with the remaining costs of flights, accommodation and meals being met by the City of Sydney, at an estimated total cost of approximately \$13,000 per person.
26. Funds are available within existing operational budgets.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

27. The Conference will convene in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015.
28. It is proposed that the Lord Mayor will be in Paris for the first week of the Conference when the majority of the events being organised by C40, 100 Resilient Cities and ICLEI are being held.

**MONICA BARONE**

Chief Executive Officer