



March 5, 2018

Dear Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,

As you gather cities and scientists in Edmonton to “[inspire the next frontier of research focused on the science of cities and climate change](#),” we urge you to 1) shift the scientific focus from global negotiations to local action, 2) seek ways to include cities in scientific knowledge production, and 3) make the scientific knowledge more accessible to cities.

First, we urge you to strengthen the scientific focus on local action. Cities within the [Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance](#) are doing everything they can to stay under the IPCC-recommended 1.5-degree warming target. Our cities are some of the key players in reaching the targets outlined in the Paris agreement. They have stepped up to the plate, adopted aggressive emissions reduction targets, and are now rolling out solutions to reach those targets. But we need the scientific community to recognize the shift and work with it when moving forward - both in the IPCC synthesis work and in developing scientific projects. We need to see more funding of, calls for, and development of research projects with a local action focus.

Second, we urge you, the IPCC, to give more recognition to scientific processes that include local policy makers. Cities need knowledge on which they can act. But this can only happen when cities are involved in the scientific process, not seen as merely knowledge receivers. Cities need to have a role in the formulation of research questions. That means leaving the linear, traditional thinking on knowledge production and consumption and, instead, allowing cities to take the lead in research projects and drive the knowledge production for local solutions. We are encouraged by the initiative from the IPCC to catalyze and foster new processes for joint knowledge production. Now, let’s go further and bring cities on board in the formational stages of any knowledge production process.

Third, we urge the scientific community to include cities when considering the audience for scientific knowledge. Climate policy development is not a straightforward process and the solutions-oriented pathways that are necessary – i.e. large emission cuts – are not always obvious. Cities need to be able to easily apply scientific knowledge when deciding on zero-emission pathways. Cities need scientific knowledge that’s accessible to them. Academic publications and language are not inviting to cities. In fact, they are often barriers to knowledge application. Finding ways to make knowledge more accessible is a conversation that needs to happen between science and cities – and soon.

For decades, cities have been addressing the climate crisis, in response to the scientific community’s excellent climate research, data and modeling. But it’s now become clear that we can only solve the crisis if science moves with us. We invite you into this partnership above, aligning climate science with local climate action.

Respectfully,

The Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance