

10 major African cities sign onto C40 clean air declaration

Ahead of COP27 being held in Africa later this year, the mayors and governors of ten major African cities announced today an unprecedented, ambitious commitment to improve air quality with the signing of the C40 Clean Air Cities Declaration.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

Abidjan, Accra, Addis Ababa, Dakar, Ekurhuleni, Freetown, Johannesburg, Lagos, Nairobi and Tshwane will join a global cohort of 38 cities including Durban, which became the first African city to sign the declaration in 2019. By signing the C40 Clean Air Cities Declaration, the mayors recognise that breathing clean air is a human right and commit to work toward safer air quality to meet WHO Air Quality Guidelines

The announcement was made at an event organised by C40 during the 9th Africities Summit in Kisumu, Kenya. At the event, C40 launched the African Cities for Clean Air Programme to support African cities as they work to improve air quality and public health.

Air pollution has become the second largest cause of death on the African continent, due in part to rapid urbanisation and industrialisation. Approximately 1.1 million deaths per year have been linked to air pollution across Africa, according to a Global Burden of Disease study.

Approximately 59 million people across the ten African cities stand to benefit from cleaner air and improved health through commitments that could prevent as many as 10,000 early deaths linked to air pollution exposure, as well as more than 300,000 hospitalisations, resulting in US\$ 9.4 billion in annual savings from averted deaths and hospitalisations.

Air pollution and climate change are closely connected and should be considered together; both need swift, unprecedented and collaborative action to address the sources of pollution that are harmful to our health and warming our planet.

The C40 Clean Air Cities Declaration sets a framework for cities around the world to improve air quality. Within two years, signatories to the declaration will establish baseline levels and set ambitious reduction targets for air pollutants that meet or exceed national commitments. These targets will put the cities on a path towards meeting World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines for particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and sulphur dioxide.

By signing this declaration, C40 cities continue to take bold climate action despite the many challenges faced in recent times, with the global pandemic, economic disruption, climate-related natural disasters and in many cases strained financial resources.

C40's new African Cities for Clean Air Programme will help cities to achieve these commitments through capacity building, regionally-focused peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, and collaboration centred on air quality best practices.

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