



CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

WE ARE LIVING IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY.

In 2021, we have once again witnessed extreme weather-related events in Europe: July was ranked the third hottest on record¹; communities in Germany and Belgium were hit by devastating floods; the Czech Republic was struck by a tornado; and Turkey and Sardinia were ravaged by forest fires. The global temperature is now 1.1°C² higher than pre-industrial levels. The climate we will experience in the future depends on the decisions we make today.

More and more local communities³ are making a commitment to the Paris Agreement, driving the change to maintain a stable climate.

Every day, we are confronted with dramatic evidence of the climate crisis on our screens. We are all affected, wherever we are. Decision makers at national and international level may be aware of the 1.5°C target, but the actions they are taking is not enough⁴. Fortunately, more and more stakeholders — and especially local communities — are recognizing the magnitude of the climate crisis and its impacts on their daily lives and are deciding to act at local and regional level.

BOOST COMMUNITY AMBITIONS!

This toolkit provides guidelines and tips for citizens on catalyzing commitments, dialogue, and action for a just, resilient, and carbon-free future in their local communities. Initiatives such as this have an impact that can be felt beyond the local level, often leading to national and regional change and ultimately contributing to the achievement of the Paris Agreement goals.



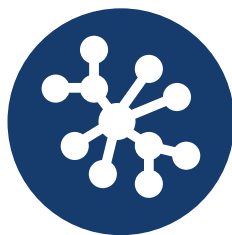
LISTEN!

- Understand the local impacts and challenges of the climate crisis
- Explore local climate policies
- Learn from interested groups and activists



CONNECT!

- Engage and empower potential allies
- Inspire and activate citizens
- Cooperate with local media



ACT!

- Articulate demands for climate ambitions and actions
- Launch an ongoing dialogue with local leaders
- Keep your allies informed and motivated



LISTEN!



We need to understand the origins, impacts, and challenges of the climate crisis at a local level. There is plenty of evidence in the form of droughts, extreme rainfall, floods, and heat waves. Find out more; identify the most relevant issues that will resonate most powerfully with local stakeholders.

TIPS ON RESOURCES:

- Check the website of the national meteorological agency for data on your region
- Collect evidence from media, businesses, farmers, etc.
- Ask grandparents or older people to share their recollections of past weather patterns
- Listen to groups that are particularly affected, such as economically vulnerable societies, minorities, and indigenous peoples

Find out about the local municipality's commitments and decisions — or lack of them. Learn about the roles of municipal bodies in the decision-making process. Most European municipalities have twin towns and sister communities. Check whether yours has already declared a climate emergency.

TIPS ON RESOURCES:

- Browse the local municipality website for information on decisions, policies, and sister communities
- Check which municipalities have already declared a climate emergency and see if the actions taken by the municipality can be replicated by your community/municipality

We are stronger together: identify other groups and activists in your region that are focusing on the impacts or challenges of the climate crisis.

TIPS ON RESOURCES:

- Check local social media channels of NGOs & activists
- Monitor traditional local media, such as newspapers, radio stations, and TV channels
- Follow local community influencers and leaders who support the climate cause

Identify affected stakeholders and their respective goals and ambitions (or their lack) with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation. This will give you an insight into the attitudes and interests at play in your neighborhood, and into the goals of political decision making.

TIPS ON RESOURCES:

- Attend local public meetings, municipal events, and clubs, and talk to your neighbors
- Monitor local social media, press, and newsletters



CONNECT!



Initiate dialogue and cooperation with selected civil society organizations, innovative businesses, schools, or even local family physicians.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Discuss local climate crisis evidence and challenges with them
- Empower them — organize workshops on climate crisis science, impacts, and solutions with the help of Climate Reality Europe and our trained Climate Reality Leaders
- Join or set up Facebook groups on topics such as the local impacts of climate change and environmental degradation

Building community support in the early stages of an initiative will not only contribute significantly to its impact but will also ensure firmer foundations and connections when it comes to demands and action.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Ask a Climate Reality Leader from your city/country to deliver a presentation, including an introduction to climate science and perspectives for the future
- Organize or join planned events to generate awareness of the climate emergency and draft demands for action
- Initiate a moderated debate and/or survey to define a community vision for future climate solutions

Local media can substantially amplify your message and help you to achieve your goals. Monitor local media and opinion leaders, meet them in person, and involve them in the conversation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Contact social media groups, local newspapers, and radio and TV stations
- Invite these groups to dialogue with stakeholders
- Support them with ideas for reporting and articles on the local climate crisis

“The reality we now face
implores us to act.”

AL GORE

*Former US Vice President
Founder & Chairman, The Climate Reality Project*

ACT!



Synthesize the local vision, local challenges, and the status of municipality actions. Define your demands and determine with your allies which policies and measures decision makers should consider at local level.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Develop a white paper summarizing your demands in relation to the declaration of a climate emergency
- Ensure that the content of the paper responds to local challenges and is in line with the Paris Agreement

Communicate your demands to local decision makers. Convey a strong message about what the community wants and maintain support for and pressure on the municipality.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Organize local community forums
- Meet the mayor, relevant municipality teams, and elected representatives
- Speak up at municipality events
- Use tools such as open letters and petitions

Maintain an ongoing dialogue with citizens and allies, including local media, to ensure that your demands are integrated into local policies and decisions.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Monitor progress rigorously
- Acknowledge results
- Renew your demands when necessary



HOW CAN WE DO MORE TOGETHER?

- Please send us (**europe@climatereality.com**) your comments and recommendations on these guidelines — we will update this document regularly
- Share your experiences and stories about the climate emergency and about community efforts and achievements
- Take part in our quarterly forums to meet experts, activists, and local municipality leaders
- Follow Climate Reality Europe to get updates, suggestions, and solutions for driving the change at local and regional level

OTHER IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

- Public communication of the climate crisis — Psychologists for Future **bit.ly/2Z30q1k**
- Transition Model Canvas — an easy to use tool to evaluate and accelerate socio-technological transitions **bit.ly/3uTsX4C**
- The Local Government Climate Emergency Toolkit **www.lgcet.com**
- How to declare a climate emergency — A toolkit from the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) **talkofthecities.iclei.org/how-to-declare-a-climate-emergency**
- Climate Reality Europe **www.climaterealityeurope.org**

¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/last-month-was-worlds-third-hottest-july-record-eu-scientists-2021-08-05/>

² <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/>

³ <https://climateemergencydeclaration.org/climate-emergency-declarations-cover-15-million-citizens/>

⁴ <https://climateactiontracker.org>