

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA + SOUTHEAST FLORIDA



RECOGNIZING DURBAN AS A GLOBAL LEADER in ecosystem-based adaptation at the municipal level, CityLinks hoped to build on the reach of the DAC through city partnerships. The DAC was formed at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 17) in Durban in December 2011. The charter commits local governments to assist their communities in responding to and coping with climate change risks to reduce vulnerability.

Yet even with the success of the DAC, Durban struggled with how to mitigate the adverse effects on their environment that originated outside of their municipal jurisdiction. Interested in how they might regionalize their efforts to mitigate sea-level rise and increase biodiversity and ecosystem services, Durban looked to ICMA's CityLinks program.

CityLinks introduced Durban to ICMA members in Fort Lauderdale to learn more about the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact. Established in 2009, the Compact includes four counties representing 5.8 million people (Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach). The Compact represents an ongoing collaborative effort among the Compact Counties to foster sustainability and climate resilience at a regional scale.

PARTNERING ON SHARED CLIMATE CHALLENGES

As two coastal cities with similar climate vulnerabilities, Durban was paired with Fort Lauderdale and Broward County, Florida to explore the feasibility of regional governance models that address climate change.

RESULTS

As a direct result of the exchange visits, the city of Durban has established its own Central KwaZulu-Natal Climate Change Compact modelled on that of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact. The CKZNCCC is a partnership between the twelve local and district municipalities in Central KZN. It provides a platform for an integrated response to climate change and for members to engage and learn from each other and to access opportunities as a unit. By collaborating on their climate change response, Compact members are able to develop bankable adaptation projects with benefits that transcend each member's municipal boundary.

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DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT: IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES

- Durban faces challenges with sea level rise and coastal erosion but does not have jurisdiction of entire coastline or relevant catchment areas.
- Surrounding municipalities have fewer financial and human resources to dedicate to climate change initiatives.
- Without regional cooperation environmental “wins” are often undermined by lack of coordination and communication.

TECHNICAL EXCHANGE: SHARING BEST PRACTICES

- Meetings to discuss the genesis of the South East Florida Climate Compact, how to garner support, and operational successes and challenges.
- Visits to storm water management facilities to demonstrate regional efforts.
- Overview of coordinated sea level rise projections and how they are utilized across counties.

WORK PLANNING: CREATING A REPLICABLE AND OPERATIONAL CLIMATE COMPACT MODEL

OBJECTIVE

Support the development of a regional climate governance model that is responsive to the needs of Durban and the surrounding municipalities.

ACTIVITY 1

Work with key staff to identify steps required to establish a regional climate compact. Study the Southeast Florida example from a governance and technical perspective to assess replicability.

ACTIVITY 2

Outline a plan to operationalize the Central Kwazulu Natal Climate Compact. Assess the feasibility in the Durban context, and identify potential capacity building opportunities for participating municipalities.

CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- 1 Climate change knows no political boundaries, organized regional cooperation and planning are critical for successful adaptation projects.
- 2 Working regionally encourages knowledge sharing across jurisdictions and departments that can lead to process improvements and efficiencies.
- 3 Regional collaboration brings more attention to critical environmental and infrastructure needs, that if addressed can lead to wider benefit and additional funding sources.