



NET ZERO CITIES

One stop shop platform report

On the current operation of Mission Platform

Deliverable D3.3

Version N°1

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Summary

The purpose of the rescoped deliverable D3.3 is to describe the current operation of the Mission Platform and operational structure as well as the available and foreseen portal modules

Keywords

Portal, Mission Platform, CCC, Finance guidance tool, Climate Transition map, Pilot Cities Guidebook, Knowledge repository



Introduction

This deliverable submitted formally under D3.3 is the fusion between D3.3 and D3.6 of the NZC Grant Agreement:

- *D3.3 : One stop shop platform report [M14]: Report describing the functionality and process of how the Platform works and related content and plans for updates. This deliverable is connected to Task 3.3 One Stop Shop Platform Operation.*
- *D3.6 : Platform technical description and user guide [M15]: Report on the platform as per its first establishment, including technical description and a user guide explaining functionalities. This deliverable is connected to T3.2.*

The purpose of the rescoped deliverable D3.3 is to describe the current operation of the Mission Platform and the available and foreseen portal modules. In order to clearly identify the scope of the deliverables, two definitions are important to clarify at this point:

- The **Mission Platform** organises and makes accessible to all cities available tools, resources, expertise, capabilities. It is composed by:
 - **Mission Portal** refers to the [online portal](#), made of 13 modules (see more information in section 2 below), which is the main digital interface with cities.
 - **City Advisors**, which are the human side of the Mission Platform, and are assisting cities in navigating through the Mission platform resources.
 - **Service design Team**

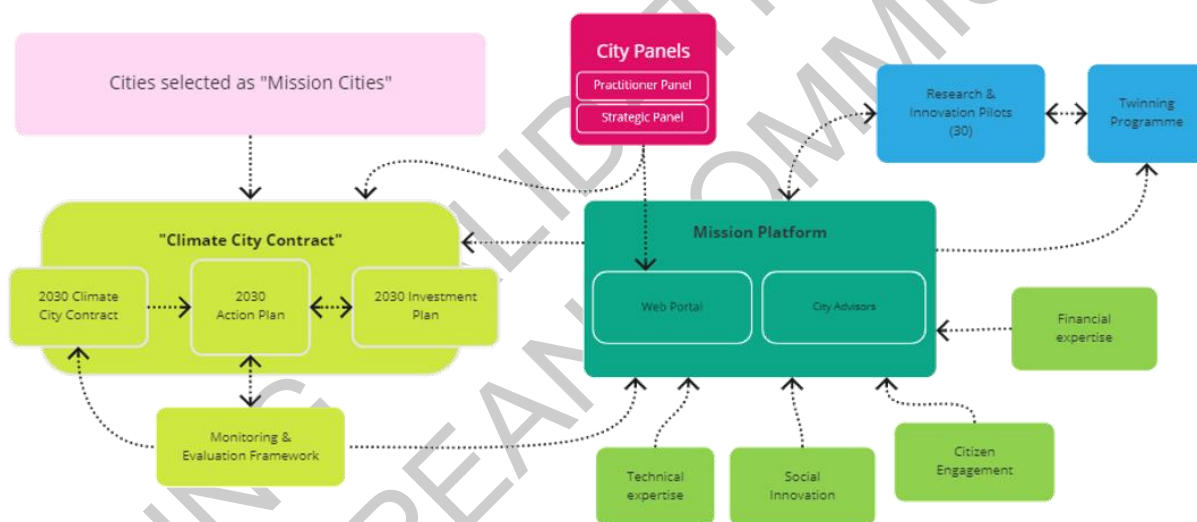


Figure 1: NetZeroCities' overall organisation

This deliverable therefore is composed of 3 sections: Mission Platform governance, Portal features and services, User guidance.

This deliverable does not describe the operational processes of the NetZeroCities project, as this is already covered by the D11.2 Project Quality Plan and [project handbook](#). This deliverable D3.3 is also linked to the SGA 1 WP5 dedicated to the improved portal operations.

This deliverable is part of WP3 of NZC, which is responsible for the operational design, build and maintenance of the Mission Platform. It builds on Deliverable 3.1, *Design and specification for the Portal and Platform*, submitted M8, and is cross-referenced within D3.2 *Capacity Building Programme Plan*, submitted M16.



1 Platform governance and operational structure

1.1 Governance model during Year 1

This section demonstrates how NZC project governance was linked to the Mission Platform.

1.1.1 NZC project governance

The project followed a classic two-level governance.

- **General Assembly** is the highest authority of the project, comprising of one representative per partner, chaired by the NZC Coordinator. GA meetings will be organised once per year (but the ExCom can call for ad hoc GA meetings). The GA's decisions may include: Request amendments to the NZC Grant Agreement; Initiate and agree on changes to the Consortium Agreement (CA); Define strategic reorientations of the work plan or budget; Termination of a partner's participation, following procedures set out in the CA. Decisions of the GA shall require a vote by simple majority, except for changes affecting the Grant Agreement, which shall require a 2/3 majority. The quorum is of 2/3 of GA members.
- **ExCom** is comprised of the NZC Coordinator (chair) and the WP leaders, supported by the Project Management Office (PMO, which does not vote). The ExCom is the executive body in charge of the management of the project with the following responsibilities: operational decision-making; harmonisation, follow-up and adaptation of detailed work plans; assessment of the results obtained and possible minor adaptations of the future work; deciding on technical reviews; preparation of periodic scientific and management reports; proposals for GA decision on major work plan or funding issues; risk management.

ExCom meetings were organised twice a month on average, while full consortium meetings took place once a year. Considering the high amount of required evolutions from the Mission Team side and the interconnected nature of the project and its work packages, these were aimed at updating partners on the project progress and making decisions on the adaptation of the Grant Agreement to the reality of the Mission. Mass communication by email to consortium partners in the form of newsletters or core emails complemented these meetings as far as the flow of information between partners is concerned.

In addition, bilateral meetings between work package leaders and the programme management team composed by LGI & CKIC were organized every six weeks, to review WP progress, deliverables, milestones, risks and any other relevant business.

1.1.2 Interactions with City advisers

City advisers were selected as part of WP13, taking into account the need for diverse backgrounds and geographic diversity. Their onboarding was undertaken over the course of August and September 2022. City advisers were invited to participate in the ExCom and all-consortium meeting to provide feedback from their experience with cities.

1.1.3 Interactions with the Mission Team

Regular calls between the Mission Team and CKIC are organised on a weekly basis. These focus on latest developments, including alignment on external representation and events, debriefs from meetings, updates on the set-up and implementation of processes, and upcoming communications to cities. Specific meetings were organised on a case-by-case basis in order to advance on specific topics such as Climate City Contract monitoring, Pilot Cities Programme, Mission Annual Conference etc. Through these meetings, the NetZeroCities consortium is able to stay aligned with the wider developments of the Mission, to consult the Mission Team as needed, and to receiver ad-hoc requests from the Mission Team,

1.1.4 Why some evolution was required

The following elements led us to revise the current governance beyond year 1:

- The upcoming SGAs, scaling up the scope while partially covering the same period as NZC.
- The difficulty to address cross work-package topics
- The high number of various contributors
- The need to integrate feedback from cities on services, CCC, etc.



1.2 New governance model including SGA 1 & SGA 2

1.2.1 New governance structure

High-level governance structure. Formally, there should be as many ExComs and General Assemblies as the number of projects. In practice, the coordination teams of the project will aim to avoid the multiplication of meetings, especially considering that the scope, the consortium and the work-package leader organisations are related between NZC and the FPA/SGAs. Therefore, NZC and SGAs ExComs and project meetings will be held jointly most of the time. This being said, in some cases, a specific governing body may be convened if, for example, there is a need to update the NZC Grant Agreement specifically.

Four committees were created to take decision on topics which cross both NZC and SGAs:

- Data Impact & Monitoring Committee
- Communication and Portal Curation Committee
- Management & Strategy Committee
- Resource & Grant Allocation Committee

The functioning and scope of these committees will be described in the SGA deliverable D8.1 Governance and Process Strategy. This deliverable will not only outline a strategy for efficiently and effectively managing the delivery of the SGA, it will also propose a strategy for delivering both NetZeroCities and the SGA concurrently in a manner that complements both projects and is seamless for the cities participating. These four committees will sit above WPs but below the ExCom. They have been designed to provide input on areas and risks that sit across multiple work packages. The committees will report directly back to the ExCom as needed. Each committee will have roughly 8 to 10 members. Roughly half of these will be standing members and the other half will be on a 6-month rotation. This ensures we keep membership fresh and spread across the Consortium. Each committee will have a nominated Chair and Secretary and these roles will also be allocated on a 6month rotation. More detail on the committee structure will be provided in D8.2 Terms of Reference for Committees.

Themes. In addition to these committees, “project management themes” were created to follow-up operationally the progress of some key topics:

- Climate City Contracts
- City Support
- Pilots & Twins
- Investment & Finance
- Monitoring, Learning & Impact
- Policy & Partnerships
- Operations

These governance structures are supported by tools, processes and software (EMDESK, Teams, Miro, etc.).

1.2.2 Organisation of City Support

Our improved approach to city support structures itself around the City Support Theme as outlined above. Under this Theme SGA WP2, NZC WP6-10 and NZC WP13 will work collaboratively to provide support and resources to cities. A City Support Project Manager will be appointed to oversee the coordination of the multiple Work Packages within the City Support Theme.

An agile City Support. City Advisors (CAs) offer services to cities that help identify and tackle systemic challenges, access tools and resources, link them with expert advice, and facilitate exchanges with their city peers. Three service levels have been established to illustrate how all cities engage with NZC and the Mission and differentiates between Mission Cities and Pilot Cities and their service expectations:

- Support Mission Cities to develop and review CCCs, action and investment plans.
- Support Pilot Cities to help scope and deliver Mission-level work to advance to climate neutrality by 2030 and enable learning to replicate and advance climate-neutral transformations.



- Lead implementation of the Twinning Programme, collaboration, and learning for climate neutrality.

Our city support model delivers a stable point of contact for cities, rapid responsive support and ensures maximum impact for the resources committed. The working model balances stability and certainty of resourcing to enable cities and partners to plan effectively and with the responsiveness to take advantage of opportunities as they emerge. Mission Cities will be aligned with **City Support Groups** (CSGs), with CAs leading the work with set core teams of NZC experts working as a coherent, transversal teams. These CSGs provide cities with stable, focused support teams, direct support on design and delivery of CCC elements of Commitments, Action Plans and Investment Plans, and co-ordination of peer networking and wider city relations. As the City Support Theme helps cities to develop their CCCs they will act as the 'Feedback and Support' phase of the CCC review process. Strong support and guidance during the development of the CCC from NZCs will minimise the pressure on the CCC completeness check which will be performed by the CCC Theme before CCCs are submitted to the European Commission.

- Specific domain expertise is developed, and new services designed through a series of expert-led **Working Groups**, which also provide specialist second-line support to the City Support Groups.
- Cities will be clustered around common challenges and will be created to support peer networking and common solution-finding, with support delivered by **Sprint Groups** made up of cities, subject-matter experts and CAs.
- Finally, **Pilot Teams** will provide specific support to Pilot Cities, in designing, refining, and delivering pilot activities.

Work planning will be based on six-month cycles, supported by process tools to assess evolving city needs and learn across the Mission. This regular review pattern enables us to develop and improve services as work progresses, with a focus on effectively managing resource spread and adaptation across more cities over time. This city support model set out in SGA WP2 supports in delivering CCCs, Pilot Cities and learning programmes, and links to learning to the rest of the consortium and beyond, through SGA WPs 4 and 6.

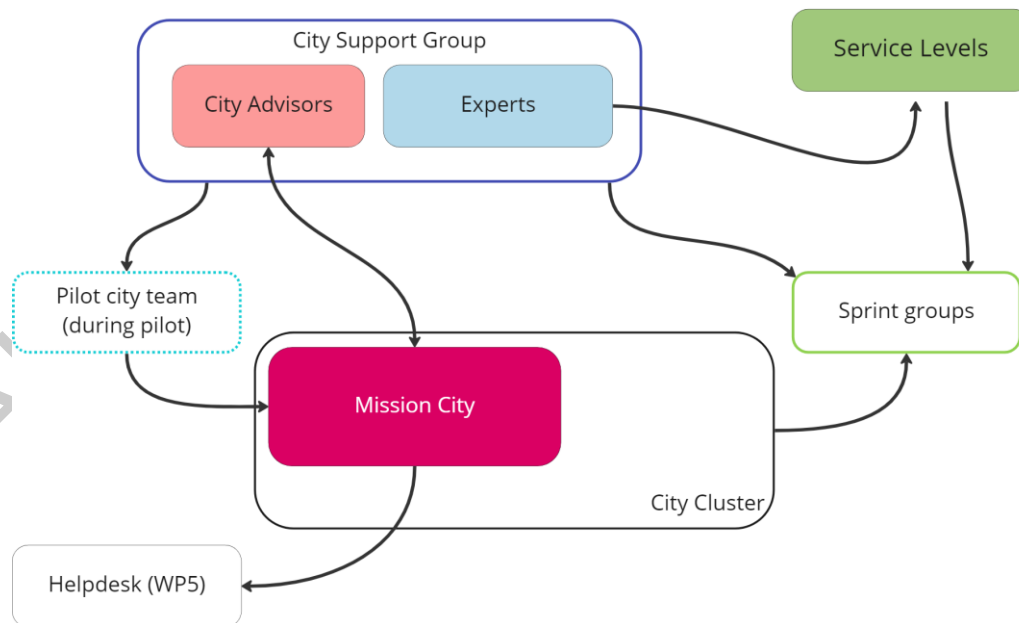


Figure 2: NZC agile city support

2 Overview of the Portal Features & Services

2.1 Summary

Before describing each of the portal current and future modules, the following statistics provide an overview of the current portal use:

- Number of registered users – 1,509
- Number of groups - 37
- Number of entries in the knowledge repository - 426

The modules are linked together via a shared tagging structure, comprising 31 tags as set out in the list below. User need to assign these tags when setting up a new user profile, creating an event or a group, or adding a resource to the Knowledge Repository, allowing the Portal to prompt tailored content to individual users and groups based on the tags.

Category	Social & Economy	Sustainable environment	Science & Technology
Tag	Awareness Raising Circular economy Citizen participation Culture Education Finance Funding Governance and policy Social innovation Stakeholder engagement Tourism	Air quality Biodiversity Climate resilience Food Green area Health Local resource Nature based solutions Soil Waste Water	Analytics and modelling Building Carbon capture Energy Industry Materials Sustainable fuel Technology Transport and mobility

Further interconnections are made via the Climate Transition Map segments, as explained in section 2.2.7 below.

2.2 Available modules

2.2.1 Explore page

The Explore Page allows users to navigate the resources and tools available on the portal. Users can easily access tools such as the Groups features and browse through a variety of resources including the Climate Transition Map, the Pilot Cities Guidebook, and the Knowledge Repository.

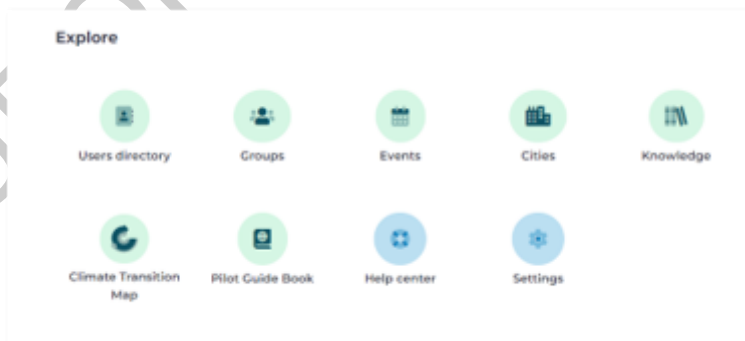


Figure 3: Explore page



2.2.2 Onboarding module

The Onboarding Module gives an introduction to NetZeroCities, with video and a series of quick reads on key concepts and tools for users to get familiar with the approach and services. It opens automatically when joining the Portal for the first time and can be accessed at all times for a refresher from the home page.



Figure 4: Onboarding module

2.2.3 News Feed

When logging into the Portal, users are redirected to a personalised social network news feed. Mission Cities users, NetZeroCities consortium members and European Union representatives are able to post on the general news feed to share information, ask questions, and collaborate. The news feed is fuelled with posts coming from all over the portal, such as events and groups users are participating in.

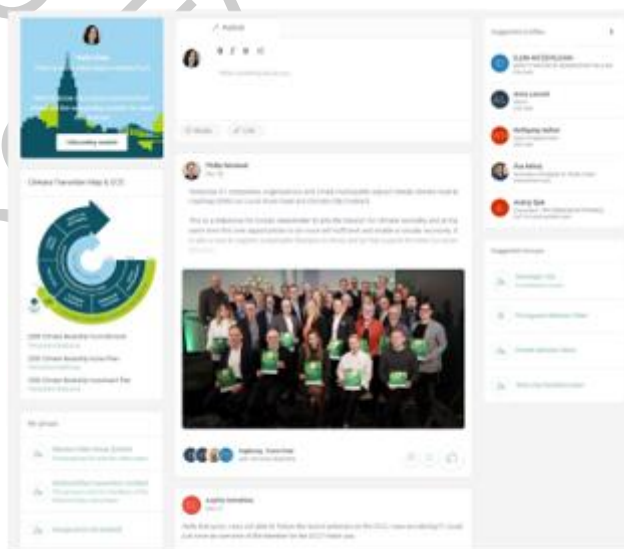


Figure 5: News feed



2.2.4 User Directory

The User Directory is where all users can find each other's profiles and contact details. To date there are over 1,500 users on the Portal, including Mission City Representatives, NetZeroCities Consortium members, public authority representatives (EC members for instance), and cities' local partners. Users have started building their profiles already, where they can add their biography and picture and access the groups they are a part of. They can also use the Chat feature to discuss directly with peers.

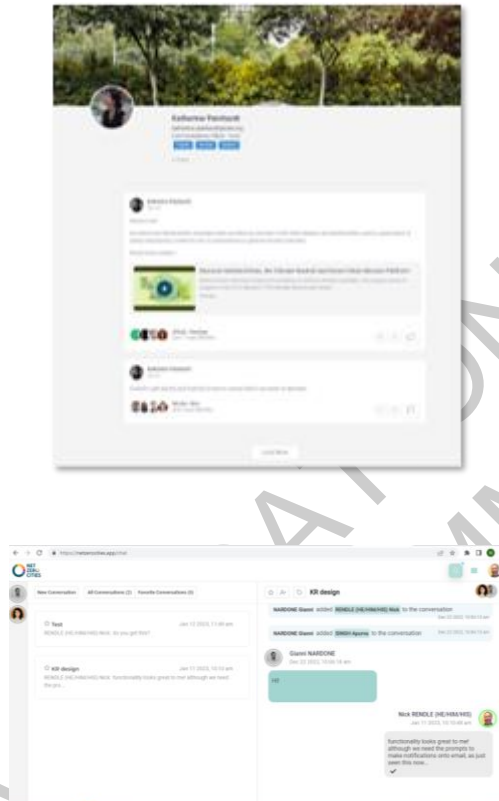


Figure 6: User directory

2.2.5 Groups

Users can engage with each other within public or private groups. They can create groups or join existing ones. Private groups can be accessed upon invitation only, such as the Mission Cities Group. Groups are generally thematic and can be based on various topics, geographies, etc. To date, 37 groups have been created.

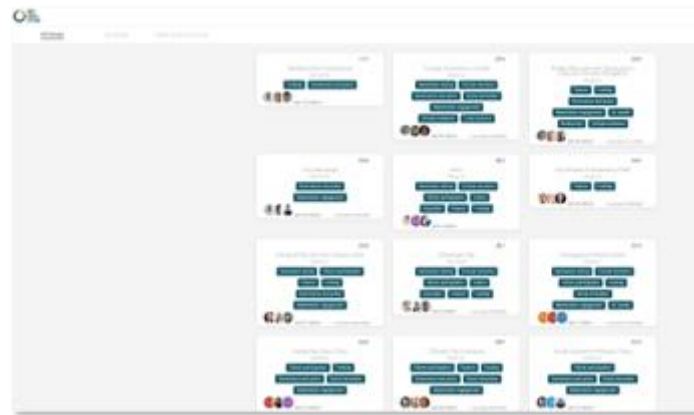


Figure 7: Groups

2.2.6 Events

The events page showcases upcoming opportunities to engage, for example by attending webinars and other group meetings. On each specific event page, users can register, comment and join the event. The events page also gathers statistics around user engagement with the various events, displaying attendee numbers among other impact-related measures.

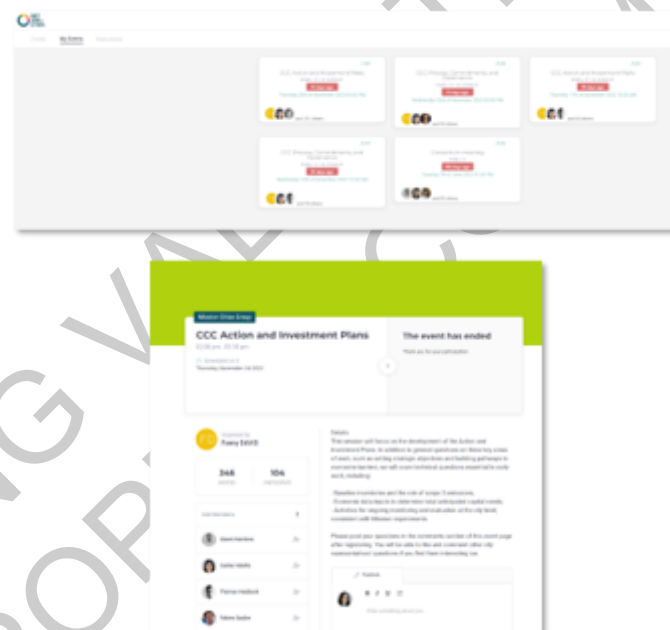


Figure 8: Events

2.2.7 Climate Transition map

The interactive Climate Transition Map allows users to dig deeper into the different phases of the climate neutrality journey. Pop-up features allow users to click through the various steps to find dedicated visuals and write-ups of each of the phases of the climate transition and allows them to navigate to resources in order to take action on the different phases. The rings of the map demonstrate the practical and theoretical parts of the journey of a Mission City. For example, it highlights the role of the CCCs in the journey to climate neutrality, leading users to a set of templates and guidance documents for the three parts of the CCC.





Figure 9: Climate Transition Map 1 (CTM)

The Climate Transition Map supports navigation across the portal, since (consortium members only) users can connect Events and Knowledge Repository resources to the map, via a detailed list of sub-heading prompts falling under each section 'wedge' of the map, as in the example below for the 'Build a Strong Mandate' section.

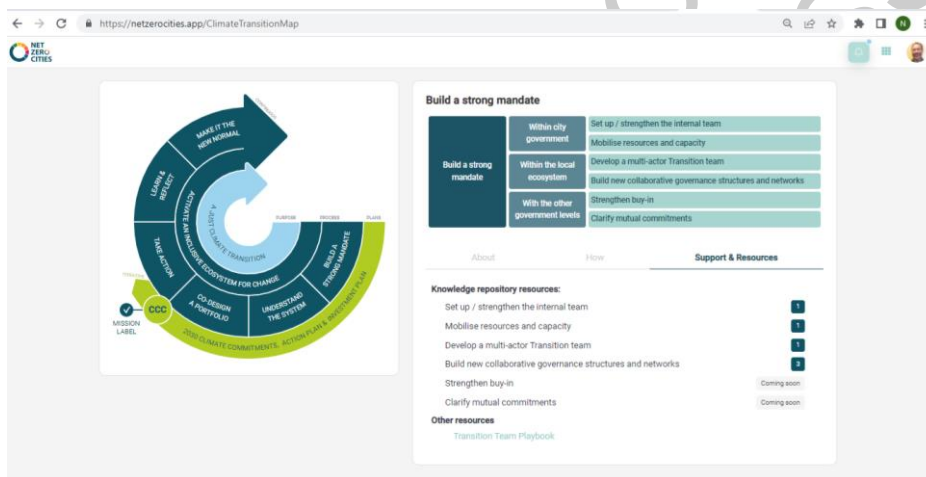


Figure 10: Climate Transition Map 2 (CTM)

2.2.8 Pilot Cities Guidebook

The Pilot Cities Guidebook helps users through the process of designing and implementing a Pilot Cities Programme. It has been particularly useful for applicants during the opening windows of the Call for Pilot Cities. The Guidebook outlines the scope, aims, and objectives of the Pilot Cities Programme, and links readers further to relevant resources and examples. The Guidebook is easily navigable by sections in a sidebar menu of the Portal.



Figure 11: Pilot Cities Guidebook

2.2.9 Knowledge Repository

The Knowledge Repository is a rich compilation of 426 different resources, including fact sheets, case studies, methods, articles, and more. All of these are searchable and can be found via advanced filters by content type or theme tags. The front screen also prompts relevant resources to the user, based on the tagging structure they have selected as part of their profile.

- A Fact Sheet gives an overview of a climate-neutrality topic, including text, visuals or photos, and citations for further reading. To date, we have 160 Fact Sheets in the repository
- Case Studies provide a longer text about examples of climate neutrality-relevant efforts. In each case study a brief description is provided for context, along with key data in an “overview” section, and the final section outlines the contribution of the case study example to climate neutrality. The impacts, approaches, relevant stakeholder networks, and other key practical insights are highlighted. To date, we have 44 Case Studies in the Repository.
- Methods delineate actionable approaches to climate transition, providing an overview, as well as useful information about barriers, governance, participation, resources, and other data that might enable a user to identify whether an approach is applicable to their context. To date, we have 61 Methods in the repository

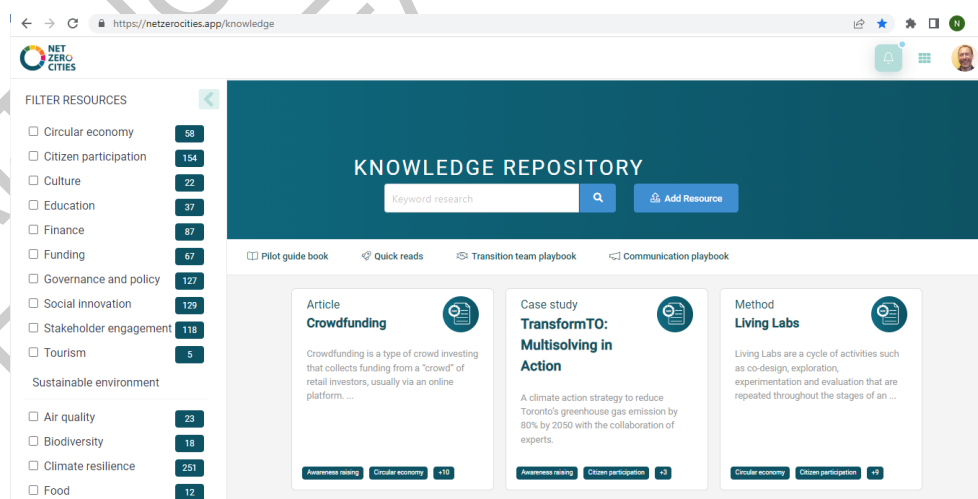


Figure 12: Knowledge Repository (1)



The Knowledge Repository is also designed to be a living, shared resource bank. All users can add and edit content via the “Add Resource” function, which guides users through an easy-to-navigate system of content collection, including templates and an editor function.

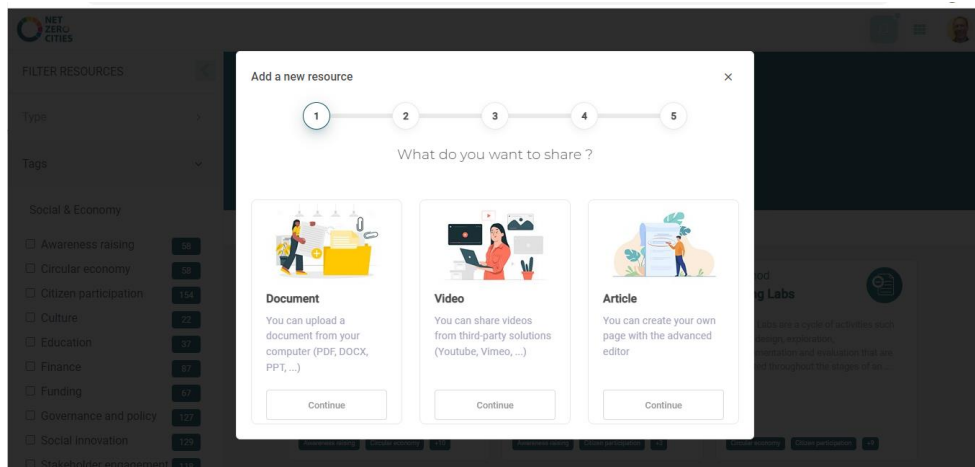


Figure 13: Knowledge Repository (2)

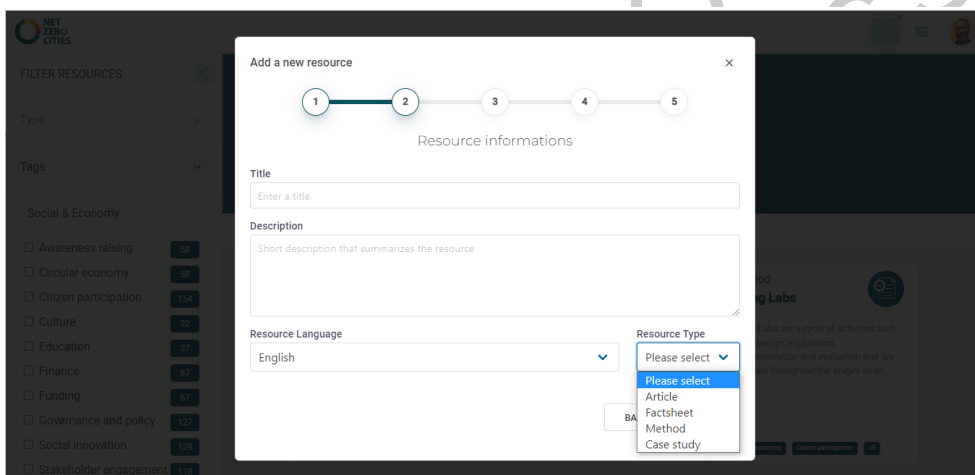


Figure 14: Knowledge Repository (3)

2.2.10 Help Center & FAQs

2.3 Features under development

2.3.1 Finance guidance tool

This tool supports cities as they identify finance options and supports their investment planning, based on a decision matrix which helps define needs and identify a range of options appropriate to the city's circumstances.



Figure 16: Finance Guidance tool

2.3.2 Dashboard

The Dashboard gives customisable ways for cities to visualize their greenhouse gas emission data and examine transition pathways. They can also link to datasets on nature-based solutions, co-benefits, and levers of change. The Barometer will aggregate city-level data, providing programme-level insights and allowing cities to compare their situation.

2.3.3 CCC digital workplace

The CCC Digital Workspace will support cities to develop, visualise, and share their CCC Commitments, Action Plans and Investment Plans with partners, in a controlled and data-secure environment. This will also support the review and validation process for the Mission.

3 User Guidance (Published on the Portal as FAQs)

The following list of Frequently Asked Questions has been published on the Portal at <https://netzerocities.app/FAQ>

3.1 Getting started

3.1.1 What is the Mission Platform?

The Mission Platform combines digital services, via the online portal, and human support, including the Climate Neutral City Advisors and thematic expertise on systems innovation, finance, social innovation, and technical solutions.

The online portal is not just designed to host resources and tools. It is designed to support peer-to-peer collaboration. We are providing an online space for cities to interact and learn together. Both Climate Neutral City Advisors and NZC Experts will be working with cities within the online communities and learning groups.

3.1.2 What features and functions does the portal provide?

The portal currently provides:

- An **Onboarding Module** introduces NetZeroCities, with video and a series of quick reads on key concepts and tools.
- A **Personalised News Feed** where users can post to share information, ask questions, and collaborate. The news feed is fuelled with posts coming from all over the portal, such as events and groups users are participating in.



- The [User Directory](#) allows users to find each other's profiles and contact details. It is divided between City Representatives, NetZeroCities Consortium members, public authority representatives (EC members for instance), and cities' local partners.
- The [Groups](#) pages allow users to engage with each other within public or private groups, based on themes, topics, geographies etc. All users can create groups or join existing ones. Private groups can be accessed upon invitation only.
- The [Events](#) page showcases upcoming opportunities to engage, for example by attending webinars and other group meetings. On each event page, users can register, connect with other attendees and join the event.
- The interactive [Climate Transition Map](#) allows users to dig deeper into the different phases of the climate neutrality journey. Pop-up features allow users to click through the various steps and navigate to resources to take action on the different phases
- The [Knowledge Repository](#) is a rich compilation of different resources, including fact sheets, case studies, methods, articles, and more. All of these are searchable and can be filtered by content type or theme tags. The Knowledge Repository is also designed to be a living, shared resource bank. All users can add and edit content via the "Add Resource" function, which guides users through an easy-to-navigate system of content collection, including templates and an editor function.
- The **Finance Guidance Tool** (due for release in early 2023), supports cities as they identify finance options and supports their investment planning, based on a decision matrix which helps define needs and identify a range of options appropriate to the city's circumstances.

3.1.3 Who has access to the Portal?

The core Portal features are open to all European Cities. However, Mission Cities and Pilot Cities have access to additional specific services and events on the portal, reflecting the programme support they receive from NetZeroCities.

3.2 Using the Platform

3.2.1 How do I add something to the Knowledge Repository?

- 1) Go to the [Knowledge Repository](#) (be sure you are logged in the portal)
- 2) Click 'add resource'
- 3) Select your content type and click 'continue'
- 4) Follow the step-by-step instructions to add your content, either in its original format (pdf/doc/video etc) or by using our article creator, which has inbuilt templates for factsheet/ method/case study as well as a general article creator.

Once published, your resource will appear in the Knowledge Repository and will be searchable. You can always delete or edit your content once it has been published.

3.2.2 How do I join a public event on the portal?

- 1) Scroll down the homepage to find the events calendar on the left-hand side. The events in dark green are the ones you have already registered for. The events in light green are events you can register for.
- 2) Click on an event to open the events page (alternatively you can do this by selecting events from the navigation panel by your user icon in top right corner of the NetZeroCities website).
- 3) Once on the events page, you may register for the event you wish to attend if you have not already done so.
- 4) Five minutes before the event begins a button to join will appear on the events page. Click and wait for the event to begin.

3.2.3 How do I join an event which is restricted to a private group, including Mission City-only events?

- 1) If you're not already a member you can request to join the private group and wait for admin approval. (For Mission City events, you need to request to join the [Mission Cities group](#))



2) Once in the group, scroll down the page to find the group events calendar on the left-hand side. The events in dark green are the ones you have already registered for. The events in light green are events you can register for.

3) Click on an event to open the events page (alternatively you can do this by selecting events from the navigation panel by your user icon in top right corner of the NetZeroCities website).

4) Once on the events page, you may register for the event you wish to attend if you have not already done so.

5) Five minutes before the event begins a button to join will appear on the events page. Click and wait for the event to begin.

3.2.4 How can we reach the city officers from another city?

By going to the city profile page you will find a list of people working there. Then by going to the profiles of these users you will see their email addresses.

3.2.5 How can I create a group and invite other people to join?

If you click on the 'create a new group' button on your home page, you can then go through a simple process to define the group name and purpose and set basic functionalities.

You can then invite people to join by using the 'add members' button within the group - you will be able to invite people either individually (via their user profile name) or as an organisation (their city profile or organisation profile name).

3.2.6 How do I manage my city profile page?

City profiles are open for editing, and we encourage all cities to do so. We initially put default opening text in for each city with the expectation that cities will then edit this.

We encourage each city to set-up an administrator to manage this page and other functions in the portal. If you haven't done so already, please complete [this form](#) to set up your administrator.

3.2.7 Portal Translation

We want all portal content to be translated into all 24 EU languages, with users easily able to switch between languages so you can access content and conversations in your preferred language. We have experienced some technical challenges in setting this up, but we aim to have this functionality available in Spring/Summer 2023.

3.2.8 Privacy Policy & Terms of Use

Our privacy policies and terms of management for user data and intellectual property are set out in the following. These detail the rights and obligations of all users:

- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Terms of use](#)
- [Legal notices](#)

3.3 City Advisors

3.3.1 What is the role of the Climate Neutral City Advisors for Mission Cities?

The Climate Neutral City Advisors serve as front-line information providers for Mission Cities. They facilitate and support the setup of the Climate City Contract process. In practice, this means that they act as the main contact point for cities.

Each Mission City is allocated to a pair or group of Climate Neutral City Advisors who support them through the elaboration of the Climate City Contract, provide advice and guidance, animate collaborative working with other cities, and connect them with experts within NZC and tools/services according to their needs.



City Advisors are experienced working in and with cities and have expertise in different elements of climate action. Their support is tailored to each city's necessities and local context.

3.3.2 Does each city have its own personal Climate Neutral City Advisor?

No. Each pair or group of City Advisors works with around 11-30 cities. NetZeroCities makes sure that each pair or group can answer the needs of all the cities they are supporting.

3.3.3 Do non-Mission cities have access to Climate Neutral City Advisors?

City Advisors are only available to Mission Cities, and other cities participating in the NetZeroCities Pilot City and Twin City programmes.

Cities not participating in these programmes still have access to many resources on the portal including; [Knowledge Repository resources, events](#), and [The Climate Transition Map](#), which includes templates and guidance for creating Climate City Contracts.

3.4 Climate City Contract

3.4.1 General

3.4.1.1 What is the structure of the Climate City Contract?

The CCC is both an iterative process and a living document, consisting of three interlinked components: Commitments, an Action Plan, and an Investment Plan.

The [2030 Climate Neutrality Commitment](#) (the 'Core Contract') captures the outcomes of the co-creation process with local, regional, and national stakeholders to establish new ways of working together to achieve climate neutrality. It includes a shared 2030 climate neutrality ambition as well as the specific commitment(s) to action from stakeholders in the contract, including a political commitment.

The [2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan](#) identifies the strengths, insights, and gaps of existing strategies, policies and plans, to progressively create, over successive iterations, a coordinated and measurable portfolio of interventions across multiple levers of change to achieve the 2030 ambition.

The [2030 Climate Neutrality Investment Plan](#) identifies the potential costs and associated investments required to reach climate neutrality and strategically mobilises and organises public and private resources in order to orient public, private, and civic capital at scale for funding and financing cities' pathways to climate neutrality.

3.4.1.2 What is the timeline/deadline for the development of Climate City Contracts?

Each city should go at their own pace to deliver meaningful CCCs. Some cities will proceed quickly, while some may need more time to bring stakeholders together or conduct the analysis necessary for decision making.

The process will also be iterative, so the first version evolves over time. We estimate that the process will take between six months and two years (and on average one year) depending on the cities' starting point, setup and context.

3.4.1.3 Will there be extra funding for the city staff to set up Climate City Contracts?

No, there is no EU funding for staff costs for developing the CCCs. However, there will be funding for cities selected to participate in the Pilot Cities Programme as well as additional Horizon Europe calls related to the Mission.



3.4.1.4 Can any previous contract signed with national authorities be taken into consideration for the elaboration of the CCC?

The Cities Mission Climate City Contract includes specific components mandated by the European Commission, which are necessary to receive the Mission Label: a Commitments document, an Action Plan, and an Investment Plan. National contracts can be a starting point on which the city can co-create a Climate City Contract that enhances and strengthens national or regional contracts – or other similar mechanisms, like Local Green Deals or Climate Pacts.

3.4.1.5 Does the Climate City Contract need to be written and submitted in English?

CCCs will have to be submitted in English. As cities will understandably want to work in their native language, we are currently exploring machine translation options. Please ask for help if producing an English language version is a barrier.

3.4.1.6 How does the Climate City Contract relate to the SECAP, SUMP, CEP, and any other existing plans?

The CCC and in particular the attached Action Plan focuses on filling the gap between actions detailed in existing plans and the achievement of climate neutrality by 2030. The process advises to draw on all existing plans as much as possible, however it is also necessary to devise further actions to realise climate neutrality.

The emissions gap calculated in Module A-1 of the Action Plan explicitly defines how much of the overall emissions will credibly be cut by 2030 via existing plans and strategies, and therefore requires the development and implementation of new and further actions for the remaining, previously unaddressed emissions as a basis.

However, cities who wish to complement their existing plans and strategies in terms of detailed actions and projects in the AP, or in terms of capital planning and additional investments in the IP, are encouraged to use the CCC as an opportunity to do so.

Furthermore, it may be highly recommendable from a city's perspective to closely align any current, ongoing or forthcoming action planning activities closely with the Mission targets. This may save significant amounts of effort for cities, allow for multiple uses of these plans, increase coherence and synergies and avoid doubling up of efforts. SECAPs, SUMPs, CEPs and other plans or similar activities may therefore be developed or revised in parallel or in combination with the CCC.

3.4.1.7 How does the Climate City Contract fit into the journey of the Climate Transition Map?

The Climate Transition Map is the visual representation of the NetZeroCities approach to the 2030 climate neutrality journey and builds on the systems innovation approach to climate action. It includes the following key phases:

- Build a strong mandate
- Understand the system
- Co-design a portfolio of action
- Take action
- Learn & reflect
- Make it the new normal

The indicated phases are not individual or prescriptive steps, but rather capture key elements that may enable the transition to climate neutrality. These are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they have to be sequential: They are interwoven and often take place in parallel. The map will be further informed by the experience and the feedback of the cities during the lifetime of the NetZeroCities programme, and is expected to be updated during the process.

The first three phases of the map are particularly relevant to the first iteration of the CCC process. They enable cities to build a strong level of ambition and a foundation for effective implementation of the CCC's three elements: Commitments, Action Plan and Investment Plan.



3.4.2 Commitments

3.4.2.1 Who signs the Commitment document?

The Commitment Document will need to be signed by the elected Mayor of the city or equivalent. Other signatories may include local stakeholders indicated in the answer to Question 3.

In essence, for the city to be able to meet its climate neutrality goal, key actors across the city, including emitters as well as other stakeholders will need to be identified and their commitment to the climate neutrality target secured, as most municipalities only control a minority of emissions directly.

3.4.2.2 Who is involved in co-creating the 2023 Climate Neutrality Commitment?

The Commitment process and document aim to capture the commitments of different stakeholders, as well as strategic actions by the municipality and (if present) the wider local stakeholders. Participants should be part of the city's local ecosystem and have a role in cutting emissions to achieve climate neutrality, for example:

- City function service providers, e.g. transport companies, utilities, public education and health providers, public housing providers, the cultural and creative sector, etc.
- Owners and managers of large city infrastructure assets, like ports and airports, whether public or private, housing developers, etc.
- Large private sector entities or anchor institutions, like major employers or asset owners, whether in industry or services, or the real estate sector, etc.
- Large sector specific umbrella organisations like employer organisations, industry associations (e.g. tourism), etc.

The Commitment process is iterative, which means that municipalities might start with a smaller number of participants making commitments and grow both participants and commitments over time.

3.4.2.3 Who steers the Commitment process?

The Commitment process is steered by a **Multi-actor Climate Transition Team**, especially the part of this team embedded in the municipality and/or the associated internal steering group.

Where possible (and this is highly recommended) this is strengthened by a wider coalition which includes stakeholders from across society and the wider city ecosystem (i.e. companies, public organisations, knowledge institutions and civil society) and especially citizens and local communities.

3.4.3 Action Plan

3.4.3.1 How often will indicators in the Action plan need reporting?

It is advised that Cities report on the implementation of their Climate Neutrality Actions via indicators every two years to track progress on Action Plan implementation and the transition towards climate neutrality by 2030. Please note that these indicators are still in development. A communication providing notification of their release same will be published once the indicator sets have been finalised.

3.4.3.2 Where can I find the NetZeroCities indicator sets indicated in module B-3 of the Action Plan?

A first set of NetZeroCities indicator sets have been prepared and are currently being revised by the NetZeroCities consortium. This first set of indicators will be published by March 2023 as part of wider outreach on monitoring and evaluation.

3.4.3.3 What level of detail is required when describing the actions?

The Action Plan needs to show that each city has a thorough approach and that participants have considered all the relevant priorities that need to be tackled. If the details of your Action Plan are publicly available elsewhere, please add a comprehensive outline and then include the link to the relevant document. If there are areas that the city has not started working on, please add an outline of planned next steps, so as not to leave any blanks or gaps.



3.4.4 Investment Plan

3.4.4.1 Is the Investment Plan only for the city or for all signatories?

The Investment Plan is intended as whole-city document, as is the case with the rest of the CCC.

It needs to cover all actions needed to achieve climate neutrality in a city, which may be both actions undertaken by public bodies of the local government and municipal authorities, as well as actions/projects in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including private ones.

3.4.4.2 What is an Investment Plan in the context of the Cities Mission?

An Investment Plan is a city-wide long-term economic and financial planning exercise that enables the city to execute the portfolio of actions and achieve the impacts set out in the Action Plan to reach climate neutrality by 2030. The Investment Plan takes into account the city's existing climate budget and how funding gaps can be bridged.

3.4.4.3 What is the Investment Plan framework?

The Framework consists of a [Guidance document](#) and an [Investment Plan Template](#) to help cities develop their own Investment Plan.

3.4.4.4 Will any financial resources be dedicated to external support for cities?

No direct financial support is envisaged, but partners will work with Mission Cities to identify their needs to develop a coherent Investment Plan. This will include their needs for cooperation with universities, data providers and R&D centres, and take into consideration existing relationships. This is covered in the Stakeholder element of the Investment Plan Framework.

3.4.4.5 Does the Mission Platform provide tailor-made assistance to every city on its Investment Plan?

We are working to ensure that every Mission City receives the necessary support to prepare a well-structured Investment Plan as part of their Climate City Contract, to both serve the unique contexts of the city and meet the requirements for the Mission Label once these have been communicated by the European Commission.

We will help Mission Cities identify ways to align and mobilize resources to support their work. Due to initial funding constraints, we are only able to provide more general support to Mission Cities. We will be able to provide tailor-made support as additional resources become available in mid-2023

3.4.4.6 Is there a template for the Investment Plan?

Yes. You can access an Investment Plan template [here](#). We provide a guiding template and structure, but as each city will be at a different pace in their journey, this template will be evolving. Dedicated training and capacity building for Mission cities will be part of the support to develop Investment Plans.

3.4.4.7 What level of detail is expected for the first Investment Plan?

While the first draft of the Investment Plan may be quite high level, we will work with Mission Cities on subsequent versions to develop more granularity and help the city mobilize capital at scale, as this is necessary to achieve climate neutrality. The level of detail for the Investment Plan will be commensurate with the detail necessary to receive the Mission Label, based on the requirements to be communicated by the European Commission.

3.4.4.8 Is the proposed Investment Plan similar to a climate budgeting exercise?

They are different. The Investment Plan is a comprehensive framework that will take into account the city's climate budgets to understand the level of funding currently available to achieve their goals, and address the "financing gap" that exists between the current city climate budget and the amount of capital needed to achieve the net zero transition. It will take into account 8 different pillars to leverage and enable private sector financing.

3.4.4.9 What is meant by a bottom-up portfolio approach?

The Investment Plan takes a holistic, top-down approach across the entire city and all affected stakeholders. This will complement bottom-up efforts to identify projects and actions on an individual



basis (or on a portfolio basis) and then secure financing for them. Projects will need to be developed to supplement the top-down approach for the purpose of allocating capital.

3.4.4.10 How will the Investment Plans align with the EU Taxonomy on Sustainable Finance?

The Investment Plans will be closely aligned with the EU Taxonomy to address environmentally sustainable economic activities under the Taxonomy. This will cover the six environmental objectives under the Taxonomy Regulation:

- Climate change mitigation
- Climate change adaptation
- The sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources
- The transition to a circular economy
- Pollution prevention and control
- The protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems

3.4.4.11 Is there scope for second party opinion evaluations in regard to the financing for investors?

The Investment Plan will incorporate economic, technical and financial indicators to monitor progress and use of proceeds. There is no dedicated Second Party Opinion envisaged, but the NetZeroCities finance team has already engaged with investors and international banks to ensure alignment in the development of an Investment Plan Framework.

3.4.4.12 How will NetZeroCities account for local public procurement?

A current policy ecosystem for procurement will be mapped out in the development of both the Action and Investment Plans. The Investment Plan will focus on funding and financial policies that can support cities in their transition towards net zero. Elements which are directly linked to capital planning, such as green procurement, together with the capital flow resulting from public procurement processes, will be considered in the development of the Investment Plan. The Investment Plan will provide a platform for municipalities to identify and outline key public and private financial policy recommendations to reach climate neutrality.

3.4.4.13 How will the Investment Plan link to other key aspects such as policy?

One of the key pillars within the Investment Plan framework is to evaluate, identify, and develop new financial policies that will enable cities to mobilise public and private capital. Non-financial policies will be captured in the Action Plan and some may have an indirect impact in the development of an Investment Plan. The efficiency of these policies will need to be monitored by the city on an ongoing basis, through the support of the metrics developed within the Investment Plan, and adapted to support the administration to mobilise capital.

3.5 Monitoring and Learning

3.5.1 What does MEL mean in the context of NetZeroCities?

"The NetZeroCities consortium will provide an overarching NetZeroCities impact and indicator framework, allowing for a holistic and multidimensional assessment of progress towards climate-neutrality among the Mission Cities. This resource shall create an integrated framework of indicators and support tools for the evaluation of Climate City Contracts (CCCs), and the monitoring of implementation of 2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plans and Investment Plans, as well as of the NZC Pilot Cities' interventions. This framework will integrate diverse monitoring, evaluation and learning (in short, MEL) to support cities. Each of these actions are defined as below:

Monitoring: Co-development and application of quantitative indicators to track and analyse cities' progress towards direct impacts (like net-zero GHG emissions in critical sectors) and indirect impacts (co-benefits), as well as the setup, management and maintenance of data collection tools and infrastructure.



Evaluation: Analysis and assessment of monitoring information against set goals, targets, and benchmarks, with the aim of determining the degrees to which critical milestones, intermediate outcomes, and final impacts have been achieved.

Learning: Evidence and knowledge which is collected and reported through a structured and continuous process of stock-taking and synthesis. These insights generated in real-time help cities understand which solutions are working, in what contexts, for whom and why, as well as risks and barriers."

3.5.2 How will cities' monitoring and reporting actions be structured and supported?

The NetZeroCities consortium is currently preparing an integrated indicator framework that responds to the impact requirements of the Cities Mission. This framework should enable Mission Cities to monitor (i.e., to self-assess) their progress towards reaching climate neutrality by 2030. Furthermore, the integrated indicator framework should ensure that the data collected by the cities is comparable to facilitate cross-cutting analysis, benchmarking, and mutual learning among cities. This will also enable the European Commission to follow the progress of the Cities Mission and obtain validated data for future decision-making. Based on this system, the NZC Platform will have a range of tools and features meant to be utilised by Mission cities.

3.5.3 Will cities be expected to undertake additional reporting for NetZeroCities or the Mission or are current reporting practices sufficient as cities develop their Climate City Contracts?

Additional reporting by Mission Cities is envisioned to occur on the Action Plan. Based on the impact pathway (strategic objectives) and associated indicators selected as part of the Action Plan, Mission Cities are required to report progress biannually. Thus, the reporting will involve the submission of a baseline GHG inventory (see inventory requirements set out in the Mission Info Kit) and the submission of monitoring GHG inventories and reporting on selected indicators (e.g. for co-benefits) every two years. The current proposal on reporting of GHG inventories (both baseline and monitoring inventories) is that Mission Cities should continue their current reporting practices via MyCovenant or CDP-ICLEI Track platforms (i.e. the NetZeroCities Platform will not become a GHG reporting platform of its own). The NetZeroCities consortium aims to cooperate with these platforms and make the data available for import into the NZC Platform as needed. The NetZeroCities consortium will help and provide guidance on how to adapt incoming data to the Mission requirements, however some additional work will be required to be done by the city in this context, especially for source sectors currently not addressed within existing reporting procedures and platforms – for example Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU).

3.5.4 What does 'impact logic' mean in the context of NetZeroCities?

Impact Logic (used interchangeably with 'Theory of Change') refers to a co-created, shared, and consensus-based impact narrative, as a basis for integrating both qualitative and quantitative evaluations, including the rationale and assumptions for achieving several hard-to-measure or hard-to-define co-benefits of decarbonisation. An Impact Logic is meant to explain how change through NetZeroCities interventions are expected to happen and how a particular action contributes to impact. Preparing such a conceptual model would be an optional step for Mission Cities to support their MEL activities.

An Impact Logic usually comprises a diagram or a visual map or systematic description that includes a city's specific climate-neutrality outcomes, and how they are directly or indirectly connected to each other and the activities or actions. Cities will be provided with tools and helpful guidelines to support creating an Impact Logic. The Impact Logic can serve as both a communications tool and an approach for tracking progress through monitoring and evaluation data (both qualitative and quantitative). This helps to maintain a focus on the relevant outcomes and the evidence needed for continuous learning from implementation over time.

3.5.5 What do 'impact pathways' mean in relation to MEL activities?

Impact pathways describe the transformation steps that outline the fundamental mechanisms through which short, medium and long-term systemic change towards climate-neutrality is envisioned by the city.



As cities will act on several emission domains as part of their CCCs, proposed actions and pilot interventions, their impact pathways are expected to converge and overlap, thereby necessitating coordinated actions and interventions across the portfolio.

Developing an Impact Logic (see previous question) can be useful for outlining and selecting cities' impact pathways to illustrate how short-term and long-term outcomes are expected to happen, as well as how various outcomes, actions and stakeholders are logically connected. Moreover, the outlining of impact pathways will also support and build a logic for cities selecting their key indicators in order to measure, monitor and evaluate city's progress towards desired impact goals.

3.5.6 What does 'sensemaking' mean for cities' MEL activities and peer-to-peer learning?

'Sensemaking' refers to a structured, social, periodic and facilitated process of observation, reflection, synthesis, analysis, pattern-finding and insight-generation, in order to produce knowledge that enables decision-making and tracking progress towards impact. This happens both at the city level as an internal self-assessment and at a collective level with a group of peer cities facilitated by the consortium. Sensemaking activities also support continuous, flexible learning processes that will generate rapid and tangible insights, as well as feed this knowledge back into the planning/implementation of actions and new ones not planned beforehand. Collective sensemaking processes for mutual peer-to-peer learning will also be important to build trust and synergies and create a safe learning environment in which cities feel empowered to exchange insights on barriers or failures, and to encourage course-correction of their respective impact pathways, if necessary

3.5.7 How will the online city dashboard work? Will this be publicly available or only visible to the city itself?

We are currently developing a range of dashboards to support Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning by cities. This will include both visualizations of GHG emissions monitoring and of impact pathway modelling.

The GHG emissions dashboard will visualize data being reported via the CDP-ICLEI Track or MyCovenant platforms (see Question 1 above) and enable a range of ways for cities to visualise their own data, compare it against aggregated data sets, and with visualisation tools help cities communicate about data.

Cities will be able to choose how much of this detailed data is publicly visible, although some datasets will likely need to be published when linked to the Climate City Contract reporting.

We also intend to create a public 'barometer' to track the collective progress of all Mission Cities – this aggregate data on the overall programme will be publicly displayed.

3.5.8 Can cities keep using existing tools which work well for them, for example Climate View or Kausal?

We want cities to keep using all the tools which work best for them, including Climate View and Kausal and sharing that experience with other cities. We are actively looking at options for bringing such tools into the Mission Platform and linking that to the proposed CDP and Covenant of Mayors reporting for GHG emissions. We aim to bring a package of reporting dashboards and pathways visualisation tools together on the portal in 2023.



4 Conclusion

This deliverable report has set out the operational structure of the Mission platform, and the services currently presented to cities. The Platform will continue to evolve in response to feedback from cities, and this will be reported on via future NZC deliverables, including D3.4 Pilot City Expertise support process, due M20 and D3.5 Annual Reports on Platform performance, due M24/M36/M48.

This deliverable would also link to the SGA1 WP5 (HORIZON-MISS-2021-CIT-02-03), via:

- Deliverable 5.1 Updated Design and Specification for the Portal EuC (SGA M18)
- Milestone 5.1 Launch Online Helpdesk (SGA M3)
- Milestone 5.2 Launch City Dashboard v01: GHG reporting (SGA M6)
- Milestone 5.3 Launch City Dashboard v02: Non-GHG reporting and co-benefits (SGA M12)
- Milestone 5.4 Launch Barometer (SGA M12)
- Milestone 5.5 Launch CCC Digital Action & Investment Plan Submission Workspace (SGA M12)

More widely, the deliverable will support emerging discussions with the Cities Mission Projects, the Urban Transitions Mission Project, and other existing initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors. It will be used to assist with the definition of MoUs between each project/initiative and NetZeroCities.

