



Achievement of Climate Planning Objectives among U.S. Member Cities of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)

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ABSTRACT

In an effort to address climate change, many cities have joined the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) whose members commit to work toward five specific program objectives designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This study examines the extent to which 257 member cities in the U.S. have been successful in achieving these program milestones and identifies factors that may explain variation in the performance of member cities. Potential influences on milestone attainment include socioeconomic, political and ideological characteristics of residents, length of ICLEI membership, existence of other climate programs within the state, and local environmental pressures. Multiple regression results indicate that length of membership is the strongest predictor of milestone attainment, regardless of local socioeconomic conditions, ideological and political orientations of residents, or other climate-related initiatives within the state. This finding supports the general effectiveness of ICLEI's network organizational model and its outreach and education efforts. However, member cities facing more "climate stress", including higher levels of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and greater automobile use among residents are making slower progress. The findings yield insight into the conditions under which cities engaged in climate planning are more likely to succeed in reducing local greenhouse gas emissions-relevant information for planners, community stakeholders and administrators of organizations like ICLEI.

KEYWORDS

Greenhouse Gas Reduction; Local Climate Initiatives; Climate Planning; Climate Organizations; ICLEI

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