

Outcomes of the Lord Mayor's participation at the UNFCCC SB62

Tuesday, 22 July 2025
Council

Strategic Alignment - Our Environment

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Public

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 10 June 2025, Council approved the Lord Mayor's travel to Bonn, Germany to represent the City of Adelaide at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Subsidiary Bodies' 62nd Session Climate Meetings (UNFCCC SB62), held from Saturday 14 to Friday 20 June 2025.

This report provides an overview of the Lord Mayor's participation in the meetings, including key outcomes and likely future actions.

The Lord Mayor was invited by the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCOM) for Climate & Energy and C40 Cities as one of a small number of mayors globally to represent local leadership on climate action. The Lord Mayor's objectives were to:

- Showcase city leadership and subnational action on climate;
- Strengthen multilevel governance partnerships;
- Advocate for Australia's candidacy to host COP31 in 2026;
- Position Adelaide as a preferred host city and regional climate leader.

A summary of the visit is provided in the itinerary (**Attachment A**) and is accompanied by photos (**Attachment B**).

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the report, itinerary for the visit as contained in Attachment A and photos from the visit as contained in Attachment B to Item 13.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of Council held on 22 July 2025.
2. Notes that the Lord Mayor held discussions with the Commonwealth Government's COP negotiator regarding opportunities for Adelaide to drive greater municipal engagement and supporting strategies for COP31.
3. Notes that the Lord Mayor participated in three official speaking engagements at UNFCCC SB62.
4. Notes that the Lord Mayor will continue to advocate for Australia's COP31 bid and the inclusion of local governments in official UN processes, including possible further international travel.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Environment
Policy	Not as a result of this report
Consultation	Not as a result of this report
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	There are opportunities for the City of Adelaide to continue to advocate for Australia's COP31 bid and the inclusion of local governments in the official UN processes.
25/26 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
25/26 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

1. On 10 June 2025, Council approved the Lord Mayor's travel to Bonn to represent the City of Adelaide and advocate for Australia and Adelaide to host COP31 in 2026.
2. The Lord Mayor was formally invited by C40 Cities and the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCOM) to attend the UNFCCC SB62 climate meetings.
3. The Lord Mayor's registration, travel and accommodation were funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies through Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), in partnership with GCoM. Support on the ground was provided by the ICLEI Oceania Manager, who facilitated key meetings and provided strategic and logistical support.
4. The Lord Mayor met with the Commonwealth Government's COP negotiator at the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), to discuss national-local collaboration on climate diplomacy and COP31.
5. The Lord Mayor also participated in three official speaking engagements.
6. Upon her return, the Lord Mayor has continued to actively advocate for Adelaide's role in a successful Australian bid to host COP31 and work to ensure a seat at the table for local government.
7. A summary of the visit is provided in the itinerary (**Attachment A**) and is accompanied by photos (**Attachment B**).

Context

8. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network working with more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. The City of Adelaide is a member of ICLEI Oceania, which serves as the regional secretariat for ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.
9. UNFCCC SB62 is a mid-year technical negotiation session designed to prepare for the annual Conference of the Parties (COP). It focuses on agenda-setting, text development, and progress tracking under the Paris Agreement.
10. COP30 will be held in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025.
11. Australia has submitted an official bid to co-host COP31 in 2026 in partnership with Pacific nations.
12. Due to the UN's consensus-based decision-making, Australia's bid cannot be approved until Türkiye withdraws its competing bid. At SB62, Türkiye reaffirmed its interest in hosting COP31, and no decision was reached at the Bonn plenary sessions.
13. The host country for COP31 will be confirmed at COP30 (Belém, November 2025).
14. If successful, Australia would provide the venue and services for COP31, including formal negotiation space, pavilions, and public zones.
15. The event is expected to attract between 30,000 and 50,000 participants over two weeks.

Lord Mayor's activities and advocacy

16. The Lord Mayor, reflecting the City of Adelaide's long established climate related policies and actions, delivered strong advocacy for Adelaide as a compelling host city for COP31. Her key messages focused on:
 - 16.1. Climate leadership - South Australia generates over 70% of its electricity from renewables.
 - 16.2. Innovation track record - Adelaide's achievements in the circular economy, climate-smart urban planning, and biodiversity leadership.
 - 16.3. Established networks - long-standing collaboration between the City of Adelaide and the South Australian Government. As well as CoA's involvement with ICLEI, GCoM, and the Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance (CNCA).
 - 16.4. Cultural and creative credentials - highlighted Adelaide's artistic depth, events culture, and unique assets such as its Pacific art collections and capacity for place-based cultural activations during major events.
17. The Lord Mayor met with key national and international stakeholders, including the Commonwealth Government's COP negotiator, to discuss Australia's candidacy and explore how cities like Adelaide can meaningfully contribute to national climate diplomacy.
18. The Lord Mayor presented at three official engagements:

- 18.1. Panel on 'Subnational Engagement in the Climate Process',
 - 18.2. Multilevel action panel 'All in: A new generation of multilevel partnerships in challenging times'. This panel addressed how local and regional governments can advance multilevel partnerships both together with their national governments and in the absence of strong national leadership.
 - 18.3. Panel on 'Cities leading the way: advancing healthy and just transitions through urban climate action'. This panel was hosted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and C40 Cities.
19. The Lord Mayor also attended several official functions and met with prominent city leaders.

Outcomes

20. A Town Hall COP is being planned for Adelaide in September 2025, with the intention of running two streams:
 - 20.1. Stream one: inviting greater Adelaide metropolitan mayors, elected officials, and technical experts to explore collaborative COP31 strategies.
 - 20.2. Stream two: inviting residents and businesses to participate in a community-led climate dialogue - connecting grassroots conversations to national climate plans and international processes like COP.
21. The Lord Mayor is actively sharing Adelaide's likely role in the 2026 COP31 and the possible consequences for local government, including at the Metropolitan Mayor's Forum held on 3 July and the Greater Adelaide Regional Organisation of Councils (GAROC) on 14 July. The matter will also be raised at the LGA Mayors and CEO Forum on 25 July, with the Local Government Association taking a coordinating role for local government involved in the COP31 process.
22. The Lord Mayor will continue advocating for COP31 and may attend further international forums, including the Smart City Expo World Congress in Barcelona in November 2025 which is a significant gathering of local leaders.
23. The Office of the Lord Mayor will deepen city diplomacy efforts, including connecting with recent host cities (e.g. Glasgow, Paris, Sharm El-Sheikh) to coordinate lessons and strengthen Adelaide's hosting capability.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Lord Mayor itinerary

Attachment B – Photos

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