ANNEX 5
of the Commission Implementing Decision on the 2017 Annual Action programme for the Partnership Instrument

Action Fiche for Support to Covenant of Mayors initiatives – cooperation with the JRC

1. IDENTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the action</th>
<th>Support to Covenant of Mayors initiatives – cooperation with the European Commission Joint Research centre (JRC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country(ies)/Region</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>Total estimated cost: EUR 900 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total amount of the EU budget contribution: EUR 900 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total duration¹</td>
<td>30 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of implementation</td>
<td>Direct management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative arrangement with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Markers (from CRIS DAC form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rio convention markers</th>
<th>Not targeted</th>
<th>Significant objective</th>
<th>Main objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological diversity</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combat desertification</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change mitigation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change adaptation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

This action aims to contribute to the achievement of the EU's external climate and energy policies through the provision of scientific, technical and methodological support for the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy initiative and the Covenants of Mayors supported through the EU’s International Urban Cooperation (IUC) Programme funded under the Partnership Instrument.

¹ Maximum duration of the operational implementation period of individual contracts upon their signature.
Intended as an auxiliary support to the IUC programme, this action will engage in cooperation the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) to develop and support the implementation of bottom-up open-source methodological approaches for the Covenants for North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, East and South-East Asia, India, Japan, and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. The cooperation with the JRC builds on its current successful role within the Covenant of Mayors (CoM) as the scientific backbone of this key climate action initiative.

This action is expected to make an important contribution to the success of the IUC programme as the provision of specific technical expertise will increase the legitimacy and the appeal of the Regional Covenants of Mayors initiative embedded in the programme.

Ultimately, the action and the IUC programme contribute the delivery on the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

2.2. Context

The EU recognises and promotes the essential role cities and regional governments have in addressing climate change. Globally, urban areas are responsible for about 70% of energy-related global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with the building and construction sector accountable for over 20% of global emissions. With at least two-thirds or more of the global population living in cities, these are also the places where the impact of climate change is felt by most people.

In Europe, broad city engagement on climate change has been operationalised through the EU Covenant of Mayors, a key EU policy implementation initiative, bringing together Mayors and local authorities in a movement which supports the adoption and implementation of (climate) Action Plans on sustainable energy, mitigation and adaptation. Initially launched in the EU in 2008, the initiative has grown to include the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood countries and more recently Sub-Saharan Africa with dedicated Regional Covenants. The success of the Covenant of Mayors has demonstrated that climate action has gained political momentum on the local level also internationally. The Covenant of Mayors today counts more than 7000 signatories and over 5600 Action Plans have been adopted by city and town councils.

Since June 2016, the Covenant of Mayors has joined forces with the Compact of Mayors, set up by the U.N. Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change Michael Bloomberg. The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, effective from January 2017, provides a single, global initiative to support cities and local authorities on climate action in line with the Paris Agreement. It will build on Regional/National Covenants, taking a bottom-up approach and using the EU Covenant of Mayors as a model for other Covenants. Over time, the Global Covenant of Mayors will work towards ensuring compatible and comparable reporting approaches for signatory cities. In this process, it is important to ensure that the EU can bring on board the specific expertise of its Joint Research Centre bearing
in mind the work and resources over the years put into developing, in cooperation with cities, a flexible, efficient and robust reporting and monitoring framework.

The EU's International Urban Cooperation (IUC) programme, funded through the Partnership Instrument (Annual Action Programme 2015) and designed to build on the Covenant's success by exporting it to the EU's strategic partners, is one of the EU's mechanisms to deliver on the Global Covenant and specifically on Covenants targeting key partner regions and countries. Working both internationally and bilaterally, the IUC programme is seen as a support to EU policy dialogues.

Under the IUC, Covenants of Mayors with their respective support teams are being set up in North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, India, Japan and East and South-East Asia. To remain relevant and effective and ultimately successful, each Covenant will need to reflect the specificity of a given region in terms of its commitments and the corresponding emissions inventory, vulnerability and risk assessment, access to energy assessment and Action Plan methodology. This adaptation to regional specificities requires scientific, technical and methodological knowledge and support beyond what is currently envisaged under the IUC programme. In this context, cooperation with the JRC is crucial.

Since 2009, the JRC has played a crucial role in the Covenant of Mayors initiative by providing support for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Covenant of Mayors initiative. Building on this successful experience, this action seeks to secure the support of the JRC in providing the scientific, technical and methodological support to the Global Covenant, and Covenant of Mayors initiatives supported through the IUC Programme. The action will continue and take to scale current limited start-up support provided by the JRC to the Covenants, as part of the overall support provided to the EU Covenant of Mayors. The enhanced cooperation with the JRC will reinforce the lead role of the EU in supporting sustainable climate and energy policies at the urban level, thus contributing to EU energy and climate policies.

2.3. Lessons learnt

Thanks to the experience gained through the involvement in the EU CoM as well as in the CoM extension to the Eastern and Southern Partnership countries, the JRC has learnt useful lessons for the development of adapted methodological frameworks for local climate and energy planning. In particular, to make sure that the methodological framework is relevant to the specific circumstances of different regions, the following main aspects will have to be assessed beforehand:

- Level of autonomy of local governments in relation to national governments and decision-making processes.
- Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and/or national legislation requiring local and regional governments to develop climate/energy plans.
- Presence of a national methodology for local climate/energy plans.
• Administrative structure of the country and existing forms of supra-municipal collaboration or coordination.

• Most pressing climate- and energy-related issues.

• Availability of activity data and information to develop emission inventories, climate risks and vulnerability assessments, access to energy assessments.

• Availability of human and financial resources for local governments.

• Internal organization of municipal structures.

• Level of participation of local authorities in city networks active on climate and energy issues.

These aspects will be assessed through the involvement of a wide range of local practitioners in the development of the adapted methodological frameworks.

2.4. Complementary actions

The action is designed to support delivery on the EU International Urban Cooperation programme and the wider Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. It complements the EU's political commitment to deliver on the UNFCCC Paris agreement and to support sub-national climate action by putting in place a concrete tool for cooperation.

In addition, as an auxiliary action to the IUC programme, the action will benefit from the overall synergies and complementarity established by the IUC programme with other Covenant initiatives. This includes the EU Covenant of Mayors, Covenants in the eastern and southern Neighbourhood and in Sub-Saharan Africa. The proposed action will also interact with the wider urban cooperation component of the IUC programme to foster coherence in the engagement with city networks and other urban actors. In a separate action financed by DG DEVCO, JRC is providing technical and methodological input to the development of the regional Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa. Both actions will benefit from each other's local and regional experiences and activities.

In collaboration with the Mayors Adapt/Covenant of Mayors Office, the European Commission (DG CLIMA) is supporting local climate solutions by raising awareness on climate adaptation among city representatives (e.g. climate change networks to facilitate dialogue among relevant scientific communities). These actions are reinforced by the EU Research & Innovation Agenda on Adaptation (DG RTD), which contributes to closing knowledge gaps (e.g. Horizon 2020 supports research on the economics of climate change adaptation and on the design, testing, and deployment of innovative solutions to enhance climate resilience, with emphasis on nature-based solutions).
3. **Detailed Description**

3.1. **Objectives**

The *overall objective* of this action is to contribute to the delivery of approaches which are beneficial to the achievement of the EU’s external climate and energy policies

Designed as an auxiliary support to the IUC programme, the project will be organised in two mutually reinforcing work streams reflecting its *specific objectives*:

- **SO 1** to enable the Covenants of Mayors supported through the EU’s IUC programme to develop adapted methodology and provide scientific, technical and methodological input to local authorities’ action plans;
- **SO 2** to contribute to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy initiative, by ensuring EU expertise and leadership in the processes aiming to develop comparable and compatible data analysis and reporting approaches for the initiative, building on the EU Covenant of Mayors experience as well as internationally relevant frameworks.

3.2. **Expected results and main activities**

The *expected results* of the action are:

- **R1** Methodological basis for the Global and Covenants of Mayors initiatives developed
- **R2** Cities of the Covenants supported in developing and implementing Action Plans
- **R3** Aggregated city action assessed in terms of climate change mitigation, adaptation and access to energy
- **R4** Helpdesk services provided to Covenant initiative
- **R5** Covenant relevant IT tools strengthened

*Main indicative activities:*

- Research and stakeholder engagement activities

**Covenants under the IUC programme**

The action will conduct research on how to adapt commitments and methodologies defined and developed for the EU Covenant for planning and tracking mitigation and adaptation results to the other regions covered by the EU’s IUC programme, taking into account processes such as national methodologies, the IPCC guidance and the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement, where relevant and feasible for cities. The research will also take into account the new Covenant dimension of access to clean and affordable energy. Specific attention will be paid to
analysing how national climate action plans involve city planning and implementation, particularly as a result of the Paris agreement.

The research will be conducted in parallel with stakeholder engagement to ensure the relevance of the research findings and the methodological proposals. The resulting adapted methodology will be made available through digital Guidebooks.

The process of developing adapted methodology will feed the work of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy on monitoring and reporting methodologies, bringing synergies across the initiative.

Global Covenant

At the level of the Global Covenant initiative, the action will ensure consistent and substantial expertise on all aspects related to methodology, thus strengthening the EU contribution in these discussions.

- Training and capacity building activities

The action will provide regular technical training and capacity building of the five Covenant support teams (IUC programme implementers) on the adapted methodology. The trainings will explore the "train the trainer" – approach to allow for further multiplication effects.

For a limited number of pilot cities and city networks, the action will also provide targeted training on the adapted methodology. For these pilot cases, it will provide hands-on support on their draft action plans and advice on how to address specific challenges.

- Conducting and publicising assessments

To support cities in assessing the impact of their collective climate efforts and provide a substantial technical input into global climate discussion, the action will carry out assessments of the collective efforts of cities in the relevant regions, based on the data from submitted plans and implementation reports. It will present as far as possible in aggregate manner the level of ambition of signatory cities in relation to the three components of the initiative (mitigation, adaptation and access to energy) and will also measure progress towards each target. This will contribute to the assessment of the impact of the Global Covenant of Mayors community.

- Technical support activities

The action will support the five Covenant support teams to develop their helpdesk services, through a specific dedicated training. It will also operate a continuous “second-line technical helpdesk” which will complement the frontline helpdesk operated by the Covenant support teams in local language.

- Reprogramming JRC IT tools and database structure
Under the IUC supported Covenants initiative, it is expected that the JRC will need to adapt its existing IT tools to align them with the new (methodological) frameworks. This activity will ensure that the JRC systems supporting the Covenant of Mayors initiative stay fit-for-purpose.

As a cross-cutting activity, the action will enhance the visibility of the Global and Covenants of Mayors initiatives by presenting methodological achievements to the academic community, and to encourage research on the initiative.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Assumption

The main assumption underpinning this action is the continued interest and commitment of national and/or local authorities in key EU partner countries and regions to engage in the Covenant of Mayors initiative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Risk level (H/M/L)</th>
<th>Mitigating measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overlapping tasks with other Covenant of Mayors structures could harm the proper execution of JRC tasks.</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Regular tri-lateral meetings (JRC – COM – CoM Offices in Brussels and in the partner countries) to be held to ensure smooth collaboration and clear repartition of roles and responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methodologies competing with the Covenant but not adhering to its principles might seek international recognition and be willing to impose their approach</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Reinforce the role of local experts to define adapted methodologies, suitable to the specific situation of each region. IUC-supported Covenants will not impose methodology but rather work on promoting an adapted methodology as a benchmark. However, participating cities should have methodological freedom within the parameters set by the Global Covenant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4. Stakeholders

Key target groups of the action include cities and towns, and sub-national authorities; Central Covenant of Mayors Office (Brussels) and IUC programme implementers operating Covenant offices outside the EU; Global Covenant of Mayors initiative and in particular its secretariat and Founders' Council; City networks and representatives of Covenant-like initiatives who may be willing to promote their methodologies for the development of climate and energy plans worldwide.

Key stakeholders include EU Delegations, DGs ENER, CLIMA and FPI as responsible for the Covenants of Mayors under the EU's IUC programme. DGs NEAR and DEVCO will take part in project events particularly in relation to the Global Covenants of Mayors initiative. The proposed action forms part of the overall
cooperation between the following services of the European Commission: ENER, CLIMA, FPI, NEAR, DEVCO, REGIO and the JRC in the context of the Covenant of Mayors initiative and more recently, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.

4. **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

4.1. **Method of implementation**

**4.1.1 Administrative Arrangement (direct management)**

The proposed action will be implemented in direct management through the conclusion of an administrative arrangement (AA) with the EC's Joint Research Centre.

The main objective of the AA is to assign JRC with tasks to assist FPI in view of achievement of the objectives, expected results and main activities described above under section 3.1 and 3.2.

To enhance synergies and ensure a better strategic vision and efficiency of the cooperation, it is foreseen to explore the pooling of resources by DGs ENER, CLIMA and the FPI to the JRC through the conclusion of a single, joint administrative arrangement.

4.2. **Indicative budget**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Implementation</th>
<th>Amount in EUR million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 – Administrative Arrangement with Joint Research Centre</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. **Performance monitoring**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partners' responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports and final reports. FPI and DGs ENER and CLIMA will closely supervise the implementation of the action.

The progress and final reports shall provide quantified and qualitative data in relation to the logical framework indicators which will include relevant indicators from the list of common Partnership Instrument indicators.

In addition and as part of quality control, methodological and technical outputs by the JRC are subject to a hierarchical review through PUBSY (the JRC Outputs Management System) before they are authorised for publication. JRC will also explore the possibility to subject the outputs to a peer review by JRC experts in the
field, who are not directly involved in the Covenant. Prior to their publication, JRC outputs developed in the context of this action will be shared – upon request - with the DGs involved in the Covenant of Mayors for comments.

To ensure proper follow-up and strategic orientation regular meetings will be held between JRC and relevant Commission services to discuss progress on the activities and reconsider priorities.

The Commission may undertake project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews.

4.4. Evaluation and audit

For this action the Commission may carry out interim and/or final/ex-post evaluation(s) via independent consultants contracted by the Commission based on specific terms of reference.

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to the contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments.

As the "N+1" applies for contracting under this decision, external evaluations and audits, as well as additional external monitoring referred to under section 4.3 above, will be funded from sources other than those allocated to this specific action.

4.5. Communication and visibility

To ensure adequate communication and visibility to the activities carried out by the JRC as part of this action, methodological and technical reports as well as other relevant JRC publications will be uploaded on the JRC Science Hub\(^2\) and on the website of the Global and Regional Covenants of Mayors\(^3\). When appropriate, press releases and web headlines will also be prepared.

---

\(^2\) https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en
\(^3\) www.covenantofmayors.eu