



How national climate councils drive real climate action, working together with the ICCN

“ *As a member of France’s High Council on Climate, I’ve seen how independent expert advice plays a crucial role in holding governments accountable and enriching public debate on climate action. Now, as the climate crisis intensifies, it’s clearer than ever that governments must step up. Climate councils embedded in a climate governance framework are a powerful tool to ensure that climate action is ambitious, science-based, and equitable. With the ICCN’s support, more nations can embrace this approach, driving transparency, creating certainty for investors, and building the public trust essential for real climate progress.* **”**

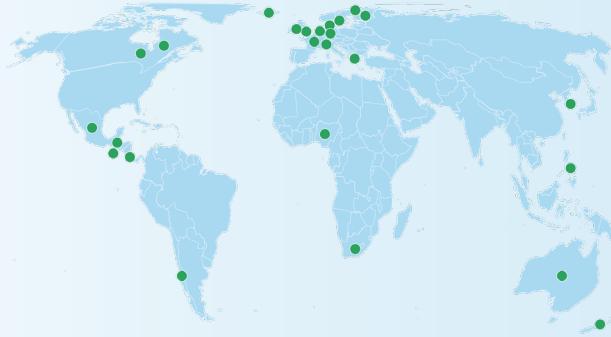
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**To find out more please visit our website using
the QR code link or get in touch via email at
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As the world faces the urgent challenge of limiting global warming, a science-based approach to national climate governance has never been more essential. Since their inception, national climate councils — that unite experts from science, policy, and other fields — have played a pivotal role in driving decarbonisation and adaptation efforts.



Today, over 25 climate councils are part of the ICCN network.

What is a climate council?

Climate Councils that are part of the ICCN are official advisory bodies mandated by the national government. This mandate may take different forms such as legislation, ministerial decree, or a long-term grant agreement. The primary focus of our members is advising their government on climate change policy – whether that be mitigation, adaptation or both – as well as ensuring a just transition for all members of society.

Usually the councils (or committees/commissions) are made up of independent experts from a wide range of academic fields relevant to climate policy. The councils may also have experts representing government, business and civil society interests. Councils are commonly supported by a secretariat that is funded via a sponsor government ministry, but they may also receive external sources of funding. The secretariats contain a mix of analytical, communications and administrative expertise.

6 reasons to work with the ICCN

1 **ICCN members have a real-world impact** on creating ambitious, long-term climate policies in their jurisdiction. Our members generate evidence and solutions that directly inform government.

European Union

In June 2023, the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change published its advice on an EU 2040 climate target. Based on the latest available scientific evidence and considerations of feasibility and fairness dimensions, the Advisory Board recommended EU net emissions reductions of 90–95% compared to 1990 levels. This advice was reflected in the February 2024 proposal by the European Commission to establish an EU 2040 target of - 90%, as a key milestone towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 at the latest.

Canada

The Canadian Climate Institute (CCI) publishes an Early Estimate of National Emissions ahead of Canada’s official National Inventory Report. This innovative and valuable analytical tool provides insight into Canada’s progress and highlights opportunities for the government to accelerate action.

Finland

In 2019, a party coalition agreement was reached on a carbon neutrality target for 2035. The Finnish Climate Change Panel played a central role in establishing the scientific foundation that enabled this consensus. Based on the recommendations of the Finnish Climate Change Panel, in 2022 the carbon neutrality target and updated emission reduction targets were passed into the new Climate Act.

Denmark

Since 2018, the Danish Council on Climate Change has consistently advocated for a substantial general tax on greenhouse gas emissions. In 2022, the Danish government introduced a tax targeting industrial GHG emissions. In 2024, the government is in negotiations with the Danish Parliament to implement a GHG tax on agriculture—a pioneering measure that would be the first of its kind internationally.

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Our members are uniquely influential as they are embedded in national climate governance, with an inside track with governments.

The ICCN and our members are also **influential internationally**, helping shape global climate architecture.

France

The High Council on Climate “Haut Conseil pour le Climat” is an independent body providing an annual report directly to the Prime Minister, ensuring their advice is listened to and acted upon. The Government is obliged to respond to this report within six months and present their response to Parliament.

Australia

The Climate Change Authority plays a key role in governing Australia’s climate change mitigation policies by providing independent advice on the preparation of the Annual Climate Change Statement to Parliament, and on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to be included in new or adjusted nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

Republic of Korea

The Presidential Commission on Carbon Neutrality and Green Growth is a private-public joint body composed of 22 government ministers and 33 climate experts, playing roles in deliberating and deciding on key strategies and policies; monitoring the implementation of each ministry’s tasks; and coordinating relevant ministries for net zero policies and projects.

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The positive impact of climate councils is evidenced by a growing body of research that shows they help effective policy-making aligned with net zero targets.

Analysing over 60 climate framework laws, with in-depth studies of Germany, Ireland and New Zealand, academic research by the Grantham Institute recommends that “Governments should create new institutions for coordination and accountability, or strengthen the mandates of existing ones. Anchoring these institutions in the law helps protect against political change.”¹

In the UK, Grantham undertook a systematic assessment of the political influence of the Climate Change Committee in 2021. They found that “CCC analysis is used by all major political parties, that its influence has grown over time and that it has influenced policy debates both within its statutory remit (carbon budgets) and more broadly (energy policy and flood defence spending).”²

In Finland, an external evaluation by Gaia Consulting Oy explored the activities of the Finnish Climate Change Panel during the term 2020–2023. They found that “the Panel was considered to have had a major impact on the national climate policy, and it has successfully supported decision-making and the official preparation processes. There has also been significant growth in the media visibility of the Panel.”³

1. LSE, 14th March 2024, Impacts of climate framework laws: lessons from Germany, Ireland and New Zealand. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/publication/impacts-of-climate-framework-laws/2>

2. LSE, 5th February 2021, The influence of climate change advisory bodies on political debates: evidence from the UK Committee on Climate Change. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/publication/the-influence-of-climate-change-advisory-bodies-on-political-debates-evidence-from-the-uk-committee-on-climate-change/>

3. Finnish Government, 11th December 2023, Evaluation: Finnish Climate Change Panel has had major impacts on national climate policy. https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410903/arviointi-ilmastopaneelilla-on-ollut-merkittava-vaikutus-kansalliseen-ilmastopoliittikkaan?language=en_US

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Councils promote participatory democracy through their consultative approach, combined with a wide range of experts who champion transdisciplinary research. This includes scientists (many IPCC expert reviewers) but also indigenous peoples, civil society, private sector and government.



South Africa

The Presidential Climate Commission's (PCC's) Just Transition Financing Mechanism (JTfM) represents a crucial innovation to transition to a low-carbon economy while addressing socio-economic inequalities. The JTfM is designed to mobilise and channel financial resources toward projects that support communities and workers most vulnerable to the impacts of the shift away from high-carbon industries.

The President of South Africa welcomed the *"extensive and exhaustive consultation that informed these recommendations"* and in particular was *"pleased that the PCC considered how the mechanism could support communities and workers develop successful projects."*



Sweden

The Swedish Climate Policy Council regularly runs deliberative dialogue meetings with all aspects of society focused on specific policies or sectors. For example, in 2024 they ran sessions on agriculture with a widespread of stakeholders such as farmers, expert authorities, researchers, NGOs and citizen groups for rural areas. This outreach has built trust in the Council's independence as they incorporate all views to create robust and constructive advice on how to improve climate policy in that sector.



Guatemala

The Guatemalan National Council on Climate Change is a political entity representing the entire society (government, private sector, local governments, public and private academia; social sector, indigenous peoples and local authorities), it has its own permanent scientific advisory group - the Guatemalan System of Climate Change Sciences - made up of 10 universities and 5 research centers. The Government is required to respond to the advice of the Council.

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We have a global reach.

Our members spread across six continents with each council having a unique model tailored to the needs of their jurisdiction. The ICCN also has principles and processes that guide consistent best practice across the network.

- 1 Australian Climate Change Authority
- 2 Canadian Climate Institute
- 3 Canada Net Zero Advisory Body
- 4 Chilean Scientific Council on Climate Change (Comité Científico de Cambio Climático)
- 5 Costa Rica Climate Change Scientific Council (Consejo Científico de Cambio Climático (4C))
- 6 Danish Council on Climate Change (Klimarådet)
- 7 The European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change with secretariat hosted by the European Environment Agency (EEA)
- 8 Finnish Climate Change Panel (Suomen ilmastopaneeli)
- 9 France High Council on Climate Change (Haut conseil pour le climat)
- 10 Germany Council of Experts on Climate Change (Expertenrat für Klimafragen)
- 11 Greek Special Scientific Committee on Climate Change (Ειδική Επιστημονική Επιτροπή για την Αντιμετώπιση της Κλιματικής Αλλαγής)
- 12 Guatemala; National Council on Climate Change (Consejo Nacional de Cambio Climático)
- 13 Icelandic Climate Council (Loftslagsráð)
- 14 Ireland Climate Change Advisory Council (An Chomhairle Chomhairleach um Athrú Aeráide)
- 15 Mexican Climate Change Council (C3 - Consejo Consultivo de Cambio Climático)
- 16 Netherlands Scientific Climate Council (Wetenschappelijke Klimaatraad)
- 17 New Zealand Climate Change Commission
- 18 Nigeria's National Council on Climate Change
- 19 Philippines Climate Change Commission - National Panel of Technical Experts
- 20 South Korea 2050 Carbon Neutrality and Green Growth Commission of the Republic of Korea
- 21 South Africa Presidential Commission on Climate Change
- 22 Swedish National Expert Panel for Climate Adaptation (Nationella Expertrådet för Klimatanpassning)
- 23 Swedish Climate Policy Council (Klimatpolitiska Rådet)
- 24 UK Climate Change Committee (CCC)
- 25 Ukraine Green Transition Office

E3G – who host the secretariat – has offices in Berlin, Brussels, London and Washington DC, as well as Senior Associates in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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The ICCN is small and flexible so we can pivot to new opportunities, whilst having the assurances of being hosted within a world-renowned thinktank.

ICCN is a member-owned network, with strategic decisions taken by all members at plenary meetings. Funding decisions are taken by the monthly Steering Committee, which means we can pivot to new opportunities that align with the member-led strategy.

E3G is recognised as one of the top ten most influential environmental think tanks in the world by the University of Pennsylvania's Global Go-To Think Tank Index. They have a strong track record in delivering results, reporting, accountability and due diligence for a wide range of funders.

How does the ICCN deliver support for climate councils?

The International Climate Councils Network (ICCN) is here to support countries in establishing their own climate councils. Today, there are 25 climate councils that are part of the ICCN network. We need more countries to adopt these councils so that climate action is sustained, accountable, and far-reaching.

Our strategy is focused on three priorities:

- 1. adding value to our members through capacity building**
- 2. growing the network**
- 3. amplifying the voice of councils internationally**

We deliver these priorities by:

- Helping create new councils through peer-to-peer support from an established council, as well as access to a wider global community of experts at in-person and virtual ICCN events
- Tailoring support and capacity building programmes, including an online toolkit, in-depth research exclusive to members, secondment exchanges and partnerships with research institutions
- Working groups that empower members to collaborate in-depth on shared challenges such as: adaptation, mitigation, climate governance, just transition
- Regular email news bulletins, webinars and meetings that share the latest best practice and funding opportunities
- Amplifying our members' voices on the international stage through high-profile events at COPs, UNGA, G7, G20 and other venues.

“As a member of the International Climate Council Network we have not only benefited from participation in events, but have significantly increased our depth of knowledge. The growth and expansion of the ICCN will further enhance learning and international collaboration at this critical time for the acceleration of climate action.”

Shamini Harrington

Commissioner, South African Presidential Climate Commission

The secretariat of the ICCN is hosted by E3G, an international non-profit organisation www.e3g.org.

E3G is an independent climate change think tank with a global outlook. To find out more get in touch with Ben Rhodes the Head of Secretariat ben.rhodes@e3g.org

