

LO-ACT

Low Carbon Action
in Ordinary Cities

MID-TERM PROJECT REPORT [M1–M30]



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Introduction



The second Advisory Board report of the project LO-ACT (Low Carbon Action in Ordinary Cities) provides an update on the progress of LO-ACT, reviewing the results submitted to the European Research Council in September 2021.

This progress report covers the 30 months since the project started in February 2019. Originally LO-ACT was to do regular reporting every six months, but this has not been possible due to the difficulties raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Work Packages (WP)

- WP1** Urban Imaginaries
- WP2** Climate Policy Mobilities
- WP3** Action Impacts in Unusual Locations
- WP4** Governance and Messiness



Summary

LO-ACT focuses on the need for innovations for climate change that suit the needs of rapidly growing urban areas. It analyses this challenge at three scales:

GLOBAL SCALE

the project reviews how the actors that influence international climate politics (international organizations, professional networks, social movements, NGOs, and multi-national corporations) represent cities and urban areas. Different forms of representation enable varied forms of action from technological-led approaches to people-centric adaptation and mitigation responses.

INTERNATIONAL FLOWS AND SUPPLY CHAINS

the project explores existing innovations to respond to climate change in urban environments. The project focuses on overlooked contexts of action and initiatives that often go unnoticed under the radar. In particular, our data archive pays attention to rapidly growing small and medium cities in West Africa, East Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.

PLACE-BASED PERSPECTIVES

The final component of the project is a theoretical synthesis: the attempt to build a new understanding of the governance of climate change in urban environments. Rather than asking what solutions are needed, LO-ACT focuses on how different forms of action become understood as solutions.

LO-ACT results matter for society because they reveal current responses to climate change, following recent social demands for urgent action. LO-ACT shows a fraught relationship between normative commands to take particular courses of action and the practical realities of what is being done depending on the possibilities afforded in different cities worldwide. LO-ACT reviews visions, processes, economies, and social practices behind a global urban transition to sustainability.

LO-ACT also actively contributes to current thinking on the climate emergency in urban areas mainly through participation in the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (different members of the team participate as Lead Authors, Contributing Authors, and Chapter Scientists) or as lead consultants for global assessments such as UN-Habitat's 2020 World Cities Report on the value of sustainable urbanization. In 2021, the Principal Investigator received the AXA Award for Climate Science (from the AXA Research Fund) for her work on LO-ACT and other related projects.



Overview of activities completed to date



LO-ACT's overall objective is "to examine the impact of global environmental politics on climate change action in cities and the social and environmental outcomes of such action, directing research efforts towards initiatives that support the development and harmonization of a global multi-level partnership to tackle climate change."

The specific objectives of LO-ACT are:

OBJECTIVE 1:

Understand the mobilization of discourses of subnational action in global environmental politics attending at how they shape the conditions of possibility for local action in ordinary cities.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Explain the translation of social, technological, and institutional innovation across locations concerning climate change policies that travel from one location to another.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Identify the patterns of local action associated with international climate change commitments in ordinary cities and the impacts of such action

OBJECTIVE 4:

Reimagine current theorizations of climate change politics and urban governance with a conceptual and methodological toolbox that engages with messiness, unusual spaces, and change in the making.



According to the schedule, work has focused on Objectives 1, 3, and 4. Achievements that address each objective are as follows:

OBJECTIVE 1:

- A systematic review of academic literature on the topic published in a peer-reviewed journal
- A systematic review of nearly 500 relevant international policy documents explaining how cities are imagined in international climate change politics, as well as a systematic review of the Nationally Determined Contributions for urban content.
- An analysis of a specific set of relevant documents (300 emergency declarations)
- A consolidated but living archive of academic and grey literature.
- Participant observation at COP25 in Madrid (and confirmed participation at COP26 in Glasgow).
- A set of over 100 interviews with key individuals in the field, including UN organizations, development banks, international NGOs, researchers companies, and local authorities.
- New design-informed methodologies to analyze how biographies influence individual understandings of environmental action.
- A strategy for analyzing the data (ongoing)
- A set of outputs in peer-reviewed journals matching the achievements above.
- Work in progress on a new conceptualization of 'urban climate imaginaries' and contributions to theories of change on international policy discourse.

OBJECTIVE 3:

- A database that systematically compiles 800 actions, including materials in eight different languages and accompanying city profiles for selected countries and regions (China, Lusophone Africa, Nigeria [ongoing]).
- A strategy for analysis of the database, including ongoing coding of initiatives.
- A review of existing conceptualizations of urban innovation. LO-ACT has demonstrated that rapid urbanization demands new, tailored understandings of urban innovation because dominant concepts only reflect the experiences of cities in Europe and North America.
- A new conceptualization of social innovation that explores the gap between processes and outcomes in climate innovation, focusing on the importance of the 'mundane' dimensions of innovation.

OBJECTIVE 4:

- A review of the current environmental justice and environmental knowledge literature consolidated on a new monograph (See outcomes).
- A framework to reimagine ideas of governance, focusing on how to govern a 'messy world.'
- An argument for diversity in climate action that highlights how existing inequalities and knowledge hegemonies produce additional forms of injustice.
- A hypothesis about the possibility to develop reparative alternatives for climate action, that is, alternatives that recognize historical damage but move towards collective, resilient futures



Progress beyond the state of the art

The project has so far gone beyond state of the art, with the following insights demonstrable through the project's outputs:

1. LO-ACT has identified a paradigm change in global environmental politics regarding how cities are understood and approached. Previous work focused on motivating action for climate change in urban areas. Current academic and policy work, however, emphasizes the need for practical outcomes above all other concerns.
2. LO-ACT has mapped the different factors that affect action at the local level. LO-ACT contributions include, for example, a sophisticated understanding of the conditions that enable sustainability transitions in urban China; a critique of the notion of participation dominant in environmental governance; and further reflections of the role of the nation-state VS the local government in the context of the climate emergency. Additional theoretical work on the conceptualization of compound urban crises and the practical operation of transformations discourses have further developed from debates within the LO-ACT team.
3. LO-ACT has engaged with the evolution of climate politics, as place-based engagements lead to new political forums, new tools for motivating action, and new alliances. In particular, the team developed an analysis of how discourses of climate emergency develop in local governments and whether the adoption of emergency declarations has any tangible impact. In addition, the team engaged- via a partnership- in a synthesis of current action patterns.
4. LO-ACT has engaged with social theory emerging in China called 'the correlative epistemology.' This social theory has helped to demonstrate alternatives to the dominant theorization of sustainability transitions. Further work has looked critically into the policy discourse of ecological civilization and its operation.
5. LO-ACT has demonstrated that promoting messy actions and diverse innovation is an effective strategy to mobilise new urban futures in a messy world.

Further work in the project will focus on fieldwork and data collection in situ, articulating the project's network of contacts, as travel for international fieldwork is not allowed in the current situation. Such work will enable linking existing data on current patterns of innovation with the everyday practices in current urban areas.



Progress against objectives

The first objective of LO-ACT was to “Understand the mobilization of discourses of subnational action in global environmental politics attending at how they shape the conditions of possibility for local action in ordinary cities.” (Objective 1). Objective 1 has been directly addressed in Work Package 1 (WP1), through three achievements:

1. Map of the current landscape of academic debate in climate politics (completed)
2. Collection of data regarding archived materials and interviews (completed)
3. Development of an in-depth analysis of climate change policy imaginaries (in progress)

The current landscape of academic debate in climate politics has been synthesized in a major peer-reviewed publication in *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change* (Publication 2). It has received 15 citations in the first year since its publication. This publication generated considerable interest and led to the development of a COP26 Briefing for the British Academy, in a program seeking to influence the results of the international climate negotiations by showcasing the contribution of the social sciences and humanities. The article has also shaped the data collection process, marked by the completion of a document inventory and a collection of interviews with climate experts, which are currently under analysis to unravel critical policy imaginaries of urban climate action.

Since adopting the Description of the Action, the language of ‘emergency’ has increasingly shaped climate politics, and our team has moved forward to examine this new aspect.

One salient element has been the rise of emergency language in climate politics, not included in the project initially but that increasingly shapes the context of research. Thus, the team has engaged in the edition of a special issue on ‘The New Politics of Climate Change’ in the journal *Politics and Governance* (Publication 9) and developed specific outcomes that track the development and impacts of the language of emergency (Publications 6 and 7) including a systematic analysis of 300 local emergency declarations (Publication 6).

Further work has mobilized academic networks in global environmental politics and in-depth analysis of professional biographies of people engaged in urban climate action and systematic document analysis whose outputs are currently under review.

The second objective is to “Explain the translation of social, technological and institutional innovation across locations in relation to the course of climate change policies” (Objective 2). According to the work plan, Objective 2 and the linked WP2 will be addressed in the second part of the project, starting after submitting this report. However, to date, the team has developed the theoretical basis for the data collection activities.



2. Major achievements of the project

The starting point will be the monograph on Urban Sustainability and Justice (co-authored by Prof. Castán Broto and Dr. Westman) that surveys current scholarship in environmental justice to examine the delivery of climate change policies across contexts (Publication 1 and Publication 13).

The third objective is to “Identify the patterns of local action associated with international climate change commitments in ordinary cities, and the impacts of such action in the everyday life of urban citizens.” (Objective 3).

Objective 3 has been addressed by WP3 through four achievements:

1. Synthesis and review of the current literature on sustainability transitions (completed)
2. Working across the mitigation/adaptation divide to formulate practical strategies for delivering action in situ (in progress)
3. Database of low carbon initiatives (completed)
4. Analysis of regional patterns of innovation based upon the database’s data (in progress).

The synthesis and review of current literature on sustainability transitions, including the critical analysis of existing concepts and methodologies, has been done concerning the team’s recent experience in China. Still, we expect to extend the geographical remit with further analysis of the project’s data. The most salient contributions have been an assessment of existing frameworks to understand urban transitions (publication 5), a critical analysis of the concept of participation in climate governance (publication 3) and the development of an alternative perspective on transitions based on social theory emerging from China, the correlative epistemology (publication 8). This last publication has generated interest within the discipline of transitions, opening up the space

for several discipline-advancing viewpoints in leading international journals (publication 12).

In addition, the team has worked actively across the adaptation and mitigation divide to formulate practical strategies to deliver action in situ. An international collaboration with the Bilbao Centre for Climate Change (BC3) has produced a publication knowledge in adaptation planning (Publication 10) and created capacity for research in the area.

The fourth objective is to “Reimagine current theorisations of climate change politics and urban governance with a conceptual and methodological toolbox that engages with messiness, unusual spaces, and change in-the-making” (Objective 4), and it has been addressed via WP4. The main objective in WP4 is to develop new conceptual tools around ideas of messiness via critical analysis of existing literature on governance.

Two activities have advanced this work package:

1. Review of existing governance literature (ongoing)
2. Presentation of new concepts in public forums (ongoing)

One key output from this work package has been the lecture on messiness and governance, published in the journal *Territory, Politics, Governance* (publication 4), which has been cited 15 times. The work has also supported several keynote presentations, including a keynote presentation to close the online conference of the Place-Based Action Network based in the UK.



Novel methodologies and interdisciplinary knowledge exchange

Novel methodologies have been developed in both WP1 and WP3. In WP1, in particular, the team has experimented with design-led methods to understand professional trajectories in space. If space is relational, that is, constituted through social life (as proposed by geographers such as Doreen Massey), how does such relational space constitute people's professional life experiences? How does it change life trajectories? And especially, given WP1 research questions, how does it shape existing policy imaginaries of climate action?

WP1 has also innovated by accessing new documentary sources, most notably through the critical analysis of emergency declarations.

The research carried out by the LO-ACT team for the publication "Ten years after Copenhagen: Reimagining climate change governance in urban areas" has been [visually translated into a timeline that summaries the article's main findings](#).

This graphic design approach to dissemination allows to convey project results in a format that highlights the outputs whilst making them more accessible to the general public.

The design approach used to communicate LO-ACT research outcomes led the project team to consider design approaches as visual enquiry methods for analytical approaches to qualitative data in further project outputs.

WP3 main task has been data collection, and the team is currently working in multiple ways to analyze the database. An output currently under review has explored cluster analysis methods as a means to organize the data. A systematic review of concepts of social innovation (in progress) will support further work with existing data.

In terms of interdisciplinary development, the most important contribution has been linking debates in climate adaptation to those of the project LO-ACT. Important interdisciplinary contributions include leading one of the ten insights in climate science proposed by Future Earth (publication 11), as well as different collaborations with the Earth Systems Governance Network, the Bilbao Centre for Climate Change and as active contributors to the latest IPCC 6th Assessment Report (Prof Castán Broto is Lead Author for Working Group II on Impacts and Adaptation and Contributing Author to Working Group III on Mitigation and she is one of the Lead Authors of the Cross-Working Group Box on Urban Adaptation and Mitigation; Dr. Westman is Chapter Scientist and Contributing Author for Working Group II). Additional interdisciplinary contributions have been through interventions in key policy reports and policy debates (see Other outputs section)

The work in WP2 also informed the delivery of a chapter for the 2020 UN-Habitat World Cities Report on the Value of Sustainable Urbanization and a



2. Major achievements of the project



contribution to the book on the urban component of the European Green Deal by the Centre for Foreign Affairs of Barcelona (CIDOB) (see other outputs section).

A key achievement for the project has been receiving the AXA Award for Climate Science for Professor Castán Broto (but also recognizing the broader impact of the group). The Award emphasised the attention that the project paid to urban inequality as a significant factor shaping not only vulnerabilities but also innovation capacities.

Dr Ping Huang and Dr Linda Westman's research and article "A culture led approach to understanding energy transitions in China: The correlative epistemology" was shortlisted for the [2021 Energy SSH Innovation Awards](#) showcase the work of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) in the Social Sciences and Humanities. The body of work was selected for its advancement of "energy research through exciting new methods, findings, and engagements with policy and practice".



LO-ACT's five most significant achievements

- 1** The review of the current landscape of climate politics as mapped in Publication 2 has set up the context for the project and created a lot of attention from other academics and policy actors. This major review publication has revived the debate on cities and climate change and paved the way for the development of the field of 'climate urbanism.'
- 2** The critical analysis of current transitions' theory, particularly Publication 8, has revealed the limitations of current thinking and proposes theoretical alternatives from elsewhere. In this case, the contribution focuses on theories emerging within the tradition of social sciences in China. The hope is that this critical approach, twined with the empirical insights from the project, can further advance a transitions scholarship 'from elsewhere.'
- 3** A comprehensive mapping of environmental justice theory in urban planning has been presented and consolidated in the monograph called Urban Sustainability and Justice (Publication 1). This book is a treatise that links the objectives of LO-ACT with the academic trajectories of Dr. Westman and Professor Castán Broto.
- 4** An active engagement with ongoing debates in international climate politics with substantial contributions via the Special Issue on the New Politics of Climate Change and in dialogue with emerging discourses of messiness. This achievement brings together the work from WP1 and WP4.
- 5** The team has completed the most significant data collection challenges in LO-ACT, including completion of the documentary archive, professional interviews and the database of low carbon initiatives.



Advances in the research field

Several of LO-ACT breakthroughs align with those anticipated in the Description of Action, the document that establishes the terms of reference for the project LO-ACT. Anticipated breakthroughs are presented in cursive, followed by an explanation of how LO-ACT has addressed those.

“changes in policy discourses at the international level on sub-national climate change governance”

Our project has mapped recent changes in sub-national policy; it has also documented the rise of discourses of emergency; it has also proposed new policy discourses, including shifting interest to urban electrification and including diversity concerns explicitly in climate governance. LO-ACT has transformed its insights into policy contributions via organizations such as the IPCC, UN-Habitat, the British Academy, and others.

“the different waves of implementation of climate change policy at the local level and their overall impact on global climate politics”

Publication 2 demonstrates LO-ACT's documentation of different waves of climate change discourses at the local level.

“cross-fertilization across different action domains through urban action”

Our project has focused on the interaction between mitigation and adaptation at the urban level, with some

key publications forthcoming (such as publications 9 and 10).

“a revision of urban governance theory away from bounded contexts of action”

Our project has critically examined different elements of urban governance regarding the case of China, in particular (as reflected in Publications 3, 5, 8, and 12). This approach will be extended to other contexts in the second half of the project.

“a conceptualisation of the idea of messy governmentalities as a means to bridge the gap between global concerns and local possibilities”

The first incarnation of such conceptualization is presented in Publication 4.

Unexpected breakthroughs

The contribution to new transition theory engaging with social theory in the Chinese tradition (the correlative perspective, as explained in Publication 8) was completely unexpected and has led to deepening work in China.

The engagement with ‘emergency discourses’ has led to an active presence in the emergency debate, engaging with evolving discourses of climate politics.



Consolidation of the Climate Urbanism Group at the Urban Institute

The ERC grant first facilitated the establishment of the Climate Urbanism group at the Urban Institute in the University of Sheffield. The group now has four postdoctoral researchers working full-time in long-term research projects, one administrator, and several associates from the University of Sheffield and external. External visitors include Dr. Anne Maassen from the World Resources Institute, Dr. Xira Ruiz Campillo from the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, Dr. Marta Olazabal from the Bilbao Centre for Climate Change. It has hosted several MSc Students and, from 2021, will host a new Ph.D. student, Winnie Musivo. The group has facilitated several events at the Urban Institute and consolidated its profile. Three keynote lectures will be delivered in October and November 2021 by Professor Simon Marvin and Professor Vanesa Castán Broto. In addition to those corresponding to the project LO-ACT, several publications have been produced by the group's wider networks.

The ERC grant also supported further funding, including a £1.4 million grant for the project Community Energy and Sustainable Transitions in East Africa (CESET), funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council, which includes partners in Malawi, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. Other members of the Climate Urbanism group have successfully drawn further funding, independent from LO-ACT but which resonates and extends its themes. The COVID19 pandemic has limited this impact, but we plan to resume an active program of international engagement in 2022.



Scientific challenges



The focus of the project was on the generation of mundane innovation within ordinary life. Initially, the project was supposed to have a sizeable ethnographic component within the remit of WP2 and WP3. As field trips have become impossible, the project team has developed new methodologies that best use available data and available data collection methods. Such change has meant increasing reliance on online interviewing, online data, and methodological innovations through design. At this point, the project is advancing and making steady contributions to state-of-the-art.

Another challenge has been the need to develop connections via regional hubs and via an international conference. Such activities have not been possible to date. However, we held an active presence in online conferences, including convening the urban group in the Earth Systems Governance network, which produced a collective publication led by Dr. Westman and that enabled a thorough assessment of current climate politics of emergency (publication currently going through the last stages of peer-review). In addition, Prof. Castan Broto co-edited a Special Issue for the journal *Politics and Governance* which map the current state of research on climate politics (publications 6 and 9). Such remote activities have provided alternatives to the planned workshop-style activities originally planned by LO-ACT.



Technical challenges



Work on WP1 required researchers to travel to international conferences and complete one-to-one interviews. The pandemic resulted in travel restrictions, and the project team moved to complete data collection online. The team is now assessing how conducting interviews online has affected the sample or the content of the data. An in-person visit to the COP26 conference in Glasgow in November 2021 will help to evaluate the representativeness of this set of interviews.

Work on WP3 required delivering innovation workshops in different countries. As traveling became impossible, the database was constructed exclusively with online material. The team thus extended the search to improve the dataset. Seven research assistants have supported data search, working in different languages (including English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Amharic, Arabic, Hindi,

Kannada, Chinese) to facilitate a more comprehensive coverage of the countries studied.

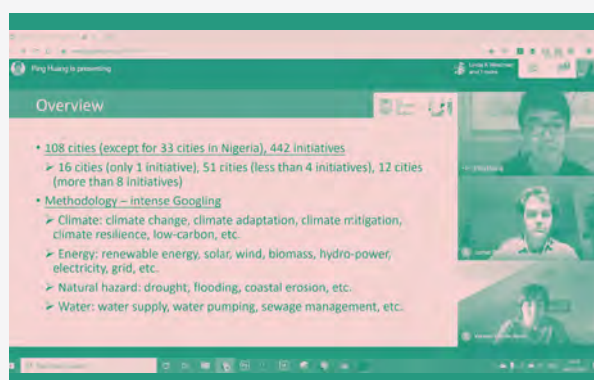
To facilitate the development of geographically informed analysis, the LO-ACT team has worked in close cooperation with research assistants with specific geographical expertise. So far, the experience includes a focus on China, Nigeria, and a group of Lusophone countries in Africa. This strategy has enabled extending the range of materials covered and increased their geographical relevance. We expect that the experts consulted will be able to co-author LO-ACT outputs.

The additional traveling components of WP2 and WP3 have been delayed due to the pandemic. They will be resumed by the beginning of 2022, although travel restrictions will undoubtedly shape the fieldwork plan. This delay represents a minor challenge, and we do not expect that will affect its scientific results.

The conflicting demands of work and personal life during the pandemic have meant that the PI cannot keep up regular communication with the team and the advisory board. Still, the project has advanced through continuous informal exchanges, long-term planning that gave autonomy to the project team, and informal individual meetings with members of the advisory board.



Practical challenges



Access to the offices of the Urban Institute has been restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2021.

Lack of access has two impacts: **1)** access to appropriate space and material equipment; **2)** connection with the research network of LO-ACT and the Urban Institute, which is essential not only to generate ideas but also to provide emotional support to the research team. Individual resources have become increasingly crucial as working from home has increasingly become the norm during the pandemic. However, this has shortbacks as individual researchers may not always have comfortable access to a workstation that meets their technical requirements and well-being needs. However, being at home and feeling safe and secure was also an essential factor. Thus, most of the team, including the PI, have found that the trade-off between finding out the resources

and space at home and feeling comfortable and safe was generally beneficial. In the case of Dr. Huang, who was visiting his family in China when the pandemic broke, this flexibility has been essential to maintaining work in the project.

The Urban Institute has been well aware of this challenge and has provided continued support during the pandemic, including weekly meetings with all staff and occasional meetings for social context. Mentoring provided at the level of the University has also supported the project team. As team members felt the increasing pressure on the balance between personal and professional life, the UI has provided different resources and understanding of the difficult situation in which the project has developed.



Academic outputs

1 Urban Sustainability and Justice

Authors

Vanesa Castán Broto, Linda Westman

Book

Just sustainabilities: policy, planning, practice

2 Ten years after Copenhagen: Reimagining climate change governance in urban areas

Authors

Vanesa Castán Broto, Linda Westman

Journal

WIREs Climate Change

DOI

[10.1002/wcc.643](https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.643)

3 Emerging dynamics of public participation in climate governance: A case study of solar energy application in Shenzhen, China

Authors

Ping Huang, Vanesa Castán Broto, Linda Westman

Journal

Environmental Policy and Governance

DOI

[10.1002/eet.1886](https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1886)

4 Climate change politics and the urban contexts of messy governmentalities

Author

Vanesa Castán Broto

Journal

Territory, Politics, Governance

DOI

[10.1080/21622671.2019.1632220](https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2019.1632220)

5 Spatiotemporal perspectives on urban energy transitions: a comparative study of three cities in China

Author

Vanesa Castán Broto, Daphne Mah, Fangzhu Zhang, Ping Huang, Kevin Lo, Linda Westman

Journal

Urban Transformations

DOI

[10.1186/s42854-020-00015-9](https://doi.org/10.1186/s42854-020-00015-9)



4. Outputs

6 Motivations and Intended Outcomes in Local Governments' Declarations of Climate Emergency

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Xira Ruiz-Campillo, Vanesa Castán Broto, Linda Westman | Politics and Governance | 10.17645/pag.v9i2.3755 |

7 Finding feasible action towards urban transformations

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| James Patterson, Niko Soininen, Marcus Collier, Christopher M. Raymond | npj Urban Sustainability | 10.1038/s42949-021-00029-7 |

8 A culture-led approach to understanding energy transitions in China: The correlative epistemology

| Author | Journal | DOI |
|--|--|---|
| Ping Huang, Linda Westman, Vanesa Castán Broto | Transactions of the Institute of British | 10.1111/tran.12453 |

9 Editorial: Is There a New Climate Politics?

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Anna R. Davies, Vanesa Castán Broto, Stephan Hügel | Politics and Governance | 10.17645/pag.v9i2.4341 |

10 Subaltern forms of knowledge are required to boost local adaptation

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|--|-----------|---|
| Marta Olazabal, Eric Chu, Vanesa Castán Broto, James Patterson | One Earth | 10.1016/j.oneear.2021.05.006 |



4. Outputs

11 Ten new insights in climate science 2020 – a horizon scan

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Vanesa Castán Broto et al. | Global Sustainability | 10.1017/sus.2021.2 |

12 China's imaginary of ecological civilization: A resonance between the state-led discourse and sociocultural dynamics

| Authors | Journal | DOI |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Ping Huang, Linda Westman | Energy Research & Social Science | 10.1016/j.erss.2021.102253 |

13 Transcending existing paradigms: the quest for justice in urban climate change planning

| Author | Journal | DOI |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Linda Westman, Vanesa Castán Broto | Local Environment | 10.1080/13549839.2021.1916903 |

Impact activities



Slide summary for the PCAN keynote conference delivered in September 2020

Professor Castán Broto wrote the lead consultant contribution to 2020 UN-Habitat's World Cities Report on the Value of Sustainable Urbanization (informed by the LO-ACT's results), published as chapter 5. [The report is available here](#). The report accumulates over 14,000 downloads.

Professor Castán Broto also presented the results at a United Nations conference on World Cities Day and at a high-level meeting on the future of sustainable urbanism in China.

Members of the LO-ACT team have delivered content as lead author, contributing author, and/or chapter scientist to the contribution of Working Group II of the 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Contributions were also made to Working Group III. Professor Castan Broto was lead

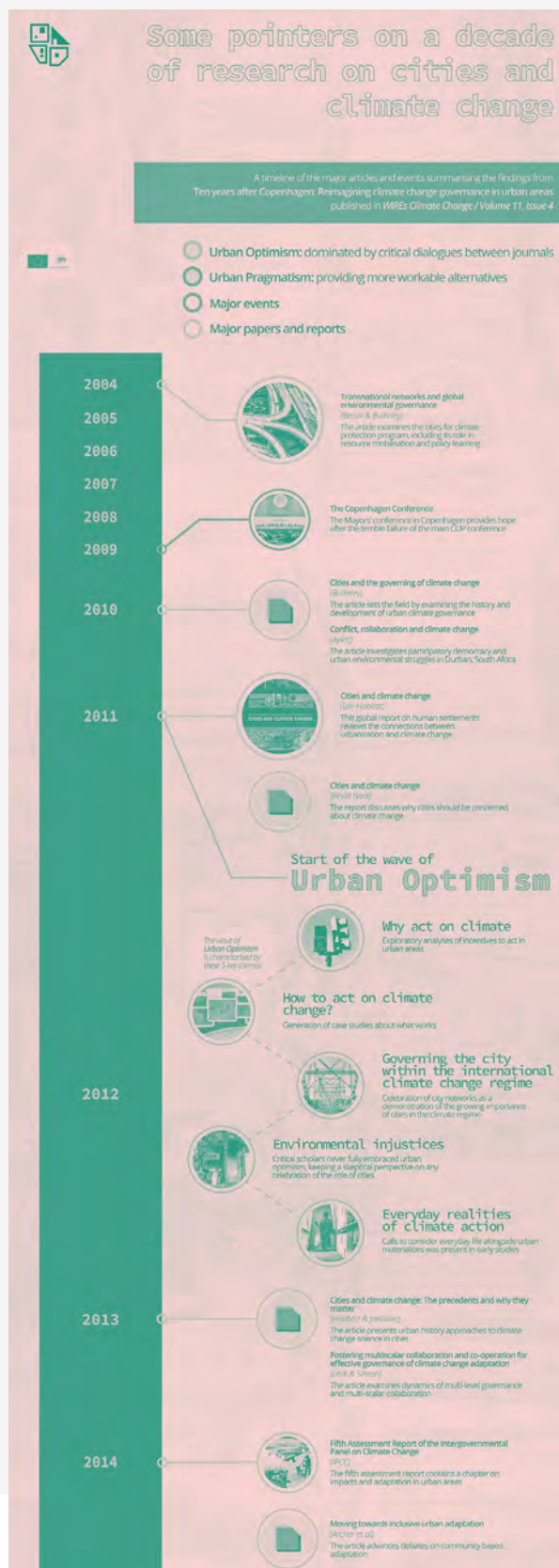
author for Chapter 6 and Dr Westman was chapter scientist and contributing author. Professor Castan Broto was contributing author to Chapter 13 on national and subnational governance, and lead author of the cross-working group box exploring urban issues.

The LO-ACT team wrote a briefing to the British Academy (BA) COP26 Briefing Series. The briefing is available at the [British Academy website](#). This briefing has also been featured on the British Academy website and newsletter (issued on 16/07/2021 as part of BA's programme to engage with COP26).

Professor Castán Broto has also participated in BA policy events to inform the COP26. She put LO-ACT's findings directly to Secretary of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in the UK, the Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP. She also coordinated a working group to discuss challenges to urban adaptation and she is now developing a BA briefing following that event.

The Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) published the book "Towards a European Green Deal with Cities which includes a chapter from the LO-ACT's PI. [The book is available here](#).

Professor Castán Broto was an external consultant for one of the events of the Lambeth Climate Assembly (London Borough). She was also a keynote speaker for the European Urban Knowledge Network's event, The



Urban Agenda for the EU, alongside representatives of the EU Commission and the EU Parliament. Engagement in policy events continues.

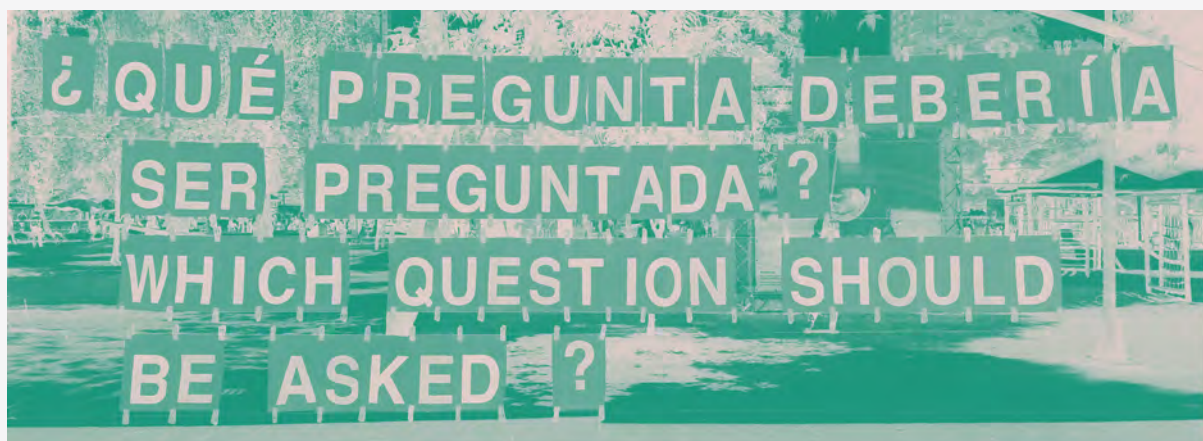
Dr. Westman led the launch of the urban working group of the Earth Systems Governance Network, which she is currently managing. LO-ACT active participation in Earth Systems Governance Network continues after the network endorsed it, including coordinating a collective output by Dr. Westman that brings together members of the urban working group (currently under review). Professor Castán Broto spoke at a semi-plenary at the annual conference of the ESG network in September 2020. Professor Castán Broto also gave the concluding lecture of the conference of the Place-based Climate Action Network in September 2020

The LO-ACT research team also participates in the urban transformations group of the Sustainable Transitions Research Network and has collaborated in writing an agenda setting brief intervention for the network.

Dr. Huang is now a visiting scholar at The Advanced Institute of Global and Contemporary China Studies (GCCS) at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen.

The LO-ACT team also hosted Dr. Xira Ruiz Camillo, from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, as a visiting researcher at the Urban Institute for six months.

Professor Castán Broto was a visiting scientist to the Bilbao Centre for Climate Change (BC3) in 2019, including a public lecture and research collaborations.



LO-ACT project social media, website, and archive of climate action

The project team has a regular schedule of communication activities through weekly tweets, updates on the website, conference presentations, and visual materials. The team compiles both an archive of cities and climate change documents (external users have already used that, for example, two MSc students used the archive to develop their dissertations) and an archive of climate action.

As part of the research of climate action for a) the construction of a database of ordinary cities to study the impact of local actions, and b) to share climate action news on the project's Twitter, the team has built an archive of over 230 news stories linked to local climate action and social justice. We are now planning to carry the building on this archive on a map hosted on the project's website.



Overview of results dissemination



Project website

Viewers are based in:

the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Australia, France, Spain, Kenya, Sweden, Austria, Germany, India, Italy

September—December 2019 visits: **120**

January—December 2020 visits: **285**

January—July 2021 views: **179**

Project social media

April—December 2019 reach: **43245**

January—December 2020 reach: **51681**

January—July 2021 reach: **33000**

Followers are based in:

the United Kingdom, the United States, India, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, Australia, Turkey, Belgium, Canada, Japan, Finland, Italy, Chile, Tanzania, Greece, Ethiopia, Brazil, Mexico, Slovenia, Colombia, Mozambique, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Peru, Denmark, Cabo, Verde, Morocco France, Malawi

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Low Carbon Action in Ordinary Cities

No 804051 – LO-ACT – ERC-2018-STG

M1-M30

MID-TERM PROJECT REPORT

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