



Covenant of Mayors
for Climate & Energy
EUROPE

Reference guide on

REGIONAL SECAPS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK



Why a Regional SECAPs Assessment Framework?

The Covenant of Mayors – Europe, the European Commission and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) recognise the important role of Territorial Coordinators (CTCs) and Covenant Supporters (CS) in leading the green transition in their territories.

Since the launch of the initiative in 2008, many Territorial Coordinators and Supporters have also taken over the responsibility of developing local Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs) for their municipalities, using a common methodology and data sources. Such commitment led the Joint Research Centre and the Covenant of Mayors – Europe Office to develop a new approach for SECAPs evaluation, based on a cluster of plans within the Coordinator / Supporter's territory.

The Regional SECAPs Assessment Framework in a nutshell

The Regional SECAPs Assessment Framework¹ was launched in 2013 and it consists of an in-depth analysis of the methodology and related reference SECAPs by the Joint Research Centre.

Active Territorial Coordinators of the Covenant of Mayors – Europe, regional / local thematic agencies and national / regional associations of local authorities can request the evaluation of their own methodology for SECAPs development. Once the methodology is accepted, all action plans for municipalities with less than 50.000 inhabitants supported by the concerned Coordinators or Supporters and submitted via MyCovenant platform, are automatically accepted by the Joint Research Centre.

Thus, this approach allows signatory municipalities to receive faster approval of their action plans and is less time consuming on the Coordinator/Supporter's side as well, as they receive feedback on the methodology and on the reference SECAPs that can be easily applied to all the other signatories supported.

The added value of the regional SECAPs assessment framework resides also in the opportunity for the Coordinator or Supporter to discuss methodological questions with the Joint Research Centre and to reinforce their role within the initiative.

Finally, the approach serves to strengthen the role of Territorial Coordinators and Supporters in their territories as parties responsible for a decentralized evaluation of the action plans developed by the supported municipalities, on behalf of the Joint Research Centre and the Covenant of Mayors – Europe Office. In view of this decentralized evaluation role, the parties involved shall guarantee the lack of commercial use of approved methodologies.

Who can benefit from it?

The request to have a methodology evaluated by the Covenant of Mayors – Europe and the Joint Research Centre can be submitted by:

- All active Territorial Coordinators of the Covenant of Mayors – Europe. Find out more [here](#).

¹ Previously called "Grouped SECAPs Analysis".

- Regional / local thematic agencies and national / regional associations of local authorities, acting as active Covenant Supporters, can request the evaluation of their own methodology for SECAPs developing, providing a letter of support from the regional and / or national authorities.

What are the requirements that shall be met?

The methodology shall foresee the development of local action plans meeting the following requirements:

- The SECAP shall be approved by the Municipal Council or equivalent body.
- The SECAP shall clearly specify the Covenant mitigation, adaptation and energy poverty commitments.
- The SECAP shall be based on the results of a comprehensive Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) and Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment(s) (RVAs). Find out more [here](#).
- **For mitigation**, the action plan shall cover the key sectors of activity (Municipal, Tertiary, Residential and Transport):
 - o The Baseline Emission Inventory shall cover at least three out of four key sectors.
 - o The mitigation actions shall cover at least two out of four key sectors.
 - o The action plan shall list a set of actions aimed at reaching the identified mitigation target in the mitigation key sectors, including at least 3 Key Mitigation Actions.
- **For adaptation**, the SECAP shall include at least one adaptation goal, and list a set of actions aimed at reaching the identified adaptation goal(s), including at least 3 Key Adaptation Actions.
- **For energy poverty**, the SECAP shall indicate one energy poverty goal, one indicator, and at least one Key Energy Poverty Action.

The mandatory data and information provided in MyCovenant shall be complete and correctly filled-in in English, as per the [Reporting Guidelines](#).

What is the procedure to submit the methodology?

Coordinators or Supporters interested in submitting their methodology for SECAPs development to the Covenant of Mayors – Europe and the Joint Research Centre are requested to send an email to coordinators@eumayors.eu, attaching the following documents:

- Description of the methodology used to prepare the emission inventory and identification of data source, as well as description of the methodology for calculation of GHG emissions reduction and/or energy savings, if relevant, in **PDF format and in one of the 24 EU official languages**;
- Description of the methodology used to carry out the Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and the identification of climate areas and related climate hazards, in **PDF format and in one of the 24 EU official languages**;
- List of signatories included in the action and related category²;

² The methodology shall clearly group the municipalities in categories. Suggested categories for the mitigation pillar are: municipalities with less than 3.000 inhabitants, municipalities between 3.000 and

- Identification of at least 1 action plan developed with the above methodology per each of the category identified;
- Letter of support from the regional / national public authorities with competences on climate and energy for methodologies submitted by regional / local thematic agencies or associations of local authorities, acting as active Covenant Supporters, only. The related template can be found [here](#).

After the administrative check of their eligibility for the Regional SECAPs Assessment Framework, carried out by the Covenant of Mayors - Europe Office, and the reception of above information, interested Coordinators / Supporters are requested to submit the identified SECAPs via the reporting template in the MyCovenant platform. Further information on the reporting template is available [here](#).

A preliminary online meeting between the concerned Coordinators / Supporters and the JRC may be carried out to discuss the methodology, prior to the submission of the identified action plans.

The Joint Research Centre reserve the right to contact the concerned Coordinators / Supporters to receive further information or clarifications on the proposed methodology.

Once the methodology is evaluated by the Joint Research Centre, the concerned Coordinators / Supporters are notified via email.

Where can you find support for the development of your methodology?

The Joint Research Centre has developed a guidebook for the development of local action plans, including a set of methodological principles, procedures and best practices. The guidebook can be downloaded [here](#).

Coordinators and Supporters are welcomed to get in touch with the Covenant of Mayors - Europe Office and/or the Joint Research Centre at any time during the development of the methodology, to receive support and clarifications on the requirements, as well as to receive feedback and pieces of advice on the methodology itself. Further information on how to reach us is available [here](#).

What happens next?

SECAPs included in the action shall be submitted via MyCovenant, within 2 years from the adhesion or renewal of commitments of concerned signatory municipalities. For further information on how to submit an action plan via MyCovenant, visit our [reporting page](#) or contact our [Helpdesk](#).

These SECAPs shall be marked as part of your regional methodology. For further information, please check the [info-pack for coordinators](#).

10.000 inhabitants, and municipalities between 10.000 and 50.000 inhabitants. Cities with more than 50.000 inhabitants, although included in the methodology, will be separately evaluated by JRC. Categories for the adaptation pillar shall be identified according to the climate areas in the territory covered by the methodology.

JRC regularly download the list of SECAPs submitted on MyCovenant. If a SECAP is marked as part of a regional methodology, JRC check that the methodology has been previously approved and, if so, change the status of the action plan's evaluation from "not performed" to "accepted".

Then, the main contact person(s) and the mayor of the concerned signatory, as well as the main contact person of the linked coordinator(s), receive an automatic notification from the platform confirming the approval of the action plan.

Get inspired

The **Province of Limburg** has been a Covenant Territorial Coordinator since 2008. It already developed a methodology for the development of Sustainable Energy Action Plans (targets to 2020) for 42 municipalities in the territory. The methodology has then been updated to accommodate the requirements of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (targets to 2030). The Province cooperated with several partners (namely network operator Fluvius, Bond Beter Leefmilieu, Steunpunt Duurzaam Bouwen Limburg) for the development of local action plans.

Firstly, the Baseline Emission Inventory and the Monitoring Emission Inventories are compiled by the '**Vlaamse Instelling voor Technologisch Onderzoek NV**' ("**VITO**"), commissioned by the Flemish authorities. This tool, available for all municipalities, calculates the CO₂ emissions per sector on the basis of different activities and emission factors. Furthermore, the Province provides a **climate database**: a set of user-friendly and accessible data to be used for environmental analyses as part of the municipal climate policy.

In addition, the Province drafts a risk and vulnerability assessment for each involved municipality, using two tools: the **Climate Portal of the Flemish Environmental Agency**, useful to identify the Flemish areas most vulnerable to climate change and therefore better develop their local adaptation policy, and **Geopunt**, a central gateway to geographic governmental information.

Finally, the Province provides the municipalities with SECAPs models, support in process management and guidance.

The SECAPs are currently developed using a **regional approach**, including different factors such as soil composition, forest and nature risk of fires and presence of canal and recreation water to define six different groups.

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The **Covenant of Mayors - Europe Office** is responsible for the overall coordination of the initiative in Europe. It is composed of networks of local and regional authorities: Energy Cities, Climate Alliance, EUROCITIES, CEMR, FEDARENE and ICLEI Europe, and of the ICT company Akaryon.

www.eu-mayors.ec.europa.eu