

2021 Cities Scoring FAQs

What will scores look like in 2021?

One overall letter score indicating the overall level of climate disclosure and performance as assessed by the information provided in the city response;

One Adaptation letter score indicating the level of climate disclosure and performance as assessed by the information provided in the city response to questions falling under Adaptation;

One Mitigation letter score indicating the level of climate disclosure and performance as assessed by the information provided in the city response to questions falling under Mitigation.

How can cities use their scores?

CDP encourages cities to use their scores as an indication of their performance across adaptation and mitigation, to understand where they might be able to focus resources and close gaps in their climate planning. Scores can also be used to track progress year on year and allow cities to benchmark their performance against the average scores of other cities in the same region or of the same size.

As well as receiving a score, CDP provides cities with a Next Steps document. The Next steps document provides feedback to cities at each of the 4 scoring levels, across the different sections of the questionnaire. This document also provides resources and makes recommendations on how a city can improve their score.

What are the main changes in the scoring methodology for cities this year?

The 2021 scoring methodology can be viewed [here](#).

To support a reduction in the reporting effort to improve the disclosure experience, improve data quality, and to facilitate year-on-year trend analysis, the Cities 2021 questionnaire has undergone minor modifications. These modifications include the addition of some new questions for 2021, and the removal of others. These changes inevitably result in slight alterations to the scoring methodology, though it remains broadly the same as in 2020.

Furthermore, in order to better align with the climate emergency we are facing, greater emphasis is placed on a cities' emissions reduction history and emissions reduction goals at the higher scoring bands this year than in 2020. In particular, this means that receiving a score which allows entrance onto the A list will be more dependent on a city's ability to show a history of reducing emissions, and the existence of ambitious forward-facing targets to reach net-zero emissions.

None of the essential criteria, or how they are scored, have changed this year.

Which sections of the questionnaire are assessed for the Adaptation and Mitigation sub-scores?

Each section of the questionnaire falls into either Adaptation, Mitigation or both themes. Those sections which fall under "Adaptation" or "Both" themes are assessed to calculate the Adaptation sub-score. Those sections which fall under "Mitigation" or "Both" themes are assessed to calculate the Mitigation sub-score. See the table below to see which sections of the questionnaire are assessed in either the Adaptation or Mitigation sub-score.

Section of the Questionnaire	Inclusion in sub-scores
City details and governance	Both Adaptation & Mitigation
Climate hazards and vulnerability	Adaptation
Adaptation	Adaptation
City-wide emissions	Mitigation
Emissions reduction	Mitigation
Opportunities	Both Adaptation & Mitigation
Energy	Mitigation
Transport	Mitigation
Food	Mitigation
Waste	Mitigation
Water security	Adaptation

Please note that cities must receive an A score overall to receive an A in either the adaptation or the mitigation sub-scores.

Which cities will receive a score in 2021?

Cities who submit the full Cities 2021 questionnaire by the scoring deadline will be scored. Scores are private to cities, with the exception of cities scoring an A – CDP will publicly recognize and celebrate the cities that receive an A score. In 2020, [88](#) cities representing a combined population of 125 million people, were recognized on the Cities A List.

Cities reporting using the shortened questionnaire are not scored, as this questionnaire does not provide a good representation of the level of action a city is taking to tackle climate change issues.

Are all the questions in the CDP 2021 questionnaire scored?

No, not all questions are scored. Almost all core CDP questions are scored, however, project specific questions, such as C40, ICLEI or WWF only questions are not scored. When completing the questionnaire, there is a tag by each question which indicates if the question is a core or a project specific question.

Questions that appear only for Global Covenant of Mayors cities are also not scored with the exception of question 4.6a. Question 4.6a is scored for Global Covenant of Mayors cities in order to not exclude scoring Global Covenant of Mayors cities who report their emissions sector and scope break down as per the Common Reporting Framework.

Questions across the whole questionnaire are scored, and cities performance on meeting scoring criteria for each scoring band will determine their final scores.

How is CDP scoring different from OPCC scoring and GCoM badging?

The CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting System is the reporting platform for multiple campaigns and initiatives. This year, the submission deadline to maximize the full benefits is the July 29th as it allows you to receive a CDP score with feedback to help identify areas to improve on your overall climate action. For cities that would like to participate in the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) as well as WWF's One Planet City Challenge (OPCC), you can submit their response by the August 31st but you will not receive a CDP score

- ▼ **CDP scoring:** focuses on the completeness of a city's response and their performance on climate action. All scores are private and only cities who get an A will be featured by CDP on our annual A-List.
- ▼ **OPCC:** WWF assess the information provided according to the [OPCC Updated Assessment framework](#) and a city's alignment and ambition to the Paris Agreement. OPCC categorizes

scores according to Vision: a city's commitment and ability to drive change; and Impact: and the reduction potential of a city's current climate action.

- ▼ **GCoM badging:** CDP-ICLEI assess the information provided for all GCoM relevant questions against the criteria specified in the Common Reporting Frameworks (CRF). GCoM awards badges based on two main pillars of the CRF: Mitigation and Adaptation. Any badge(s) a city is eligible for is based on their compliance results will be awarded by their relevant GCoM Regional/National Covenant. The badge(s) will be publicly displayed on the Global Covenant of Mayors website.

How can a city's score change from one year to the next?

Changes in the city response, missing data points, and essential criteria are the three main reasons the score could be affected. One of the key areas that can have a significant impact on scoring is the essential criteria.

In order for a city to obtain a score in the Management or Leadership levels, they must have met certain essential criteria. This means that regardless of the score, if a city does not meet the essential criteria then they cannot receive a score in Management or Leadership levels. The essential criteria are listed below:

- **Management essential criteria:** Cities **must attach** an adaptation plan in question 3.2a **or attach** an action plan in question 5.5a **and** respond **"yes"** to having a city-wide GHG inventory in question 4.0.
- **Leadership essential criteria:** Cities **must attach** a vulnerability assessment in question 2.0b **and attach** an adaptation plan in question 3.2a **and attach** an action plan in question 5.5a **and** have a fully reported GHG emissions reduction target.
- **A-list essential criteria:** Cities **must attach** a city-wide inventory in question 4.5 **and** submit their response publicly in order to be in the A list.

Although a city's essential criteria attachments may not change from one year to the next, it is still necessary to include these attachments each year to fulfil the essential criteria. It is important to note that the copy forward functionality from a submission in a previous year does not include attachments. Cities using this tool will need to upload their attachments again this year.

How are scores published and used?

For cities who receive [an A score](#), CDP will make the city score public and publish it on CDP's website.

For cities who do not receive an A score, CDP will only disclose the score to the city and to CDP group companies, companies that CDP licenses to operate using the CDP name and brand (for example, CDP North America, Inc, and CDP Europe AISBL), CDP reporting partners (including ICLEI, C40 and GCoM), research partners, report writers and scoring partners, in each case for use only within their organizations and not for publication.