

GGBP Case Study Series

Rio de Janeiro Low Carbon City Development Program

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Country: [Brazil](#)

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The Rio de Janeiro administration developed the 2016 Strategic Plan to ensure the good use of foreign investments coming to the city and to improve its governance. To support this, the Rio de Janeiro Low Carbon City Development Program was developed as a framework to plan, implement, monitor, and account for climate change mitigation actions.

Context

During the last two decades, Rio de Janeiro has experienced a declining economy, degrading urban infrastructure, and deteriorating environmental quality. For many years, the city was governed by parties that opposed the state and the national government, which isolated the city from support and investments, leading to poor governability.

In recent years the City Government of Rio de Janeiro has been committed to sustainable, low-carbon urban development, with the goal of being a world-class city with a high quality of life

for all residents. In 2011 a Municipal Law on Climate Change and Sustainable Development was passed requiring the city to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. The city government was also faced with a challenge to develop infrastructure for two mega events they would host, the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games, and ensure that the infrastructure development would be also in line with longer-term needs of the city residents and sustainable city development (City of Rio de Janeiro, 2011).

Approach

To address the issues facing the city and to improve its governance, the administration developed the 2016 Strategic Plan and a new management structure to support its implementation and targets. (City of Rio de Janeiro, 2012).

In order to link its strategic development plan and actions to its emission reduction goals, the city developed the Rio de Janeiro Low Carbon City Development Program (LCCDP) together with the World Bank (City of Rio de Janeiro and World Bank, 2012). The LCCDP seeks to help the city government to identify and finance climate change mitigation opportunities ('interventions') across a number of urban sectors.

The LCCDP is a framework certified by the International Standards Organization (ISO) that defines a common process for each intervention to be assessed, registered, and monitored so that emission reductions can be verified. The emission reductions will either be sold to external buyers, or counted towards Rio's municipal reduction targets and hence 'retired'.

Initially under the responsibility of the Environmental Secretary, the program was reallocated and put it directly under the responsibility of the Mayor's Office, as the program deals with different sectors of the administration and is a strategic management tool.

Outcomes

The LCCDP is still under implementation. The city administration has a budget of 65.9 million Brazilian reais to finance all the initiatives

contemplated in the plan for the 2012–2016 period, including green building certification, recycling, reforestation and urban tree planting, bicycle lanes, and finishing its bus rapid transit system.

Under the program framework, a project design document was elaborated for the reforestation projects, which will be submitted to Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). A study is also being undertaken involving the World Bank, a public lighting company, the Mayor's civil cabinet, and consultants to evaluate the technical and economic feasibility of replacing most of the public light bulbs in the city with light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs and assess the potential savings.

Lessons

Successful features of the LCCDP are:

1. Well-defined framework of roles and processes to plan, implement, monitor, and account for mitigation actions.
2. The organizational structure of the ISO-certified program can be replicated.
3. Flexibility. The program has the potential to expand over time to include a wide range of municipal activities – institutionalizing a 'carbon lens' through which ultimately all municipal activities may be viewed.
4. Participation and engagement from municipality staff and stakeholders through a working group of technical experts from the municipality and local university.
5. High-level mandate and engagement under the Office of the Mayor.

The main constraint is data availability and documentation. Taking the reforestation pilot

project as an example, it has the potential to be applied to carbon credits systems, such as the clean development mechanism or VCS, but the lack of documentation and good data makes it difficult to comply with the requirements of these systems.

Further Information

Low Carbon City Development Program:
http://einstitute.worldbank.org/ei/sites/default/files/Upload_Files/RiodejaneiroLowCarbonCityDevelopmentProgram_PD.pdf

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This case is a summary of research input to the Green Growth in Practice: Lessons from Country Experiences report published by GGBP in July 2014. The views and information expressed in this case study are not necessarily endorsed by the GGBP sponsors or organizations of the authors.

July 2014

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