

**UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS Paper 1, Society – urbanization and associated issues.
COP-28: Elevating Cities in the Climate Action Agenda**

Significance of Urban Areas:

The increasing importance of urban areas is evident as the global urban population is projected to reach 68% by 2050. Currently, urban centers consume approximately 75% of primary energy and contribute to around 70% of CO2 emissions. Addressing urban issues is integral to achieving the desired outcomes of the Paris Agreement commitments.

Major Event at COP-28 for Urban Area Development:

During COP-28, a significant milestone was the special ministerial meeting on urbanization and climate change. This gathering included key stakeholders such as ministers, local leaders, and financial institutions. The meeting underscored the need to formally recognize cities' roles in global climate negotiations and advocate for direct financial and technical assistance.

Challenges Faced by Cities in the Global South:

Cities in the Global South encounter distinctive challenges, including weaker governance structures, a prevalence of informal employment, and heightened vulnerability to climate disasters. Empowering these cities through increased financial and governance support is crucial for effective climate action.

Examples of Proactive Cities:

Some cities, like Chennai, are taking proactive steps in climate action, setting ambitious targets such as achieving zero emissions by 2050. These examples highlight the significance of local initiatives in advancing climate goals.

Way Forward:

To enhance climate resilience, city governments should actively participate in National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions. A crucial starting point involves creating a climate atlas of cities to map and identify vulnerable hotspots, facilitating targeted and effective interventions for sustainable urban development.