

# Introduction to Cities Scoring 2024

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## Introduction

### Principles of scoring

Scoring is closely aligned with CDP's mission – CDP works with jurisdictions to motivate them to disclose their impacts on the environment and natural resources and take action to reduce negative impacts, highlighting the case to do so. The CDP Scoring Methodology is designed to incentivize jurisdictions' transition towards resilience and net-zero through equitable environmental action. The scoring process is a valuable opportunity for jurisdictions to get feedback on their climate and environmental planning. Jurisdictions can use their score to benchmark their progress against others and to identify areas to improve on.

CDP undertakes scoring by assessing responders against a scoring methodology, which details how each question in the questionnaire will be scored, evaluating the responder's progress towards environmental stewardship. The scoring methodology provides a roadmap to jurisdictions on how to achieve best practice, and by developing the scoring methodology each year to align with best practice, CDP aims to drive changes in jurisdictions' behavior to improve environmental performance.

The scoring methodology assesses the level of detail and comprehensiveness in a response, as well as the jurisdiction's awareness of environmental issues, its management methods, and progress towards environmental stewardship. CDP is committed to transparency and as such provides the full scoring methodology online.

### Scoring of responses

The scoring of jurisdictions responses is conducted by the CDP scoring team, who carry out the scoring and run data quality checks and quality assurance processes to ensure scoring standards are upheld. To receive scores which accurately reflect a jurisdiction's climate and environmental actions, it is important that the questionnaire is answered as thoroughly as possible. CDP does not verify the information in any individual response by a jurisdiction – information outside of the CDP response is not considered as part of the scoring process, unless specified in the scoring methodology.

Responders are reminded that information in the CDP response may be made publicly available after scores are released and if the jurisdiction receives an A score. As such, responders are



advised to provide information that is as complete, accurate and as reflective of the jurisdictions current situation as possible. Scores remain private to jurisdictions, but CDP recognizes leadership in climate action by highlighting those who receive an A score through an international media campaign.

CDP scores responses submitted in all languages. Responding in English is not a requirement to be on the A list and the language of submission will not impact a jurisdiction's score.

## Other scoring resources

This document should be utilised in conjunction with the Cities Scoring Methodology available in the CDP Cities questionnaire and reporting guidance, the Cities High Level Methodology 2024 and the CDP Cities questionnaire - overview. The reporting guidance explains the elements covered in answering the questionnaires. It is important to report data in line with the instructions provided in the reporting guidance, as the scoring methodology functions based on responders providing response data in line with this guidance.

## Scoring of the Cities questionnaire

The questionnaire is aligned to a global network of initiatives including the Race to Zero, Race to Resilience, ICLEI initiatives, Global Covenant of Mayors, and NetZeroCities. By reporting to CDP-ICLEI Track, jurisdictions fulfil their commitments as part of these initiatives. Three questionnaire pathways are available to reflect the different contexts of local governments and to streamline reporting. This enables reporting to a core set of questions for all jurisdictions and additional questions only where relevant and valuable (Note C40 cities are presented with a standardized questionnaire. Therefore, questionnaire pathways are not applicable to C40 cities).

In 2024, the scoring methodology will only assess questions in Pathway 1. These include the data points requested by all partner organizations and therefore, all jurisdictions will be scored on the same data points and with the same scoring criteria. Any additional data points/questions presented in Pathway 2 or 3, or any project-specific data points/questions, will not be scored. The 2024 CDP Score will therefore reflect action on the core questions on climate change mitigation and adaptation in the areas of governance, assessment, planning and actions with some detail on sector metrics.

## Increasing scoring ambition

Reflecting minor changes in the questionnaire in 2024, the Scoring Methodology has been updated to reflect these changes, continuing to align with the imperative to limit global warming



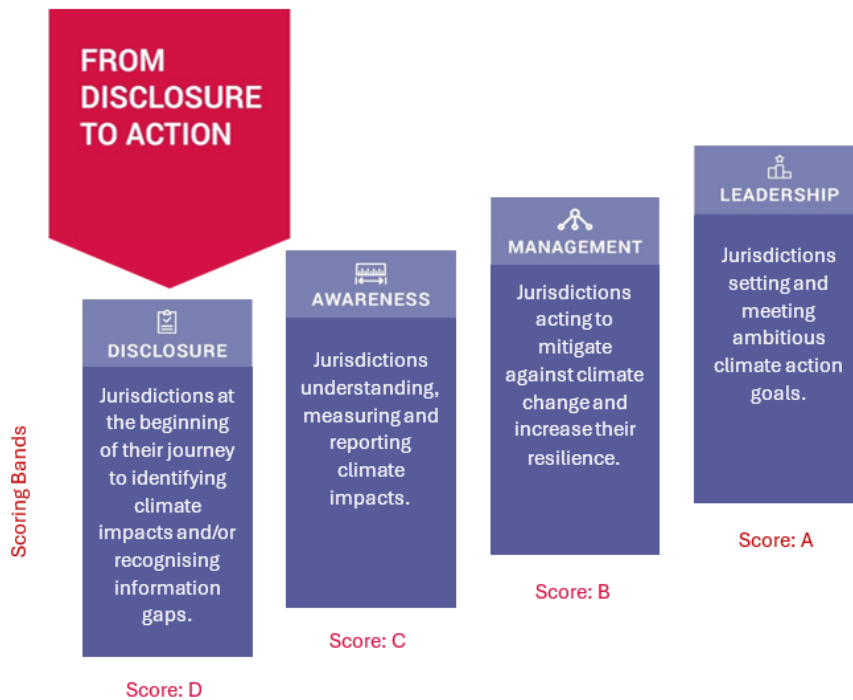
to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change. The Scoring Methodology in 2024 continues to highlight the importance of science-based targets, incentivizing jurisdictions to set goals addressing climate-related hazards and track their progress towards these goals and targets.

## Approach to scoring

### Scoring levels

Jurisdictions are assessed across four scoring bands which represent the steps jurisdictions move through as they progress towards climate leadership. The bands are:

- ▼ **Disclosure (D- or D):** A jurisdiction in the Disclosure scoring band has just started the journey of understanding and reporting on climate impacts. These jurisdictions understand the value of collecting data to drive climate action but may not have structures or resources in place to obtain the necessary information. Jurisdictions in the Disclosure band report on the degree to which climate impacts and risks have been measured.
- ▼ **Awareness (C- or C):** A jurisdiction in the Awareness scoring band is in the process of assessing the main risks and impacts of climate change. These jurisdictions have begun developing an assessment and measuring impacts to get a holistic understanding of the main effects climate change has on their jurisdiction and are beginning to take action to reduce them.
- ▼ **Management (B- or B):** A jurisdiction in the Management band has managed to gather data on the main risks and impacts of climate change and is taking action to adapt to and reduce these effects. These jurisdictions have worked collaboratively with key stakeholders to understand their risks and impacts and now have plans in place to mitigate and/or adapt.
- ▼ **Leadership (A- or A):** A Leadership jurisdiction demonstrates best practice standards across adaptation and mitigation, has set ambitious goals and made progress towards achieving those goals. Jurisdictions in the Leadership band have strategic, holistic plans in place to ensure the actions they are taking will reduce climate impacts and vulnerabilities of the people, businesses, and organizations in their jurisdiction.



## Thresholds

To progress from one level to the next, jurisdictions must pass the threshold at each scoring band. For example, a jurisdiction must receive enough points in the Disclosure band to pass the threshold before they will be scored in the next scoring band - Awareness. Jurisdictions do not need to meet every criterion listed to pass the threshold of a particular scoring band. However, the more criteria they meet, the higher the chance that the jurisdiction will be able to earn enough points to surpass the threshold and be scored in the following band.

Level	Threshold	Score Level
Disclosure	1-44%	D-
	45-79%	D



Awareness	1-44%	C-
	45-79%	C
Management	1-44%	B-
	45-79%	B
Leadership	1-59%	A-
	60-100%	A

*CDP provisionally sets the thresholds and these will be reviewed during the scoring period to ensure that the distribution of responses among scoring levels is representative of the current level of progress in the responding population as a whole. CDP reserves the right to adjust these thresholds at any point prior to the release of scores in order to best represent the overall state of progress of cities.*

## Essential criteria

As well as achieving a minimum score in a level to be able to move to the next level, CDP also utilizes a system of essential criteria. To be able to achieve a score within a given score level, certain criteria must be met. Even if a responder has passed the threshold to be scored within a scoring level, they will not be eligible to be scored for the level if they do not pass all of the essential criteria associated with the level. Awareness, Management and Leadership bands have essential criteria which must be met to receive a score within those bands.

For example, regardless of whether all other criteria are met:

- ▼ To achieve an Awareness score, all Awareness essential criteria must be met;
- ▼ To achieve a Management score, all Awareness and Management essential criteria must be met;
- ▼ To achieve a Leadership score, all Awareness, Management and Leadership essential criteria must be met;
- ▼ To achieve an A score, all Awareness, Management, Leadership and the additional A List essential criteria must be met.

**Jurisdictions should ensure they have attached all essential criteria documents before submitting their response to the 2024 questionnaire to receive a score which truly reflects their**



**planning and actions. Please note that attachments do not copy forward from 2023 responses and therefore need to be reattached in order to be scored.**

## Essential criteria in 2024

The only changes to the essential criteria for 2024 are at Management level. This year we have published our attachment check criteria for the A-list.

### Awareness essential criteria

To score at least a C- or C, jurisdictions must:

- ▼ Report a climate hazard in question 2.2

### Management essential criteria

- ▼ To score at least a B- or B, jurisdictions must:
- ▼ At least be intending to undertake a climate risk and vulnerability assessment in the next two years in question 2.1
- ▼ Have a community-wide inventory and attach or provide a weblink to their inventory in question 3.1.1
- ▼ Have either an integrated climate plan addressing adaptation or mitigation OR a standalone mitigation plan OR a standalone adaptation plan and attach or provide a weblink to the plan in question 8.1.1
- ▼ Have at least one adaptation action in question 9.1 AND at least one mitigation action in question 9.2

### Leadership essential criteria

To score at least an A-, jurisdictions must:

- ▼ Have a climate risk and vulnerability assessment and attach or provide a weblink to the assessment in question 2.1.
- ▼ Have a fully reported adaptation goal in question 5.1.1
  - Fully reported means: adaptation goal, climate hazard that goal addresses, target year of goal are all complete and target year of goal is in the future.
- ▼ Have a fully reported emissions reduction target in question 6.1.1

*If the target type is Base year emissions (absolute); Base year intensity; or Baseline scenario:*

- Fully reported means: target type, boundary of target relative to jurisdiction boundary, are carbon credits currently used or planned to be used to achieve this target, base year, target year, percentage of emissions reduction, and net emissions in target year are all complete and target year is in the future and boundary of the target relative to the jurisdiction boundary must be "same" or "larger".



*If the target type is Fixed-level:*

*- Fully reported means: target type, boundary of target relative to jurisdiction boundary, are carbon credits currently used or planned to be used to achieve this target, target year, and net emissions in target year are all complete and target year is in the future and boundary of the target relative to the jurisdiction must be “same” or “larger”.*

- ▼ Have either an integrated climate plan addressing both adaptation and mitigation, OR a standalone mitigation plan AND a standalone adaptation plan and attach or provide a weblink to the plan in question 8.1.1

### A list essential criteria

To score an A, jurisdictions must:

- ▼ Demonstrate leadership in target setting by reporting targets aligned with the latest science on limiting the most harmful impacts of climate change. A science-based target should include both a long-term net-zero target (by 2050) and a mid-term target that is aligned with a fair share of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. In 2024, jurisdictions are required to report both a long-term and mid-term science-based target to score an A.
- ▼ Ensure attached Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments assess **all** potential climate risks impacting the jurisdiction and is not limited to assessing one climate risk.
- ▼ Ensure attached Emissions Inventories provide a clear breakdown of emissions within the community and their respective sources.
- ▼ Ensure attached Climate Action Plans clearly cover both an adaptation and mitigation plan
- ▼ Submit their response publicly

*Note that stricter criteria for attachments may be introduced in future years.*

## Understanding the scoring methodology

### Methodology structure

For each question, the scoring methodology provides the specific scoring criteria for each of the four scoring levels, and a table that details the point allocation for the question. The scoring criteria detail what conditions must be met to achieve points within a scoring level. The point allocation table indicates the maximum number of points that are attainable for each scoring level. Each scoring level has a separate ‘numerator’ and ‘denominator’ column. The denominator column indicates how many points are available at each scoring level.

The numerator column indicates the number of points that can be attained out of the number of points available at each scoring level. The numerator and denominator are usually identical,





except for some instances where the numerator is less than the denominator, indicating that it is not possible for a responder to achieve all the points available, even if they meet all the criteria stipulated for that level.

Only information provided in response to a given question will be utilized for scoring each question. References made to answers provided in other questions will not be considered as part of the scoring process except where specified in the scoring methodology. Please note that any text added in 'Comment' columns cannot be scored.

Unanswered questions will be scored zero out of the maximum available points for that question or set of questions. In the instance of certain key data points, an unanswered question will be scored zero out of a denominator that is greater than the maximum available points for that question. These key data points will be highlighted in specific scoring criteria in the methodology.

## Types of scoring

The approach by which points are awarded varies on a question-by-question basis, and responders are advised to check the scoring methodology closely when preparing responses, to understand how points will be allocated.

For some questions, points or fractions of points are awarded cumulatively – per each data point provided – up to the maximum points available for that question. Other questions require all data points requested to be provided for any points to be awarded. For the latter, leaving information blank or failing to provide a required data point will lead to zero points being awarded for that question.

In instances where multiple datasets are required (such as multiple rows of data in a table), a variety of approaches to scoring are employed. All of the data provided may be scored, only certain rows may be scored, or only the best scoring row(s) may be scored.

## Proportional scoring

In some instances, responses are scored in proportion to the amount of data that is disclosed. This scoring approach is used in questions in which the amount of information reported may vary between responders. Proportional scoring incentivizes complete reporting on all rows disclosed, by awarding points in proportion to the amount of information provided in a table. Points may be awarded in proportion to the number of individual cells complete within a table, or in proportion to the number of complete rows within a table. In the Cities methodology, proportional scoring by cell is the only method used.



Type of proportional scoring	Methodology criteria
Proportional scoring by the number of cells completed in a table. Only once row might be scored, or multiple rows might be scored.	Points will be awarded per completed cell in proportion to the number of cells displayed. A maximum of X points is available for this question.

## Scoring routes

Not all responders to a given environmental issue areas will see the same questions, as the CDP questionnaire contains multiple routes. Selecting question routes impacts the number of questions presented to a responding jurisdiction, and therefore the denominator of their score. Jurisdictions that respond 'Yes' to most questions will generally have a higher denominator compared to those selecting 'No'. However, scores are calculated as a percentage to normalize the effect of different question routes. The final score is the number of points awarded divided by the total number of points available to the jurisdiction for the question routes selected. If a jurisdiction answers fewer questions because they are not relevant to that jurisdiction, they are not penalized.

## Disclaimer surrounding scores

The CDP score is based on activities and positions disclosed in the CDP response. The score is not a comprehensive metric of a jurisdiction's level of sustainability or 'green-ness', or a specific metric on the environmental footprint, but rather an indication of the level of action taken by the jurisdiction to assess and manage its impacts on, and from, environmental related issues during the reporting year.

CDP's 2024 scoring methodologies are still evolving. The methodologies have been published to indicate to responding jurisdictions how scores will be awarded this year. CDP reserves the right to make adjustments to the criteria or weighting of questions before and throughout the scoring period, based on emerging risk management strategies and best practice, quality of response data or scoring outcomes.

## Feedback and support

If you would like information about receiving feedback on your score, make suggestions about CDP's scoring methodologies, or ask a general question, please contact the CDP [Help Center](#).



## **Annex I - Conflict of interest policy**

### **Policy on conflicts of interest relating to the scoring of responses**

Maintaining CDP's reputation as an independent and unbiased provider of high quality information is of paramount importance. Accordingly, CDP has adopted this policy to minimize the risk of conflicts of interest that might affect the accuracy of the scores we award to jurisdictions that respond to our questionnaire

### **Development of scoring methodologies**

1. CDP's Scoring Team is responsible for developing CDP's scoring methodologies in a way which furthers CDP's mission, takes into account scientific knowledge on environmental issues, and treats responding companies fairly. The Scoring Team must balance these factors and make an independent decision on them, and to minimize the potential for conflicts of interest none of the team members are responsible for any on-going relationships with jurisdictions.

### **Scoring process**

2. CDP's Scoring Team undertakes the entire scoring process, independently from other CDP staff. The Scoring Team may request input from other CDP staff (e.g. to translate an attachment to check whether it meets specific criteria) but such staff are not granted access to unpublished responses or scores and all staff remain subject to the prohibition below at all times.
3. Questionnaire responses submitted by respondents may only be amended by them, or to their instruction by CDP staff.

### **Restrictions on funding and attempts to influence scores**

4. CDP will not accept funding where an objective of such funding is to influence any scoring decisions. This applies equally to grants, sponsorship, sales of services or any other income.
5. Any attempt by any member of CDP's staff or board of Trustees to amend responses or influence scoring methodologies or scoring results or assist any other party in doing so for personal gain, will be regarded as gross misconduct and will result in instant dismissal without compensation.