

**Plenary Session  
Plenary Session II**

# **Cities and Universities against Racism**

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Research from city action plans in the United States suggests that two factors matter the most: (1) having paid city staff dedicated to sustainability/environmental goals, and (2) having a university in the city. City staff enable environmental activists in the community to develop action plans that are effective and ensure that those plans can be executed. Universities and especially the community members and students that work and study in them frequently provide not only financial resources but also critical expertise and labor to carry out policy efforts. As cities work together to combat racism, many of the lessons from successful efforts to combat climate change can be applied towards building more just societies around the world. Critically, city size, income, and political orientation, while relevant, were not statistically significant in predicting which cities have ambitious climate action plans. There is every reason to expect that just as small poor communities are frequently at the front edge of climate action, so too can they be leaders in combating racism.