



BUENOS AIRES – GOOD WINDS FOR CHANGE

The metropolitan area of Buenos Aires with three million inhabitants is the second largest urban region in South America. Buenos Aires pledged to cut emissions 50% by 2030 and was one of the first C40 cities to aim for total carbon neutral status by 2050. It is also the first city in the world to have 100% LED street lighting.

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH

To reach its goals, Argentina's capital city is working across different areas including social inclusion, urban development, and environmental management. Efforts with both energy efficiency and increasing renewables uptake are critical as the energy sector accounts for 55% of the city's emissions.

One strategy the city is pursuing is fostering a network for sustainable procurement for the construction industry. City officials, and especially those responsible for city infrastructure and maintenance, have trained in using the network, and

Buenos Aires is collaborating with 13 other cities through the GLCN to exchange working ideas on sustainable procurement. To date, 75% of all the city's centralized purchase orders include sustainability criteria.

Buenos Aires has also tackled gender equality as part of its sustainability work. First the city measured gender 'gaps' – physical, economic, and decision making gaps that women experience. Results were analyzed, and the city then took steps based on input: adjusting traffic signs and increasing access to public transport availability.



INTERMITTENT WINDS

The years from 2016 - 2019 were good ones for renewable energy implementation in Buenos Aires and the rest of Argentina. The government awarded contracts for 6.5 gigawatts (GW) of renewables nationally. Several wind farms sprang up in the southwest part of the Buenos Aires municipality, creating thousands of jobs. When fully online these wind and solar projects will make up 18% of Argentina's total energy supply and avoid 220 million tonnes of CO2 over the next twenty years.

But with the year 2020, a new president, economic troubles, and the Coronavirus pandemic, renewables development has suffered. Buenos Aires will have to redouble its efforts to stay on track with emissions reductions.

Learning energy efficiency networks (LEENs) are one tool the city might use. LEENs foster collaboration and continual learning in and between industries to ramp up efficiency. Buenos Aires has been part of a project to evaluate LEENs effectiveness in Argentina - and thus far energy savings of between 2-3% were achieved by project participants with little investment, mainly via improved energy management.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic Buenos Aires ramped up installation of bike lanes in the city, with a goal to achieve one million bike trips per day by 2023. As part of that goal the city added 17 kilometers of new lanes to the current network of 250 kilometers of lanes in 2020, and is promising 300 additional kilometers of travel lanes for bicycling by 2023.*

BENEFITING THE VULNERABLE

New financial support from the World Bank will help the state-owned AYSA water company reduce leaks and help the city's poorer areas increase access to clean water via solar-powered pumping stations.

Buenos Aires is beginning to reap the benefits of a revamped recycling program – there's a goal to have 80% of residents separating their trash and recycling by 2023 (up from 67% currently). Waste collection firm Amcor has increased the city's recycling with a recent 'Rethinking Recycling' campaign, and the city pledged to get more green communal recycling bins within 150 meters of all residents as key to recycling success.

Buenos Aires promised to create 111 new hectares of green space for city residents and completed that promise in 2019. For the period from 2021 to 2023 city officials pledged an additional 110 hectares of new or reconditioned green space to be created.**

WHAT'S NEXT

The city's climate efforts and ambition have not stood still in spite of setbacks. Building collaborative efforts with other stakeholders is important - LEENs can play a role. The energy sector is the most significant carbon emitter in the city so alliances with the national government, businesses, and experts will be vital. The city will need to change the energy grid's dependence on fossil fuels to more sustainable energy sources, while businesses must uptake energy efficiency – the current administration seems to have stalled. Educating citizens and completing energy standards for buildings are also key.



IN BRIEF, BUENOS AIRES HAS WORKED TO:

- ramp up a national renewables industry with wind and solar installations
- vastly increase its city bike network with more kilometers of bike paths and a promise of 300 additional kilometers of paths by 2023
- give city residents more green spaces for recreation and air quality
- advance the city's stormwater management network to respond to increased flood risk from climate and weather pattern changes

*Source: <https://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/noticias/lanzamos-los-compromisos-de-la-ciudad-2021-2023>

**Source: <https://www.buenosaires.gov.ar/compromisos/110-hectareas-de-nuevo-espacio-verde-publico>