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Covenant of Mayors
for Climate & Energy
CoM East

Support

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Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) / Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) (9)

Wednesday, 16 May 2018 07:52

What is a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) or Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

Signatories of the former Covenant of Mayors addressing only energy and climate change mitigation have committed to prepare and implement a Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP) before 2020. Signatories of the new Covenant of



SECAP only); clearly identified goals and targets; and the measures planned together with time frames, assigned responsibilities and estimated impacts.

Scope of action:

The Covenant of Mayors concerns the action at local level within the competence of the local authorities involved. Hence, it is expected that the Covenant signatories will act in several or all of their possible roles:

- Consumer and model: All local authorities are responsible for their own energy consumption. At the same time, they play an exemplary role by encouraging citizens and other stakeholders to use energy more efficiently.
- Planner, developer and regulator: All local authorities are usually responsible for building, transport and land use planning policies. They have the power to: optimize the energy performance of new facilities, integrate sustainable transport measures and adaptation strategies in local planning practice. They shape transport/energy performance by legal decisions and regulatory instruments.
- Producer and supplier: Local authorities may also act as a local utility or service provider promoting local energy production and using renewable energy sources (e.g. Combined Heat and Power/CHPs, district heating systems etc.).
- Advisor and motivator: Awareness-raising activities are important to engage the whole community to support sustainable energy and climate policies. Local authorities can act as advisor and educator for citizens and other stakeholders (e.g. architects, planners or craftsmen).

For guidance on the mitigation part, please consult the SEAP Guidebook ([en](#), [de](#), [fr](#), [it](#) & [es](#))

For guidance on the adaptation part, please consult the [Urban Adaptation Support Tool](#).

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Which sectors/fields of action are considered in a SEAP and in a SECAP?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

Since the Covenant's commitments concern the whole geographical area of the local authority, the action plan should include actions that cover the sectors of activity from both public and private actors.

Covenant signatories are free to choose their main areas of action. In principle, it is anticipated that most action plans will cover the sectors that are considered within the emission inventory and risk and vulnerability assessment (for SECAP only).

For the mitigation part (both SEAP and SECAP):

It is recommended to include actions targeting the Covenant key sectors:

- Municipal buildings, equipment/facilities;
- Tertiary (non-municipal) buildings, equipment/facilities;
- Residential buildings;



- Industry.
- Local electricity production.
- Local heat/cold production.
- Others (e.g. Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries).

For the adaptation part (For SECAP only):

Identification of the sectors to increase the resilience in a city is highly contextual. A solid and comprehensive climate adaptation strategy therefore involves thinking adaptation into all aspects of municipal services affected by climate change. Some of the main sectors that can improve the resilience of cities include:

- Infrastructure.
- Public Services.
- Land Use Planning.
- Environment & Biodiversity.
- Agriculture & Forestry.
- Economy.

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Can an already existing local climate and energy plan (SEAP) be sufficient to fulfil the requirements a SEAP/SECAP?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

In order to make sure that your existing Action Plan fulfils the minimal requirements set in the context of the Covenant of Mayors, please review the document according to the 10 key principles for the energy and climate mitigation part (see in the SEAP Guidebook - [en](#), [de](#), [fr](#), [it](#) & [es](#), page 8).

The action plan must contain a clear reference to the core commitments, i.e. at least 20% CO2 emissions reduction by 2020 and/or 30% CO2 emissions reduction by 2030 and increased resilience to the impacts of climate change



longer term strategies and goals. If your existing action plan has a shorter or a longer timeframe than the Covenant timeframes (i.e. 2020 or 2030), you have to adjust it to the Covenant target time horizons and include the Covenant target in your action plan approved by the City Council.

In addition, the key elements of your action plan have to be reported in the online template available in 'My Covenant'. Please check the Reporting Guidelines available in the [library](#).

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When to submit the SEAP/SECAP?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

Deadline for SEAP submission

Signatories to the Covenant of Mayors related to the 2020 framework, commit to submitting their Sustainable Energy Action Plans where the Covenant objectives and measures are justified within one year following the local council decision as indicated in the adhesion document.

Deadline for SECAP submission

Signatories to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy related to the 2030 framework commit to submitting their Sustainable Energy and Climate Plan, including justified objectives and actions within two years following the date of the local council decision as indicated in the [adhesion document](#).

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How to submit the SEAP/SECAP?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)



The procedure includes the following steps:

1. Log in to 'My Covenant' using your personal identifiers - You can retrieve your password at any time under the 'sign-in' section.
2. Fill in the 'SEAP template' in English - Click on 'My action plan' > 'SEAP template' in the blue menu at the top of the homepage and complete the following three sections: your 'Overall Strategy', your 'Baseline Emission Inventory' and your 'SEAP'. All the green cells are mandatory! A specific instructions document for filling in the template is available on the Covenant website [library](#).
3. Upload your SEAP document - After filling in the SEAP template, click on 'Upload SEAP document' and upload your complete Sustainable Energy Action Plan - duly approved by the municipal council - (and any other relevant documents) in a PDF format.
4. Validate your online SEAP submission - Click on 'Go to submission' and follow the instructions.

In 2017, a preliminary checking system of the template will be made available, allowing the detection of errors or inconsistencies. For this, you should click on the 'See notification checklist' button. This will be run through a parallel online application, developed and managed by the JRC.

Once submitted, your SEAP will be analyzed by the JRC and you shall receive a feedback report. More information on the SEAP assessment procedure can be found [here](#).

For submitting your SECAP:

The SECAP submission procedure is currently under development, as a part of upgrading the existing SEAP template to also include reporting for 2030 commitments and adaptation. During 2016, the SECAP template will only be available in EXCEL format in the library. New signatories can use the EXCEL version as a working tool as well as to get acquainted with the reporting framework that will be introduced online within the last quarter of 2017.

In the meantime, new signatories will be able to upload any documents. e.g. adaptation strategy as part of the SEAP



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Wednesday, 16 May 2018 08:00

How can a group of Covenant signatories submit a joint action plan?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

A group of neighboring local authorities joining the Covenant of Mayors and willing to elaborate a joint SEAP/SECAP is welcome to do so.

The group can choose between the following two collaboration options:

Option 1:

- Mitigation: Each signatory of the group individually commits to reducing CO₂ emissions (SEAP). Because the emission reduction target remains an individual commitment, ALL signatories have to fill in their own SEAP/SECAP template, including their own CO₂ / energy consumption data. CO₂ emission reductions resulting from common actions identified in the joint SEAP/SECAP have to be shared among the signatories and accounted for in each SEAP/SECAP template, according to transparent rules described in the [joint SEAP document](#). The joint SEAP/SECAP has to be approved by the municipal council (or equivalent decision-making body) of each municipality involved and uploaded by each of the local authorities onto their profile via [‘My Covenant’](#) (restricted area). The names of the local authorities that are covered by the SEAP/SECAP must be clearly indicated in the Action Plan. This type of joint SEAP/SECAP is described in the SEAP Guidebook ([EN](#), [RU](#)).
- Adaptation (For SECAP only): Signatories can decide to prepare a Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and its corresponding actions jointly or individually. When joining as a group of municipalities with option 1, each municipality will register individually by filling in Local authorities

**Option 2:**

Mitigation: the group of signatories collectively commits to reducing CO2 emissions. In this case, the emission reduction target is a commitment shared between the different authorities composing the group. Therefore, ONE single SEAP/SECAP template needs to be filled in by the group of Signatories. The joint Action Plan has to be approved by the municipal council (or equivalent decision-making body) of each involved Signatory and uploaded by the group onto a shared profile via ‘[My Covenant](#)’ (restricted area). The names of the local authorities that are covered by the SEAP/SECAP, as well as their level of contribution to the overall plan must be clearly indicated in the SEAP/SECAP document. This option aims at fostering inter-institutional co-operation by facilitating joint approaches with neighboring authorities. It is particularly recommended to small- and medium-sized municipalities lacking human and/or financial resources as well as to municipalities within the same urban areas.

(For SECAP only): Signatories can decide to prepare a Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and its corresponding actions jointly or individually. When joining as a group of municipalities with option 2, only one profile must be set up. This joint profile must include all individual adherence forms when registering the Local authority’s information & contact details online. It shall furthermore be indicated that it is a group of municipalities committing as a joint SEAP/SECAP option 2 by ticking the box in the online form and include the associated municipalities where required in the form.

Important:

In both cases, the ‘group of Signatories’ is strongly encouraged to appoint a body/authority responsible for coordinating the work throughout the SEAP/SECAP development and implementation process. It could be for example one of the most active / advanced municipality among the group, the agglomeration in case of urban areas, or the province / region acting as official Covenant Coordinator (see the [list of Covenant Coordinators](#)). If you are interested in joining the Covenant of Mayors as a ‘group of Signatories’, please contact the Covenant of Mayors Office (info-east@eumayors.eu). The CoMO reserves the right to decline any application which would



Download the adhesion form:

[Group of signatories - option 1](#)

[Group of signatories - option 2](#)

The adhesion form must be signed by all local authorities involved in the group, after official approval by their respective municipal councils.

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How to request an extension of your SEAP/SECAP submission deadline?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

Signatories are committed to submitting a SEAP (1 year after the adhesion date*) / SECAP (2 years after the adhesion date*). If the SEAP/SECAP cannot be completed by that date, Covenant Signatories must request an extension. To do so, they are invited to fill in the online delay request form, available in '[My Covenant](#)' (Covenant website extranet).

If you are an individual Signatory (i.e. not belonging to any official Covenant Territorial Coordinator):

A 9-month extension may be granted to individual Signatories where circumstances, outside the local authority' control, delay the completion and submission of the SEAP/SECAP by the official submission date.

9-month Deadline Extension Procedure:

- Go to 'My Covenant' and log in with your personal identifiers.
- Click 'My Action Plan' > 'Submit a delay request' and fill in the form (all fields marked with an asterisk * are compulsory). The request must include the main reasons of the delay.
- Press the 'Submit delay request' button. You (and other contact persons associated to the profile) will receive a confirmation by email within 1 day.

If you belong to an official Covenant Territorial Coordinator

When supported by an official [Covenant Territorial Coordinator](#) (CTC), you may request your CTC for 18 months extension.

18-month Deadline extension procedure for the CTC:

- Go to 'My Covenant' and log in with their personal identifiers.

Click 'My Signatories' > 'Submit a delay request' and fill in the form (all fields marked with an asterisk * are



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What if the SEAP/SECAP has not been submitted within the deadline?

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

If the Covenant Signatory has not applied for an extension:

One deadline extension can be granted, provided that the signatory duly completes the online delay request form - please refer to the FAQ: '[How to request an extension of your SEAP submission deadline?](#)'

If the Covenant Signatory has already been granted an extension:

The global success and the credibility of the initiative depend upon the fulfilment of the commitments taken by its signatories. The European Commission, recognizing the efforts undertaken by other local authorities having complied with these commitments and respecting the termination clause of the [Covenant of Mayors official texts](#) (*), suspends Signatories in case of non-submission within the revised timeframe. However, the signatory status in the Covenant of Mayors can be re-activated at any time, provided that the municipality fulfils its first commitment and duly submits an action plan on-line through our extranet system ("[My Covenant](#)").

(*) Short extract from the Covenant official text (page 7):

“

Suspension in case of non-compliance: Signatories accept to be suspended from the initiative – subject to prior notice in writing by the Covenant of Mayors Office – in the event of non-submission of the above-mentioned documents (i.e. Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan and Monitoring Reports) within the established deadlines. This procedure ensures transparency, robustness and fairness vis-à-vis other signatories who deliver on their commitments.

Note: With the new fully automatic and transparent- suspension procedure, the information on whether or not signatories are respecting their commitments is publicly available under their individual profiles - [see the list of Signatories](#). In case of suspended signatories, the public profiles are greyed out with the following notification: 'Signatory on hold - deadline over'.

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What happens once the SEAP is submitted? - SEAP/SECAP assessment

Written by [Raphael Chatelet](#)

Once your action plan is submitted via the online reporting platform 'My Covenant', all the key results of your action plan are automatically displayed in a graphical manner in your signatory profile in the Covenant website. Furthermore,



The evaluation process is mainly based on the description encoded in the SEAP/SECAP online template. Therefore, all Covenant signatories should ensure that information filled in the template is well-consistent with their full SEAP/SECAP document.

The eligibility criteria are the following:

- The action plan must be approved by the Municipal Council or equivalent body.
- The action plan must clearly specify the Covenant mitigation (i.e. at least 30% CO2 reduction by 2030) and adaptation commitments.
- The action plan must be based on the results of a comprehensive Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) and Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment(s).
- For mitigation, the action plan must cover the key sectors of activity (Municipal, Tertiary, Residential and Transport).
 1. The Baseline Emission Inventory must cover at least three out of four key sectors.
 2. The mitigation actions must cover at least two out of four key sectors.

The Covenant signatory will be contacted if the online template is deemed incomplete or if any additional information is needed.

Note:

The indicative timeframe for SEAP/SECAP analysis is six months.

For specific information on the assessment of your action plan the Joint Research Centre can be contacted via: jrc-com-technical-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu

In cases where a Covenant Coordinator is coordinating the action plans, a grouped analysis can be carried out by the JRC in order to provide a faster feedback. If your province/region has developed a common approach to assist signatories with their action plans you are kindly invited to contact the JRC: jrc-com-technical-helpdesk@ec.europa.eu (more information [here](#)).

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