# Participant Information Sheet

Research Project: **Integrating the sustainable development goals into climate planning in British and Japanese cities**

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Research students or research staff engaged by the project can also carry out the activities.

Project reference: ES/S013547/1

We invite you to take part in a research activity as part of a research study being undertaken collaboratively by the Institute of Energy and Sustainable Development of De Montfort University and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (Japan). This information sheet provides background information, describes your participation and informs about your rights as a participant. Please read this carefully and feel free to request any clarification or additional information as appropriate.

## Background of the research study

Through this social science research collaboration between De Montfort University (UK) and the Institute for Global Energy Strategies (Japan), we are working on the timely theme of making climate planning more sustainable in cities in United Kingdom and Japan. The world is urbanising rapidly and more than 50% of the global population now lives in cities around the world. As the economic output is concentrated in cities, their contribution to climate change is significant and growing rapidly. While many cities have climate action plans and city administrations are seemingly well-positioned to align their climate change plans with other sustainable development concerns, little is known about the sustainability of city climate plans. Relatively little is known about the steps cities are taking to make climate plan sustainable. In fact, whether and to what extent cities are making links between their climate and sustainability objectives remains an open question. This study aims to fill this knowledge gap through a number of distinct activities. We have developed a list of cities that have already produced climate change plan and we are developing screening criteria to help identify the links and gaps between that climate plan and the SDGs. The screening criteria will be used to create a shortlist of cities in both countries to determine the status of integration of Sustainable Development Goals in climate action plans, identify the reasons for weak alignment and find ways of improving the linkage. This scoping exercise would consist of interviews and surveys with a manageable number of cities in both Japan and the United Kingdom.

In the final phase, the research teams in both countries would develop a set of knowledge products and learning materials that would summarise the preliminary results of the networking and then scoping phase.

## Participant selection

We are selecting participants who we believe would be able to provide useful insights regarding the climate action plans of cities, their sustainability plans and the challenges they face and could share views about the potential for integration of the sustainable city agenda into climate actions. We have considered participants from city councils (working in the areas of climate change, sustainability, energy issues and long-term planning and development), academics, consultants, NGOs, environmental agencies. Participants are identified through an internet search of city councils, their policy and planning documents, academic publications, and other secondary sources (reports, news articles, etc.). References from participants through snowballing approach have also been followed.

## Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have no obligation to participate in this study. You may decide not to answer any of the questions if you wish. You may also decide to withdraw from this study at any time by advising the researcher interviewing you or by emailing [subhesb@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:subhesb@dmu.ac.uk) or using the contact detail at the end of this document. If you notify us of your withdrawal, all identifiable data will be destroyed. Once data has been anonymised it will be impossible to identify the origin and cannot be destroyed.

We may ask for clarification of issues raised through your participation and we may contact you subsequently, but you will not be obliged in any way to clarify or participate further.

## Your involvement

We are requesting your participation in this research through a semi-structured interview of approximately 30 minutes in length to take place by arrangement. We will initially contact you by email or telephone. If interview is not feasible for any reason, we can send the questions by email or using a web-based application or by post for your participation.

## Rights and confidentiality

The information you provide is confidential, except that with your permission anonymised quotes may be used. If you request confidentiality, beyond anonymised quotes, information you provide will be treated only as a source of background information, alongside literature-based research and interviews with others.

Your name or any other personal identifying information will not appear in any publications resulting from this study; neither will there be anything to identify your place of work.

The information gained from this interview will only be used for the above objectives, will not be used for any other purpose and will not be recorded in excess of what is required for the research. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, your data and personal details will not be shared with third parties.

Even though the study findings will be published in international conferences and journals, only the research team will have access to the interview data itself. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

## Complaints procedure

In the unlikely event of any complaint or any issue that cannot be addressed by the researcher, please feel free to approach the Principal Investigator of the study for resolution of your issue. You can contact Professor Subhes Bhattacharyya via email ([subhesb@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:subhesb@dmu.ac.uk)).

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information please ask the researcher before, during, or after the interview or contact [subhesb@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:subhesb@dmu.ac.uk)