

# Management report 2023

The year 2023 has allowed us to continue weaving networks of collaboration and trust among environmental leaders, developing tools for just climate action, and guiding our efforts towards climate justice to achieve resilient and regenerative territories and communities.





# Introduction

2023 is shaping up to be the hottest year on record so far. Precisely for this reason, the call for joint climate action is more urgent than ever.

This year, the Low Carbon City team focused its efforts on various collaborative solutions that respond to the need for climate-just, resilient, and regenerative actions. Our commitment to making climate change a vital topic within communities has also led us to work intensively on building alliances and fostering trust with partner organizations. We aim to connect efforts already underway across territories to amplify the impact of actions and unite the environmental and community sectors.

The development of the Just Climate Action Guide, our main project this year, enabled us to collaborate with our allies to create a tool designed to center the climate crisis as a cross-cutting theme in decision-making—an important factor in promoting human rights, social equity, and gender equality. This document seeks to guide public office candidates and decision-makers in climate action, while empowering citizens to contribute to democratic participation and collaboration with other sectors to build a country more resilient to climate impacts.

This same vision led us to engage directly with communities—specifically in Moravia, Nueva Jerusalén, and with leaders from

Santa Elena, Comuna 9, Rionegro, and Guarne—strengthening grassroots climate action capacities through creative workshops with children and youth, implementing and delivering solutions to enhance community resilience, and empowering citizens to develop climate projects.

Additionally, during the Cities for Children and Adolescents event, young people had the opportunity to learn about climate action and propose ideas for cities that prioritize the needs and interests of children and youth.

We also contributed to the creation of Voices from the Territories: A Gathering of Community Organizations Transforming the City. This initiative brought together community leaders to align efforts and provide guidance for reactivating social, environmental, and cultural stewardship rooted in the territories and the people who inhabit them.

This year represented an opportunity for Low Carbon City to reconnect with communities, territories, and local cooperation—a possibility that allows us to continue weaving together community and environment, committing to territorial climate action where the health and well-being of those around us depend on caring for our planet.



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# Our organization in numbers



132.451

Cumulative People Mobilized Since 2016



667

Cumulative Activities and Projects Since 2016



10.857

Cumulative experts



579

Cumulative volunteers



130

Climate solutions



# Our New Strategy

We create collective and regenerative solutions to build capacities and enhance climate resilience in territories and communities.

Science informs us that we must achieve carbon neutrality while simultaneously adapting to the climate impacts we are already experiencing. We also recognize that those most affected by climate change are the most vulnerable populations. Therefore, we are committed to developing solutions through a justice-oriented lens, contributing to the reduction of social inequalities and the collective construction of resilient, low-carbon, and regenerative territories.





# Sowing a Green Future in Moravia

We were in Moravia with children creating biodigester bales and short videos about caring for nature.

With resources from the Social Change Nest microgrant, in collaboration with Tricila and the Oasis Urbano Foundation, we conducted a series of workshops to raise awareness about nature conservation among children in the community. Together, we created biodigester bales and short stop-motion films.

[Watch the Stop Motion video](#)



# Lecture: Beyond Net Zero: Pathways to Climate Positivity

On February 15, 2023, Low Carbon City held a conversation with Ian Monroe, Professor at the School of Earth, Energy, and Environmental Sciences at Stanford University.

Ian Monroe presented his latest book, “Solving Climate Change: A Guide for Learners and Leaders,” co-authored with Jonathan Koomey. His message is clear: The planet is warming due to human impact—it is us, and we are certain. The situation is alarming, but we can solve it.

The book focuses on this very idea: we can solve it, and we have the technologies to implement solutions on a global scale. How can we finance these solutions? How can we mobilize society—from individuals to governments? What are the most urgent measures we must take to maintain and restore a healthy and safe environment?



[Watch the lecture](#)

[Buy the book](#)

[Read the report](#)

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# Workshops in Nueva Jerusalén

This year, in collaboration with the Conciencia Foundation, we have been working in the Nueva Jerusalén neighborhood to build a more resilient territory.

From the hillsides, we are sowing food sovereignty.

We worked in Nueva Jerusalén, Bello, with the Conciencia Foundation, teaching residents how to compost their organic waste, germinate seeds before planting, and together we built a vertical garden with an internal composter so children and youth can learn to sow life and food. We believe in the potential of communities to implement local solutions to climate change, fostering more resilient territories.

Additionally, thanks to material donations from the Puntos Verdes Foundation and the work of Cultura Sirco, we constructed a water collection and filtration system for the foundation's headquarters. We also donated 16 portable water filters for the mothers associated with the foundation.

During our visits, we performed maintenance on the composter, garden, and seedling nursery at the Conciencia Foundation, while teaching children skills to contribute to environmental care using local resources.

Watch the videos from Nueva Jerusalén



# Voices from the territories

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## First Gathering of Social Organizations Transforming the City

The current political dynamics in Medellín and the breakdown of public-private alliances built over the years have had invaluable impacts on the social fabric, affecting, among other things, the recognized participation of social organizations in the city's governance. In contrast, in recent years, various social and community organizations have emerged in Medellín, striving to promote collaborative processes that seek the well-being of their territories and fill institutional gaps through high-impact projects in neighborhoods, districts, and communities.

Reflecting on this context and from a shared optimistic vision, a group of friends and citizens—members of four community-based organizations: Fundación Oasis Urbano, Low Carbon City, Corporación Mangle, and Tricilab—decided to join forces to create Voces de los Territorios (Voices from the Territories). This is a gathering space for community organizations that transform the city, where through connection, dialogue, and collaboration, we aim to strengthen community processes in Medellín. The first gathering took place from March 31 to April 2, 2023, with a focus on the opportunities and needs of the territories.

The event, which was 100% community-driven, citizen-led, and self-managed, brought together 22 organizations from all communes and districts of Medellín. It served as a beautiful platform to learn, share, discuss, and co-create around the common challenges we face in Medellín, within our organizations, and in our leadership practices.

[Read the report](#)

[Watch the video](#)



# 2nd meeting with Voices of the territories

The second gathering of Voces de los Territorios was held in the district of San Cristóbal on November 25, where 15 community organizations visited the Asociación de Mujeres Campesinas Siempre Vivas (Always Alive Peasant Women's Association). Together, we reflected on the connection between the urban and rural areas of the city and ways to care for this long-neglected relationship. In 2024, we will continue creating spaces, forging alliances, and fostering conversations to co-construct the cities we dream of.

We reflected on the need for city dynamics to align with what is happening in the territories, calling for efforts to rebuild the relationship between rural and urban Medellín. We emphasized recognizing the essential role of the districts—the rural areas that comprise over 70% of the district's land—in safeguarding water and biodiversity, ensuring food sovereignty, and preserving the identity and culture of the population. We highlighted the need to close existing gaps, but without displacing or urbanizing these districts. Instead, we must create conditions and guarantees for people to remain in their territories, dignifying the role of rural communities and their way of life.



# Citizen Voices for Climate Action

We asked what citizens prioritize in environmental matters ahead of the local election campaign.

We listened to citizen voices for Climate Action, and among the most prominent themes were the inadequate management of waste and the resulting water pollution, air pollution and its effects on residents' health, and the lack of incentives for sustainable mobility (safety issues, poor cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, etc.).

We see citizens' dissatisfaction with the lack of protection for the environment, air, and water; yet few candidates prioritized actions to care for the planet. We call on citizens to demand that public servants take concrete and decisive actions that prioritize and protect life—which depends on caring for our planet.



[Watch the video](#)

# Climate Change Steals Our Lives

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## Creative intervention at the Silleteros Parade.

We joined El Derecho A No Obedecer and Global Shapers at the Silleteros Parade during the Feria de las Flores to call for decisive action in the face of the climate crisis. Our lives are at risk, and we need leaders who rise to the challenge to accelerate climate change adaptation and mitigation now.

### [Conoce el manifiesto](#)



# Indi-gestión Report

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We conducted a review of the Development Plan “Medellín Futuro 2020–2023.”

Together with 10 social organizations in Medellín, we closely examined the Development Plan “Medellín Futuro 2020–2023,” as the achievements reflected in the Medellín Mayor’s Office management reports did not seem to align with the reality of our city. After analyzing several indicators in which each social organization has expertise, we found that, rather than effective management, Medellín suffers from “indi-gestión” (mismanagement or lack of governance). Low Carbon City was responsible for reviewing the strategic line on Eco-city.

Based on the findings of this report, we carried out a digital and physical intervention, sharing with the public the figures that did not add up.

[Read the report](#)



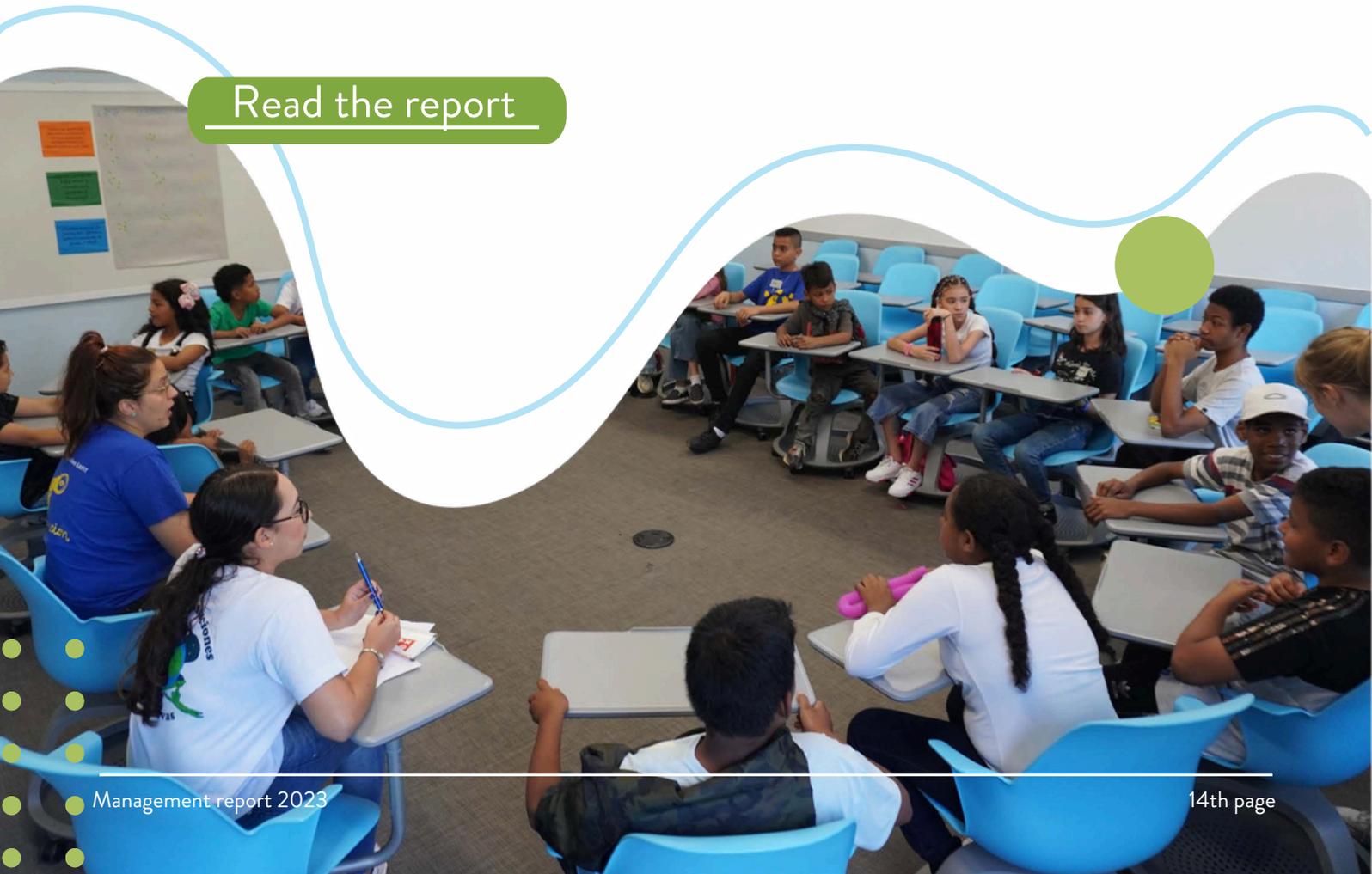
# Cities for Children and Adolescents Summit

## A Call to Action for Building Healthy and Sustainable Territories

On Saturday, September 23, 2023, the Cities for Children and Adolescents Forum was held—a space designed to include the opinions and perspectives of children and adolescents from the Metropolitan Area of the Aburrá Valley regarding how they believe the city should develop in terms of sustainability and a healthy environment. The forum aimed to give visibility to the perspectives, fears, and ideas of children and adolescents concerning climate change and the environment in the Aburrá Valley, especially to ensure that candidates in the elections heard their voices.

This pedagogical and participatory initiative consisted of 4 sessions: three virtual introductory sessions covering the various dimensions of the climate crisis and mitigation from territorial, community, and individual perspectives; and one in-person session where participants applied what they learned in the virtual sessions in a practical and dynamic way. From this final session, four projects were developed by the participants: an insect hotel, purification of the Medellín River through reforestation, proper solid waste management, and urban reforestation.

[Read the report](#)





# Climate Change Course

In collaboration with the Concesión Túnel Aburrá Oriente in Santa Elena.

A course offered by the Concesión Túnel Aburrá Oriente and Low Carbon City, aimed at residents of Santa Elena, Guarne, Rionegro, and Comuna 9 of Medellín to promote sustainability initiatives and actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation at the community level. During this course, we worked with 30 local leaders and concluded with the presentation of projects designed to benefit community residents and build territories more resilient to climate change. Additionally, five of the developed projects will receive technical and financial support to begin implementation in 2024.



An illustration at the top of the page shows a group of diverse people, including a woman with glasses, a man with a beard, and a woman with a large floral headpiece. A colorful parrot is flying in the foreground. The background is a light, textured surface.

# Just Climate Action Guide for Public Office Candidates and Decision-Makers

At Low Carbon City, with the support of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Bogotá Office - Colombia, we believe collective climate action is the answer.

We have published the Just Climate Action Guide for Public Office Candidates and Decision-Makers, which invites elected officials to make climate justice a cross-cutting and priority axis in development plans. The guide encourages addressing the climate crisis from a human rights and gender equity perspective, so that climate action becomes an opportunity to work toward closing social and economic gaps. It also presents various initiatives demonstrating that it is possible to apply these responsive approaches.

In this collective effort, we collaborated with eleven civil society organizations and non-profit entities (El Derecho a No Obedecer, Presentes Corporación, FOLU Colombia, Movimiento de Laderas, Polen Transiciones Justas, Ciudad en Movimiento, Movimiento por el aire y la salud pública del Valle de Aburrá, Colectivo Voces por el Clima, Saving the Amazon, Espora semillas originarias, Extinction Rebellion Medellín), one public and scientific institution (Instituto Humboldt), one public-private entity (Emvarias), one political foundation (Heinrich Böll Foundation, Bogotá Office - Colombia), and four private companies (Diorama Consulting, Incyclo, Emergente energía sostenible, Enka).

The guide presents 150 recommendations and proposals for decision-makers to include in their development plans and territorial programs. Additionally, it features 81 case studies from Colombia and other countries to help fulfill these recommendations and proposals.

[Download the guide](#)

## Medellín Launch



On November 15, we held the launch of the Just Climate Action Guide at EAFIT University. In addition to presenting the document, we engaged in discussions with experts in climate justice, human rights, and climate change adaptation strategies. This conversation highlighted the importance of community-based adaptation strategies and the local promotion of knowledge for risk management and the energy transition.

We were joined by:

- Presentes Corporation
- Climate Tracker
- SETAA Communities
- Movimiento de Laderas

[Watch the video](#)

## Bogotá Launch



On November 21, we shared the guide at the Heinrich Böll Foundation headquarters and discussed climate justice in the public agenda and just transition. Through this conversation, we learned more about citizen science strategies, the lack of a legal framework for climate migrants, and the need to foster socio-ecological transitions for just realities in historically vulnerable territories—promoting their self-determination and inclusion in decision-making spaces.

We were joined by:

- El Derecho a No Obedecer
- Diorama
- Oxfam Colombia
- Heinrich Böll Foundation

[Watch the video](#)

# Breakfast for Climate and Environment

On the occasion of the launch of the Guide, we brought together environmental and climate sector organizations in the Aburrá Valley.

Meeting and connecting with environmental leaders allows us to continue building trust for collaborative work, mapping stakeholders and their projects, and organizing a citizen agenda for mobilization and oversight. It is through coming together that collective conversations are generated to lead, from a citizen-driven perspective, Climate Action in the territories.

[Download the manifesto](#)



## GUÍA DE ACCIÓN CLIMÁTICA JUSTA

para aspirantes a cargos públicos y tomadores de decisión

# City Cafés



## Don't Let Climate Change Steal Our Lives

On August 24, our project analyst, Sofía Villada, moderated this Monday in the City session, focusing on the environmental changes we have experienced in the Metropolitan Area and the solutions we expect from our leaders. We collaborated with RED Entre Montañas, CSA Colombia, Árbol Red (a network of community and social organizations in the BELLO ORIENTE neighborhood), Extinction Rebellion Medellín, and the Deuda x El Clima (Debt for Climate) movement.

[Watch the video](#)



## You Are Not Alone! The Planet Is Also in Crisis

A cross-sector conversation between academia, citizens, and decision-makers to address how the intersections of climate justice and public health shape our relationship with the environment. Moderated by our Executive Director, Luisa Grajales. Participants included Daniel Carvalho, Representative for Antioquia in the House of Representatives; Eliana Martínez from the Scientific Committee for the Climate Emergency of Antioquia; Daniel Duque, Medellín Councilor; and Elizabeth Restrepo, a member of the Movement for Air Quality and Public Health.

[Listen to the space](#)



## Presentation of the Guide at Café Project

Climate action is also led from the neighborhoods. We were at Proyecto Café presenting the Just Climate Action Guide and discussing the importance of actions led by neighborhoods and community organizations. Now that we know the consequences of climate change, it is time to focus, from our daily lives, on acting together to promote solutions.

[Watch the video](#)

## Our new website

This year, we designed and updated our website. Explore it and stay updated with our news.

[Visit our website www.lowcarboncity.org](http://www.lowcarboncity.org)



# Alliances and Invitations

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## CASAP IX

In March, our Executive Director Luisa Grajales attended the Colombian Congress and the International Conference on Air Quality, Climate Change, and Public Health. She moderated the master panel: Children's Exposure to Air Pollution in School Microenvironments and Public Spaces. Following CASAP IX, the Model Policy Framework for the Right to Clean Air, Climate Justice, and Public Health in Latin America was established.

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## Sustainable Business Forum by El Colombiano

Our Executive Director participated as a panelist in this forum, speaking on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria in organizations.

[Watch the video](#)

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## No Apto – Medellín City Council

We engaged by posing a question to three council candidates regarding the declaration of a climate emergency and the lack of budget and follow-up for the fulfillment of this decree.

[Watch the video](#)

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## La Siembra Festival

Low Carbon City joined ¡La Siembra Festival!—a space combining environmental campaigns, workshops, a sustainable market, and live musical performances.

[To know more](#)



## Images of Latin America

Low Carbon City is part of the Images of Latin America project, led by the Heinrich Böll Foundation. In 2023 and 2024, the project will network initiatives, activists, organizations, NGOs, etc., from Schleswig-Holstein with groups and civil society organizations from Latin American regions.

We are working alongside organizations from Brazil, Mexico, and Bolivia to build a Latin American resilience alliance that enables the production of knowledge and content focused on the region's climate resilience.

## Latin America and Caribbean Regional Youth Conference (RCOY)

We participated in the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Youth Conference, which compiles youth proposals ahead of COP28 to shape a regional climate policy based on good practices implemented in Latin America with potential for replication across the region. This space seeks to include youth voices in climate negotiations to achieve intergenerational justice and promote care for the planet for present and future generations.

[Read the declaration](#)



## Explora Schools

We participated in the educational strategy Explora Schools, leading advisory sessions for teachers at the I.E. Alfonso Mora Naranjo in the line of Environment and Sustainable Development.



# Aknowledgments

## Let's celebrate our achievements!

This is the harvest of what we cultivated this year. Thanks to the union of efforts, we were able to develop all our projects. The combined work of the core team, volunteers, friends, and partners helped us achieve our goals. Thank you so much!

THE TEAM: Luisa Fernanda Grajales, Sofia Villada, Sara Acevedo, Silvana Olaya, Gabriela Ruiz, Carolina Rendón, Carmen Ruiz, Ada Luz Mercado , Andrés Giraldo.

VOLUNTEERS: Eliza Baring, Violette Le Pottier, Giorgio Zanichelli, Leonardo Herrera, Valentina Aguirre.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS : Maribel Díaz, Juliana Gutiérrez, Federico Botero, Alejandro Álvarez, Sara Arango, Gabriela Ruiz.

