

# Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) between City of São Paulo and City of Copenhagen on sustainable urban development

## Introduction

The following serves as high-level description of the SSC between City of São Paulo and City of Copenhagen supported by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in July 2024 at mayoral level between the two cities, clarifying the overarching political support for the partnership and reflecting the chosen challenges and thematic tracks prioritised by the project. From the beginning of 2025 until the end of 2027, the two cities will collaborate closely, sharing knowledge and experience related to the following four themes that are further detailed below.

The four tracks of the partnership:

1. Climate Adaptation and Urban Nature
2. Waste- and Resource Management
3. Energy Efficiency in Municipal Buildings
4. Green Jobs and – Skills

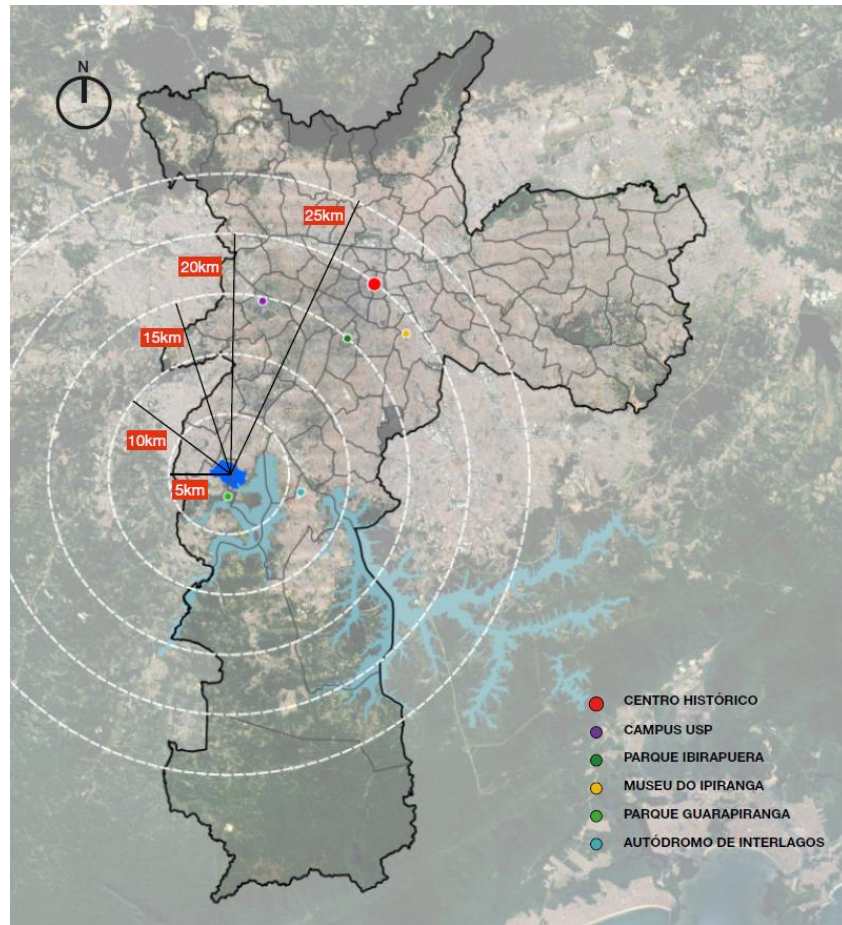
Through their thematic collaboration, the two cities will also explore opportunities to turn lessons learned and experiences into educational material for use in schools in the city.

Throughout the partnership, the two cities will both draw inspiration from and share insights with other cities globally, including through the other SSCs involving the Cities of Copenhagen and Aarhus, as well as the global climate network C40, in which both cities are members, with the aim of further strengthening climate action.

## Introduction to Guavirituba watershed

In the SSC partnership, the majority of activities, where meaningful, will be focused on the watershed Guavirituba. This is to increase opportunities for synergies and to focus efforts on an area of the city that is highly impacted by the climate crisis and, in most areas, home to vulnerable communities.

The Guavirituba watershed is located in the southern part of the city, approximately 20km from the city centre in M'Boi Mirim district near the Guarapiranga Reservoir as seen in the photo below.



The area is highly impacted by climate risk, including flooding and drought, which are exacerbated by deforestation and suburban expansion. The Guavirituba watershed has characteristics similar to other peripheral areas of São Paulo, particularly around the reservoirs, where high population density, faulty inadequate urban infrastructure, concentration of informal settlements, and high social vulnerability exist. Amongst the aims of the partnership are improving conditions in the Guavirituba watershed and ensuring that key lessons learned and experiences from the partnership can be replicated and scaled throughout the city, particularly in areas facing similar challenges as Guavirituba watershed.

### Climate Adaptation and Urban Nature

In the Climate Adaptation and Urban Nature track, the two cities will develop a climate adaptation master plan and a typology map of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for the Guavirituba watershed, alongside strategies for biodiversity and Urban Heat Island (UHI) mitigation. Based on these strategies, the cities will develop pilot projects focusing on improving a neighbourhood, including the creation of a future Guavirituba Park. NbS will be a key focus, highlighting the wider benefits they offer to a city, including increased recreational spaces, improved air and water quality, and enhanced quality of life.

The aim of this track is to build on the existing capacity, priorities, and projects of the City of São Paulo and while also offering an opportunity for City of Copenhagen to further develop their own efforts on water management, as extreme weather events are expected to become

more frequent and severe in the future. Additionally, the work on the UHI effect will benefit the City of Copenhagen, which is projected to face more frequent heatwaves.

## Waste- and Resource Management

In the Waste- and Resource Management track, the two cities will focus on developing a more circular waste model. Drawing on Copenhagen's experience with local recycling stations ("nærgenbrugsstationer"), the two cities will explore ways to improve São Paulo's local recycling stations ("ecopontos") based on best practices from Copenhagen and other cities. This track will collaborate with the Green Jobs and Skills track to enhance efforts to engage with the informal workforce through city-led programmes.

Additionally, the cities will explore methods to improve waste collection and management in informal settlements in Guavirituba and develop strategies to prevent illegal waste dumping. This work will be carried out in collaboration with the Climate Adaptation and Urban Nature track, as improved waste collection and management will contribute to cleaner water bodies in the Guavirituba watershed. Preventing illegal dumping can also be supported by creating green, recreational spaces that encourage behavioural change among residents.

## Energy Efficiency in Municipal Buildings

The work in this track will explore centralised digital approaches to energy management and the operation of buildings, along with sustainable methods for energy refurbishment and cooling.

Activities will be implemented in three types of public buildings: hospitals, schools, and City Hall. At selected hospitals, the two cities will focus on sustainability measures related to refrigerants and energy initiatives, including the tracking, handling, and replacement of unsustainable cooling solutions. Refrigerant gases have a significantly higher environmental impact than carbon dioxide emissions, yet awareness of proper handling is generally lacking, leading to high fugitive emissions.

To address rising temperatures in São Paulo, which impact school buildings by increasing thermal discomfort and disrupting learning, the two cities will explore both nature-based and mechanical cooling solutions. This will be done in collaboration with the Climate Adaptation and Urban Nature track.

At São Paulo City Hall, the two cities will build on Copenhagen's experience with centralised energy consumption and building management monitoring. A pilot project will aim to implement an Energy Management System (EMS) and a Building Management System (BMS).

## Green jobs and skills

The fourth track in the partnership focuses on ensuring a just and inclusive transition by identifying job opportunities in the green economy and the skills needed for them.

Through this track, the two cities will develop an understanding and methodology for green jobs and -skills, drawing significantly on the work of C40 and its "Good, Green Jobs" programme. Secondly, the two cities will map and explore ways to improve existing green economy programmes in São Paulo, including better engagement with jobseekers. A pilot project will aim to enhance the existing SPCoopera programme, which supports cooperatives and works to improve conditions for the informal workforce within waste management. This activity will be carried out in collaboration with the Waste- and Resource Management track.

Finally, the City of São Paulo will draw on Copenhagen's experience in engaging the private sector. São Paulo will establish a Green Economy Chamber as a platform for private sector engagement, aiming to foster green job opportunities, skill development, and relevant training initiatives.