



Cities as Focal Points: Multilevel Climate Governance Between Paris and the *Île-de-France*

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines multilevel climate governance in France from the municipal to the regional echelon, with the distinct case study of Paris and the *Île-de-France*. It assesses the various approaches adopted by the city of Paris to enact its local climate policies, and how this has impacted multilevel interactions with the tier of governance right above it, i.e., the *Île-de-France* region. Like Chapters 6 and 7 that examined the US cities and states in our sample (New York/NY and Boston/MA), this chapter addresses the first echelon of the multilevel pyramid involving interactions from the municipal to the regional echelon, in this case with a focus on the centralized French paradigm. Chapter 8 will be divided into two main sections. Section (2) provides a historical background on climate policies in Paris and the *Île-de-France*, while Sect. (3) focuses on multilevel climate governance from the municipal to the regional level, with Paris leading the way in terms of galvanizing the higher echelons. Although comparative insights between our three sample cities will be developed throughout this chapter, they are elaborated in more detail in Sect. (3), as well as in the conclusion.

Like New York and Boston, the choice of Paris as a sample city is warranted because the municipality constitutes a global leader on environmental issues. As large and prosperous urban areas located in developed

countries, our three sample cities have sizeable budgets and resources per capita, allowing them to develop advanced infrastructure and enact far-reaching climate policies. The same also applies to the *Île-de-France*, albeit to a lesser extent for reasons which will be examined below. From an analytical perspective, this provides for rich comparative material on multilevel climate governance. What is more, by analyzing in detail the implementation of local climate initiatives for the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France*, the following two sections point to both the strengths and weaknesses of this multilevel governance paradigm. As with Chapters 6 and 7, this chapter reveals how even ostensibly world-leading cities such as Paris can fall short of providing effective multilevel synchronization on climate policy with the higher levels. If even ‘best case studies’ in developed countries are inadequate, then the international community as a whole is likely to fall short in providing a robust framework of multilevel coordination and support, required to achieve the long-term objectives of the Paris Agreement.

This chapter will examine a key aspect of multilevel climate governance that differs from the United States: the region (or *région*). The municipal to regional level represents the first echelon of the multilevel pyramid in France, as opposed to the city to state echelon under the US federal system. Hence, the three cities in our sample are relevant case studies because each one of them constitutes a distinctive paradigm in terms of multilevel governance. As will be examined in detail below, variations in constitutional and legal frameworks distinguish the more centralized French State from the American federal system. Differences in policy platforms between conservative and progressive Parties on both sides of the Atlantic also impact the level of enthusiasm for climate policy, as do discrepancies in personal relations between elected officials; both present a number of parallels among our sample cities.¹

¹ As always, the analysis presented in this chapter is based on an extensive range of interviews with public officials working at the municipal and regional levels on climate and environmental matters—in the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* region, along with French civil society experts from academia, think tanks and NGOs. Most interviewees have asked to remain anonymous for the purposes of this publication (see Chapter 1).

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MULTILEVEL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE BETWEEN PARIS AND THE ÎLE-DE-FRANCE, WITH A CONTEXTUAL COMPARISON BETWEEN FRENCH CENTRALIZATION AND US FEDERALISM

2.1 *Contextual Material on Cities and Regions Under the Centralized French Framework, with Points of Contrast to the US Federal System*

Paris and the *Île-de-France* region display a multilevel paradigm on climate policy that shares a number of similarities with the US framework examined in Chapters 6 and 7, while also revealing many significant points of contrast. As examined in more detail below, Paris has been a global pioneer on climate issues, enacting a singularly ambitious and innovative municipal green policy agenda. Like Boston and New York, Paris has consistently led the way in terms of its level of ambition when compared to the *Île-de-France* region; it has acted as a pioneer, pulling the regional level of governance upwards over time. In addition, Paris (like Boston and New York) has also acted as a ‘laboratory of democracy’, experimenting with innovative climate policies that were subsequently adopted by the higher echelons.

Regarding points of contrast, the unitary and relatively centralized political structure in France is fundamentally different from the US federal system. This has a significant impact in terms of the articulation of multilevel climate governance, resulting in dissimilarities on a number of important issues. To summarize, France has historically been a highly centralized nation, a tradition that was perpetuated and enshrined in the Constitution of 1958, which established the 5th Republic as a unitary State.² As a result, few powers and competences were attributed to sub-national entities known as ‘territorial communities’ (*collectivités territoriales*). It was not until the 1980s and the election of President Mitterrand that France began a gradual process of decentralization, which has unfolded through several stages and continues up to this day, progressively transferring more responsibility to the sub-national level. The first phase occurred between 1982 and 1984 under President Mitterrand, the second from 2003 to 2004 under President Chirac and the

² See Kada et al. (2017).

third one from 2013 to 2014 under President Hollande.³ The fourth and latest phase, which began in 2021, is ongoing under President Macron; the content of these reforms are complex, and are examined in detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Today, there are three main echelons for sub-national entities in France, including (from the higher to the lower level): regions, *départements* and *communes* (the echelon of municipalities).⁴ While this may appear similar to the three levels of governance in the US (states, counties and cities/local administration), there are significant differences in terms of competence allocation. US constitutional law defines a federal system where states enjoy very broad powers. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution makes it clear that competence allocation for local governments is not a matter of federal authority, but falls under the purview of states, which can ascribe to them the level of autonomy they see fit. Building on this, local governments in the US broadly fall into two categories: those operating under ‘Home Rule’ which enjoy more autonomy, and those relying on ‘Dillon’s Rule’ (see Chapter 6).

This is very different from the unitary French political system, where all sub-national entities or *collectivités territoriales* are placed at the same level by the Constitution, below the State.⁵ Through four consecutive phases of decentralization, the national government has progressively sought to ascribe a growing number of competences to all three levels of sub-national governance.⁶ Hence, *communes*, *départements* and regions have each been granted a different set of core competences in a certain number of specific areas,⁷ including many that are relevant for environmental policy. In a number of fields, however, responsibilities are shared or overlap; in such cases, French law has established the function of *chef de file* or ‘leader in line’, which mandates a particular level of governance to coordinate the other echelons in specific fields. For instance, regions are *chef de file* in areas such as climate change, air quality and energy

³ Aubelle and Kada (2019).

⁴ Verpeaux et al. (2021).

⁵ Verpeaux and Janicot (2021) and Verpeaux (2020).

⁶ This is defined under the ‘principle of free administration for territorial communities’ (*principe de libre administration des collectivités territoriales*), enshrined in the constitutional revision of March 2003.

⁷ Faure (2021) and Collectif (2021).

efficiency, while *communes* fulfill that function when it comes to local transport, development and urban planning. Nevertheless, no one level has authority to exercise *tutelle* or *tutelage* over the others,⁸ unlike in the US where state statutes clearly take precedence over local ordinances in the event of a conflict, under the doctrine of preemption.⁹

Despite successive phases of decentralization, French regions and *départements* still enjoy far fewer competences when compared to states in the US. In fact, the two systems are markedly different, since American states enjoy all competences that are not specifically granted to the federal government in the Constitution (so-called ‘reserved powers’); states also share competences with the federal echelon in a number of important areas (known as ‘concurrent powers’). By contrast, French territorial communities only possess those powers that are expressly attributed to them under French law, including through different stages of decentralization.¹⁰ Thus, while American states enjoy their own executive, legislative and judicial branches, which enable them to enact their own laws, French regions and *départements* only have limited administrative functions, which let them pass administrative acts (*actes administratifs*). The US political system is often referred to as ‘cooperative federalism’ (see Chapter 2), in which the central government shares sovereignty with its constituent units. In a unitary State, however, only national authorities can delegate specific and limited competences to sub-state entities, but not transfer sovereignty itself.¹¹

While these provisions have impacted competence allocation at the municipal level in France, cities have still tended to enjoy a good deal of autonomy. In fact, since the late nineteenth century, *communes* have benefited from what is known as the ‘general competence clause’ (*clause*

générale de compétence), which allows them to enact regulations that go beyond the strict wording of competence allocation under the law in the name of ‘local public interest’.¹² This has provided French cities with a level of autonomy that is comparable to American cities such as Boston and New York, operating under ‘Home Rule’. Yet, unlike their US counterparts, French cities are not subjected to the *tutelage* of the regional level (the French equivalent to American states), since all sub-national echelons are put at the same level under the French Constitution. This can enhance their margin for maneuver to enact more innovative policies at the municipal level and constitutes one of the strengths of the French multilevel paradigm.

French *communes* are juridically directly under the *tutelage* of the State, unlike the US where powers ascribed to local entities fall outside the ambit of the federal government.¹³ National laws define precisely which competences are attributed to *communes*—outside of the ‘general competence clause’—and also outline the main elements that must be included within local climate plans (see below). As explained in Chapter 4, France thus possesses a ‘fused system’ of local government, whereby ‘municipalities form part of a uniform system of administration applying across the country, with a centrally appointed prefect supervising local councils’.¹⁴ This is very different from the ‘dual system’ in the US, which ‘maintains a formal separation of central and local government. Although the center is sovereign, local authorities are not seen as part of a single State structure’.¹⁵

Beyond setting out guidelines for *communes* in the formulation of their local climate plans, the French government has tended to prioritize collaboration with regions when implementing national policies at the sub-state level. This provides cities with more *de facto* autonomy, even though their *de jure* competences remain limited under national law.¹⁶ For these

¹² While the first phase of decentralization in 1982 had also provided regions and *départements* with such a ‘general competence clause’, the third phase in 2015 only kept it for *communes*, which includes municipal governments.

¹³ See Collectif (2021).

¹⁴ Hague and Harrop (2007, p. 243).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ One of the reasons for this is that following the third phase of decentralization in 2015, which consolidated several regions together, there are now only 18 regions in France, as opposed to nearly 35,000 *communes*. As a result, this makes collaboration with

⁸ In this regard, the ‘principle of free administration for territorial communities’ also applies to relations between territorial communities themselves, in addition to defining their relations towards the State.

⁹ As examined in Chapter 6, under the Tenth Amendment, the level of autonomy for local governments is a matter for state law, falling outside the ambit of the US federal government.

¹⁰ Collectif (2021). See also: Aubelle and Kerrouche (2021, 2022).

¹¹ In this case, sovereignty refers to the power of delegating competences. In a federal system like the US, states possess sovereign powers that are enshrined in the Constitution, which the central government cannot infringe upon without their express consent (hence the notion of ‘shared sovereignty’); this represents a point of contrast to unitary structures as in France.

reasons, the French paradigm illustrates the enhanced role and participation of sub-state actors in the process of policy formulation, along with the importance of democratic processes at the sub-national and local levels in the articulation of multilevel governance.¹⁷

The above factors also explain this chapter's focus on individual leadership when analyzing the climate policies enacted by Paris and the *Île-de-France*. The chapter adopts a broad-based analysis which takes many different factors into consideration, rather than simply conflating the role of particular Mayors or Regional Council Presidents with the level of climate ambition within their respective city or region. Individual leadership, or lack thereof, is critical to the successful development of ambitious climate initiatives for Paris and the *Île-de-France*, and points to the importance of coordination between the two echelons for effective multilevel climate governance. While this bears some similarity to the focus on individual leadership with the American cities and states examined in Chapters 6 and 7, the centralized French framework remains markedly different from the US federal system.

Overall, the French multilevel paradigm represents a form of 'hierarchical' and 'stratified' centralization, as opposed to the American system of 'cooperative federalism'. The hierarchical element is apparent because sovereignty in France is clearly held only by national authorities, which sit at the apex of the multilevel pyramid above the other echelons. Only limited transfers of competences to territorial communities are possible, but not sovereignty itself. The 'stratified' element can be discerned in the fact that there are so many different layers of sub-national governance in France (regions, *départements*, as well as *communes* and intercommunalities), all of which are positioned equally at the same level beneath the State, since no territorial community may exercise 'tutelage' over another. Hence, the different layers have a tendency to pile up and become superimposed onto each other, a situation that is colloquially referred to as a *millefeuille administratif* or 'administrative layer cake'.

As explained in Chapter 4, although scholars such as Verpeaux et al., Vital-Durand, Kada et al. or Aubelle and Kerrouche,¹⁸ have implied its

regions much easier and more practical for the national government. In turn, regions can then interact directly with the lower echelons, including *départements* and *communes*.

¹⁷ Bache and Flinders (2004).

¹⁸ Kada et al. (2017), Verpeaux et al. (2021), Vital-Durand (2017) and Aubelle and Kerrouche (2021).

existence, this book is the first to propose the notion of hierarchical and stratified centralization in relation to an analysis of the French multilevel paradigm. This represents an original contribution to the literature, especially regarding the comparison with US cooperative federalism.

2.2 *Historical Background of Climate Politics in Paris and the Île-de-France, with Relatively Effective Multilevel Coordination Early On*

The French multilevel configuration has allowed the city of Paris to enact, over the last fifteen years, a world-class municipal climate policy agenda. Because Paris is the capital city incorporating the largest urban area in France, the municipality possesses a special status (*collectivité à statut particulier*¹⁹), since it combines together the functions of a *commune* and a *département*, denominated simply as the 'City of Paris' (*Ville de Paris*). As a result, the Mayor and the City Council simultaneously possess powers and competences attributed to both echelons of governance, which provide them with more leeway to enact far-reaching climate policies. Still, Paris was under conservative rule for the first 24 years following the creation of the position of city Mayor in 1977, when environmental issues did not feature as a priority.²⁰ This changed dramatically in 2001 with the election of Mayor Bertrand Delanoë from the Socialist Party, at the head of a left-wing coalition known as the 'plural left' (*gauche plurielle*), where the Green Party occupied (and continues to occupy) a prominent position.²¹ This progressive coalition has governed the city for over twenty years, an essential factor in enabling Paris to gradually implement an ambitious municipal climate policy agenda, which has unfolded in several stages.

Mayor Delanoë and his coalition rapidly implemented several notable environmental policies, such as the reduction of traffic congestion and heat consumption for buildings. As a follow-up to Agenda 21 at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the city of Paris also set out its own local 'Agenda

¹⁹ On French territorial communities with a special status, see Kada and Fazi (2022).

²⁰ Jacques Chirac from the Conservative Party was Paris' first Mayor from 1977 until 1995, when he was succeeded by his close associate Jean Tiberi, who then lost the election to the Socialist Bertrand Delanoë in 2001.

²¹ On the history of the green political movement in France, see: Boivin (2015), Villalba (2021) and Jacob (2016).

21' program in 2004, which sought to integrate the notion of sustainable development throughout all aspects of municipal policy.²² This was followed by the realization of an inventory for GHG emissions across the city in 2006 (*bilan carbone*), which paved the way for the elaboration of Paris' first 'territorial climate plan' in 2007. Relevant stakeholders were involved in extensive consultations, which built on the provisions of the local Agenda 21 program. For the elaboration of both its local Agenda 21 and its 'territorial climate plan', the city of Paris followed the guidelines and recommendations set out in France's 2004 National Climate Plan, as well as the 2003 National Strategy for Sustainable Development discussed in Chapter 4. Because the Parisian electorate has historically been quite sensitive to pollution and environmental matters, this has pushed politicians to act on these issues early on. Hence, Delanoë and the 'plural left' coalition were also responding to pressure from their electoral base.

These processes were facilitated by the fact that cities can be nimbler than the higher governance echelons, since they are less burdened by large bureaucratic administrations or complex legislative procedures. Thus, Mayors are often able to take concrete action on climate change,²³ which in turn has a direct impact on constituents, since cities represent the bottom echelon of the multilevel pyramid. As a result, municipalities play an essential role in terms of transforming policy into action at the grassroots level. All three cities in our sample enacted their first major Climate Plan the same year (2007), demonstrating a comparable level of ambition and certain similarities, even though each plan is unique and adapted to the local context. In fact, a number of cities and sub-national actors around the world sought to pressure their national governments in anticipation of the 2009 Copenhagen COP. Likewise, the publication of the IPCC's 4th Assessment Report in 2007 might have also played a role in

²² For an explanation about the 'Agenda 21' at the local level in France, see Lorach and de Quatrebarbes (2003).

²³ Barichella (2018).

this regard.²⁴ The main provisions of Paris' first 'territorial climate plan' can be summarized as follows²⁵:

- 25% cut in GHG emissions citywide, with a 30% cut for municipal operations,²⁶ by 2020 (from a 2004 baseline).
- 25% for the share of renewable energies citywide, with 30% for municipal operations, by 2020 (from a 2004 baseline).
- 25% increase for energy efficiency, with a 30% increase for municipal operations, by 2020 (from a 2004 baseline).
- 75% cut in GHG emissions citywide by 2050 (from a 2004 baseline).

Despite a few small differences, these targets bear a number of similarities to those enacted under Boston's first Climate Action Plan, including in terms of GHG emission targets for 2020 and 2050, as well as in the choice of baseline years. For instance, Boston's 2050 objective was slightly more ambitious (with an 80% cut instead of 75% for Paris), and the baselines also marginally differed by one year (2005 for Boston and 2004 for Paris).

In order to implement these ambitious targets, Paris' 'territorial climate plan' set out detailed policies in a number of relevant sectors such as buildings, transportation, waste management, air quality, food consumption, as well as energy use. Since 2008, an annual report has been published (*Bleu Climat*), which records all spending and actions undertaken each year to implement the Climate Plan. The report has been accompanied by other, more specialized documents, which derive from and seek to complement the Climate Plan. These include Paris' Mobility Plan (*Plan de Déplacements*), also adopted in 2007 and completed in 2011, with an administrative version to reduce traffic congestion by 40% up to 2020.²⁷

²⁴ IPCC (2007).

²⁵ Ville de Paris (2007). *Plan climat territorial*.

²⁶ Municipal operations can be defined as all those stemming from activities that fall under the authority of the city of Paris (municipal vehicle fleets, public buildings and housing, etc.), as opposed to overall citywide emissions. It should be noted that Boston has also made a similar distinction in several parts of its Climate Action Plans (see Chapter 7).

²⁷ Ville de Paris (2007). *Plan de Déplacements de la Ville de Paris*.

While Mayor Delanoë and his coalition had voluntarily pledged to update Paris' Climate Plan every few years, national legislation (*loi Grenelle II*) subsequently came into force which rendered it obligatory for any territorial community of more than 50,000 inhabitants to develop a new framework known as the 'territorial climate and energy plan' (*Plan climat énergie territorial*—PCET).²⁸ This constituted an enhanced version of the previous territorial climate plan, with the addition of the word 'energy' in the title. In addition, as examined in Chapter 4, while the adoption of territorial climate plans by sub-state actors was merely been encouraged by the national government until 2010, PCETs were legally mandatory by a certain deadline. The main elements to be included in PCETs²⁹ were defined under the *Grenelle II* Law, along with certain procedural requirements, even though each sub-state entity retained a margin for maneuver in the implementation process. Likewise, territorial communities were henceforth required to develop a *Bilan des émissions de gaz à effet de serre*—BEGES or 'inventory' of GHG emissions within their borders, necessary in preparing the PCET. As explained above, Paris had already developed a *bilan carbone* on a voluntary basis in 2006, but subsequently updated it according to these new national rules. The latter represents a noteworthy point of contrast to the US since, as previously examined, the federal American government does not have the legal capacity to directly impose policies or actions on municipal and local governments in the same manner.³⁰

This emphasizes once again the differences between a dual system of local government (like in the US) and a fused system (as in France), where "municipalities form part of a uniform system of administration applying across the country".³¹ Paris' second Climate Plan or PCET was adopted by the City Council in 2012, and maintained all targets and objectives

²⁸ The *loi Grenelle II* was adopted on the 12th of July 2010 (see Chapter 4).

²⁹ For a detailed analysis of the PCET and the territorialization of climate and energy policies in France, see Rizzoli (2015).

³⁰ As previously indicated, the US Congress may enact national laws, including on environmental matters, which have a general ambit and apply to all entities, including states, cities or even individuals in some cases. Still, this represents an indirect form of interaction with local governments when compared to the centralized French political system, whereby national laws directly impact the municipal echelon by defining the main elements which must be included in local climate plans.

³¹ Hague and Harrop (2007, p. 243).

for 2020 and 2050 which had been set out in the previous version.³² However, specific policies to achieve these targets and implement the Plan were updated, falling under five broad categories³³:

- Land use and planning (*aménagement du territoire*) geared towards energy efficiency.
- Low-carbon housing and building infrastructure.
- Focus on the service industry and its impact on the climate.
- Transport and mobility that is more respectful of the environment.
- Towards more sustainable consumption patterns that generate less waste.

The level of ambition for Paris' first two Climate Plans in terms of timing and content enabled the city to establish itself as a pioneer on climate issues. Paris' early and proactive stance in this area also had a catalytic effect on the higher echelons of governance. Indeed, the *Île-de-France* followed suit to enact its own climate policies at the regional level under the same timeframe, through a process that can be described as a form of emulation. This was linked to the fact that the Regional Council underwent a significant change in leadership in 1998. Like the city of Paris, the *Île-de-France* had been under conservative rule since the creation of its Regional Council in 1976; thus, environmental issues had not featured as a priority. However, a few years before Delanoë's victory in 2001, the French Socialist Party achieved a similar historic breakthrough by winning the 1998 Regional elections in the *Île-de-France*. A 'plural left' coalition (*gauche plurielle*) tapped the Green Party to play an important role. The coalition elected Jean-Paul Huchon from the Socialist Party to be the President of the Regional Council. In both city and region, the alliance with the Green Party prompted their Socialist partners to raise the level of climate ambition.

Hence, multilevel climate governance between the municipal and the regional echelons became relatively well aligned under the leadership of Delanoë and Huchon, both of whom served several terms in office during

³² Ville de Paris (2012).

³³ It should be noted that Paris' first two Climate Plans included policies focusing on other sectors, which are beyond the scope of this book.

roughly the same timeframe.³⁴ Still, Paris has consistently been ahead of the *Île-de-France* in terms of climate policy, both from a temporal perspective and regarding its aspirations, with the city stimulating the regional level over time. Thus, while the ‘plural left’ coalition won the Regional elections in 1998, it wasn’t until after 2001, following the victory of the same coalition in the city of Paris, that the *Île-de-France* Council was spurred into adopting more concrete policies to support renewable energies and energy efficiency for buildings, transportation, housing, as well as public high schools.

For instance, when the city of Paris conducted its carbon inventory in 2006, the *Île-de-France* was encouraged to prepare a Regional Inventory of GHG emissions (*Bilan carbone de la région Île-de-France*) one year later in 2007, partly to avoid trailing behind the capital city. Likewise, a year after Paris adopted its first Climate Plan establishing the objective of reducing GHG emissions 25% by 2020 and 75% up to 2050 (from a 2004 baseline), the Regional Council subsequently followed suit in 2008 by approving a *Schéma directeur de la Région Île-de-France* (SDRIF—‘Directing Framework for the Île-de-France Region’).³⁵ This framework established the objective of reducing regional emissions 75% by 2030, from a 1990 baseline.³⁶ While this corresponds to a similar medium and long-term trajectory as that of Paris, the target and baseline years are different. The fact that the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* have not been ideally synchronized in their long-term objectives and baseline years has been problematic in terms of the coordination and harmonization of

policies between the two echelons. This represents a potential weakness in the articulation of multilevel climate governance.

It wasn’t until 2011 that the Regional Council adopted its own Climate Plan or PCET³⁷ (known as the *Plan régional pour le climat d’Île-de-France*³⁸), four years after the city of Paris. Such a temporal gap highlights the extent to which the region has shadowed the city in terms of its climate policies, striving to catch up.³⁹ This is similar to the multilevel paradigm between New York City and the state of New York, as well as Boston and Massachusetts, whereby Governors in both states have lagged behind their capital cities for climate action over the last fifteen years or more (see Chapters 6 and 7). Once again, such a configuration points to a pattern whereby cities act as catalysts within the global climate regime, pushing the higher echelons of governance upwards over time. Cities can help to set the climate policy agenda within a multilevel framework.

The *Île-de-France* Regional Climate Plan not only enshrined the objectives that had been set out in the SDRIF, but also contained detailed policies in terms of how they were to be achieved and enacted, with 24 proposed actions revolving around the four main axes:

- Stop thermal leakage.
- Balance the energy mix.
- Enhance public transportation and mobility.
- Support and accompany territorial communities.

The last axis aimed to reinforce the multilevel dimension by setting out specific measures to enhance coordination on these climate issues with the lower echelons of governance, including the city of Paris. Building on this, the Regional Council adopted in 2012 a ‘Framework for Climate, Air and Energy in the Île-de-France’ (*Schéma Régional du Climat, de*

³⁴ Delanoë served as Mayor of Paris from March 2001 until April 2014. Likewise, Huchon was President of the *Île-de-France* Regional Council from March 1998 up to December 2015. Thus, there is a thirteen-year overlap between their respective mandates, providing ample time for an effective articulation of multilevel climate governance.

³⁵ The SDRIF constitutes an overarching policy framework which focuses on urbanism and territorial management in general, not directly on climate policy. Although the project for the SDRIF was approved in 2008, the final version was not validated until December 2013 following extensive consultations and collaboration between regional and national authorities, including via the Regional Prefect (see Chapter 4). See also Conseil régional d’Île-de-France (2013).

³⁶ It is important to emphasize that the *Île-de-France*, as the French economic epicenter and seat of national government, is the only metropolitan region which has been authorized under national law to maintain an overarching planning framework such as the SDRIF—providing it with a special legal status (*statut particulier*), similarly to the city of Paris as previously indicated. See Kada and Fazi (2022).

³⁷ For a detailed analysis of the PCET, see Rizzoli (2015).

³⁸ Conseil régional d’Île-de-France (2011).

³⁹ This may also be due to the fact that Jean-Paul Huchon formed part of the ‘old left’, which did not prioritize the environment to the same extent as social justice, in contrast to Delanoë, who sought to embody a ‘new left’ that treated climate change as a priority.

l'Air et de l'Énergie d'Île-de-France—SRCAE).⁴⁰ This happened the same year that Paris enacted its second Climate Plan. The latter demonstrates a more coordinated approach, with both echelons jointly enhancing their level of ambition. It is true that Paris' second updated Climate Plan and the SRCAE were rendered mandatory in 2010 under national law (*loi Grenelle II*), which set out certain deadlines and procedural rules (see Chapter 4).⁴¹ Yet, the fact that a 'plural left' coalition was in power at the same time, both at the municipal and regional levels, clearly facilitated the articulation of multilevel governance in this area, since city and region shared similar policy goals and platforms on climate issues.

The SRCAE established 17 objectives and 58 strategic orientations for the region in terms of reducing GHG emissions, enhancing renewable energies and promoting energy efficiency, which fell under three broad priority areas⁴²:

- Reinforcing energy efficiency in buildings, with the objective of doubling the pace of renovations in the service sector and tripling it for residential buildings.
- Developing urban heating through renewable energies, with the objective of increasing by 40% the number of accommodations relying on this technology by 2020.
- Reducing by 20% GHG emissions from transportation, to be combined with a sharp decrease in atmospheric pollutants (such as nitrogen dioxide, for example).

⁴⁰ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2012). In fact, the Regional Climate Plan subsequently became a 'Climate Component' within the SRCAE.

⁴¹ The SRCAE, like the SDRIF discussed above, was developed and enacted by regional authorities in close collaboration with the national government and its local representatives, including the Regional Prefect. As examined in Chapter 4, the SRCAE is one of the main frameworks relied upon by the State to transpose national and EU climate objectives at the sub-national level.

⁴² Like Paris' Climate Plans, the SRCAE also contained policies focusing on other sectors, which are beyond the scope of this book.

2.3 Comparative Perspectives on Multilevel Climate Governance Between the French and American Cities and Regions/States in Our Sample

While these are ambitious objectives, they are of a different nature when compared to the ones set out by the American states examined in Chapters 6 and 7. Although Massachusetts and the state of New York have adopted a more holistic approach, providing overarching objectives that span across many different sectors, the SRCAE focuses only on specific policy areas. This is due to the fact that, despite consecutive phases of decentralization, French regions still possess only limited competences in particular fields, defined under national law.⁴³ This represents a fundamental point of contrast to the US federal system,⁴⁴ whereby states enjoy extensive competences through the exercise of both reserved and concurrent powers, as defined under American constitutional law.

Another relevant point of comparison with the US has to do with the nature of multilevel interactions between the different tiers of governance under the hierarchical and stratified centralization which characterizes the French political system. As discussed above, following the enactment of national legislation (*loi Grenelle II*), there is a legal obligation for both the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* to develop specific types of climate plans and frameworks (SRCAE or PCET, for example) under certain deadlines and following specific procedures, whose main elements and composition are defined under the law. In addition, territorial communities are also required to develop a *bilan* (BEGES) or 'inventory' of GHG emissions within their borders, necessary for the preparation of local climate plans and frameworks.⁴⁵

This is very different to the US, since the American Congress regularly operates under political gridlock and has been unable to ratify national climate legislation over the last few decades.⁴⁶ As explained in Chapter 3,

⁴³ As examined above, French *communes* also have specific competences attributed to them under national law. Yet, unlike regions, they continue to benefit from a 'general competence clause' (*clause générale de compétence*) which allows them to enact policies that go beyond the strict wording of the law in the name of 'local public interest'.

⁴⁴ On US federalism, see Fisher and Harriger (2019), Coleman and Leskiw (2018) and Robertson (2017).

⁴⁵ See Rizzoli (2015).

⁴⁶ See Klyza and Sousa (2013).

only budgetary legislation, which has a more limited ambit and scope, has been enacted under President Biden. Likewise, while Obama's former Clean Power Plan (CPP) had sought to establish broad emission reduction targets and percentages for each individual state based on differing local circumstances, states were given wide latitude and a high degree of autonomy in the implementation process, especially in terms of flexibility for how to meet national emission standards at the local level. This clearly differs from the top-down French approach.

What is more, Obama's CPP was never enacted since it was stayed by the US Supreme Court in 2016, before being repealed under the Trump Presidency. While a number of progressive American cities and states pledged to voluntarily adhere to the CPP's objectives under Trump, as part of national networks such as Climate Mayors or the US Climate Alliance,⁴⁷ they were certainly not under a legal obligation to do so. US constitutional law does not provide the American federal government with the ability, as in France, to pass legislation or policies requiring local/municipal governments to implement certain types of climate plans and frameworks, since the latter falls under the purview of state-level authorities.⁴⁸

Furthermore, the SRCAE became a regional reference framework for energy and air quality, as well as a 'policy toolbox' to help territorial communities of more than 50,000 inhabitants to define and implement their own Climate Plans or PCETs, so as to transpose the SRCAE's objectives at the local level.⁴⁹ In fact, one of the characteristics of multi-level governance in France is the direct legal obligation of compatibility between the various echelons⁵⁰ when developing and implementing plans or strategies across policy sectors such as climate, energy and the environment. This means that Paris' Climate Plans must be compatible with the orientations defined in the SRCAE, an obligation which can be enforced

⁴⁷ See Barichella (2018).

⁴⁸ As examined above, this highlights once again differences between a dual system of local government like in the US, and a fused system as in France, whereby "municipalities form part of a uniform system of administration applying across the country". See Hague and Harrop (2007).

⁴⁹ This 'policy toolbox' was referred to as the 'synthesis of recommended actions for territorial communities' (*Synthèse des actions recommandées aux collectivités territoriales*).

⁵⁰ See Collectif (2021). On the legal aspects of decentralization in France, see Verpeaux and Janicot (2021) and Faure (2021).

through the French court system. This compels the different echelons to work closely together in the articulation of multilevel climate governance, a direct result of the unitary and centralized French political system.

Because such a framework tends to encourage a greater degree of policy harmonization and coordination, there is less of a risk of conflict regarding policies and norms enacted between the different echelons. This emphasizes one of the strengths of the centralized French system in the articulation of multilevel climate governance. By comparison, the obligation of compatibility in the American federal system is more indirect (see Chapter 6 and 7). Local ordinances from municipalities cannot be contrary to state law due to the doctrine of preemption, even though there is no direct legal obligation of compatibility per se in the elaboration process, which can in some cases open the door to potential divergencies between the municipal and state echelons.

In addition, the legal obligation of compatibility in France also applies in a lateral manner.⁵¹ Like Paris' municipal Climate Plan, the Regional Climate Plan and SRCAE were accompanied by several more specialized policy frameworks focusing on a number of targeted sub-sectors. This includes, for example, the Regional Plan for Air Quality (*Plan régional pour la qualité de l'air—PRQA*), the Regional Framework for Linking Renewable Energies to the Power Grid (*Schéma régional de raccordement au réseau électrique des énergies renouvelables—S3REN*), as well as the Regional Framework for Wind Power (*Schéma Régional Éolien—SRE*).⁵² A legal obligation of compatibility is required for these more specialized documents between themselves, and vis-à-vis the SRCAE. In addition, this also relates to policy frameworks in sectors such as urbanism and mobility (*Plan de Déplacements Urbains—PDU*),⁵³ the protection of the atmosphere (*Plan de Protection de l'Atmosphère—PPA*),⁵⁴ along with

⁵¹ Ibid. See also Verpeaux (2020).

⁵² As examined in Chapter 4, the *Grenelle II* Law established modalities for the elaboration of these other more specialized regional policy frameworks, with the aim to complement the dispositions of the more general SRCAE. Following these legal requirements, the *Île-de-France* approved its PRQA in June 2016 and the S3REN was passed in February 2015. While the *Île-de-France*'s SRE was initially approved in September 2012, it was subsequently struck down by the French court system in 2014 due to inadequate following of procedural requirements.

⁵³ The *Île-de-France* enacted its PDU in June 2014.

⁵⁴ The latest version of the *Île-de-France*'s PPA was adopted in January 2018.

housing and habitat (*Schéma Régional de l'Habitat et de l'Hébergement—SRHH*).⁵⁵ These documents all contain provisions that have a bearing on climate policy, which must be compatible with the SRCAE.⁵⁶

While the juridical specificities of the centralized French system have certainly contributed to the effective articulation of multilevel climate governance between Paris and the *Île-de-France*, the political dynamics at work have also played a key role in this regard. The fact that 'plural left' coalitions, where the Green Party occupies a prominent position, achieved historic electoral successes at both the municipal and regional levels only three years apart, was instrumental. It allowed for the prioritization and coordination of climate policies at both echelons of governance during a fifteen-year timeframe (from 2001 to 2015).⁵⁷ This provided an effective framework for the articulation of multilevel climate governance between Paris and *Île-de-France*.

The latter remains true even though Delanoë and Huchon did not always get along on a personal level. In fact, they developed a rivalry over the years, with a certain level of institutional competition between the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* region. Since they both came from the Socialist Party and shared a similar political philosophy within a 'plural left' coalition involving the Green Party, this personal rivalry did not significantly hamper the articulation of multilevel climate governance. Their respective administrations and staff, as well as coalition members within the Municipal and Regional Councils, were able to effectively collaborate on climate policy, regardless of personal differences between their leaders.

⁵⁵ The *Île-de-France*'s SRHH was implemented in December 2017.

⁵⁶ As explained in Chapter 4, these other regional policy frameworks, which focus on different yet related sectors, are also rendered obligatory by various national laws. This covers specific requirements for the elaboration procedure, along with the main elements that have to be included, and is representative of the centralized nature of the French political system. As with the SRCAE, these policy frameworks are developed and enacted by regional authorities in close collaboration with the national government and its local representatives, including the Regional Prefect.

⁵⁷ Mayor Delanoë was elected in 2001, and his successor Anne Hidalgo (also from the Socialist Party) came to power in 2014. Regional Council President Huchon was elected in 1998 and finished his third term in 2015, before being replaced by conservative Valérie Pécresse. This constitutes roughly a fourteen-year overlap, when both the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* were governed by the same 'plural left' coalition.

As examined in Chapter 6, this is similar to the situation in New York, where an institutional competition between Mayor and Governor has been apparent more often than not. In this regard, former Mayor Bill de Blasio and Governor Andrew Cuomo developed a mutual animosity towards each other during their time in office. Yet, the fact that they both came from the Democratic Party, with solid progressive majorities at both the state and city levels, enabled them to work together on climate issues regardless of personal rivalries.⁵⁸ By contrast, even though Boston Mayor Marty Walsh and his successor Michelle Wu developed excellent relations with Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, the fact that they come from different Parties was initially problematic. Although Baker is a moderate Republican, he had a mixed record on environmental issues during his first term, at a time when Boston was surging ahead with its climate policies as discussed in Chapter 7. This suggests that personal relations may not be a determining factor for the articulation of multilevel climate governance; sharing a similar political philosophy, due to membership of the same party or coalition, appears to be more important.

The evolution of relations between Paris and the *Île-de-France* over the last few years lends further support to this suggestion. Like Boston and Massachusetts, a change in leadership at the regional level following a conservative victory in the *Île-de-France* has somewhat hindered multilevel climate governance, at a time when progressives reinforced their majority at the municipal echelon. Thus, although Mayor Delanoë was succeeded in 2014 by Anne Hidalgo from the Socialist Party, who maintained a plural left coalition in Paris' Municipal Council, the French Conservative Party (*Les Républicains—LR*) came back to power in the *Île-de-France* after winning a new majority during the 2015 elections (with a reelection in 2021). Hence, while Paris has continued as a pioneer on climate issues, the momentum has slowed at the regional level, impacting the articulation of multilevel climate governance.

⁵⁸ This sort of institutional competition and rivalry between the Mayor of a large city and a regional/state executive appears to be quite common. For instance, over the last decade, neither Mayors Bloomberg nor de Blasio had gotten along with Governor Cuomo. Hence, the traditionally good relations between the Mayor of Boston and the Governor of Massachusetts appears to be more of an exception than the rule (see Chapters 6 and 7).

3 MULTILEVEL CLIMATE GOVERNANCE FROM THE MUNICIPAL TO THE REGIONAL LEVEL UNDER HIDALGO AND PÉRESSE: PARIS LEADING THE WAY IN TERMS OF GALVANIZING THE HIGHER ECHELONS

3.1 *Paris Enhances Its Level of Climate Ambition Under Mayor Hidalgo, with a Comparison of the Policies Enacted by Our Three Sample Cities*

Anne Hidalgo replaced Delanoë as Mayor of Paris in 2014, when she succeeded in securing a comfortable majority for the ‘plural left’ coalition within the City Council.⁵⁹ The majority of the Parisian electorate, quite sensitive to environmental issues, supported the new mayor’s green policies.⁶⁰ As a result, right from the start of her mandate, Hidalgo has been adamant about making climate change a top priority for her administration, building upon and surpassing what was accomplished by her predecessor. Hidalgo rapidly implemented many of her campaign promises, such as developing cycling lanes and enhanced public transport, enlarging organic food distribution, accelerating the pace of building renovations and increasing the number of parks and green areas. For instance, less than one year after winning the 2014 election, the ‘plural left’ approved a plan to combat automobile pollution, which unfolded in several phases up to 2020 and focused on gradually banning older vehicles.⁶¹

The organization of the COP21 in Paris played a key role in accelerating the momentum for climate policy within Hidalgo’s coalition, pushing them to raise their level of ambition. Hidalgo co-hosted a Climate Summit for Local Leaders in parallel to the official process of UN negotiations in December 2015; she did so in partnership with Michael Bloomberg and several global networks. The event attracted more than 1000 sub-national representatives from all around the world, who signed the ‘Paris City Hall Declaration’, pledging among other things to reduce GHG emissions by 80% and to increase the share of renewable energies to 100% by the year 2050. These pledges formed

⁵⁹ This comprises 92 seats for the ‘plural left’ coalition out of a total of 163 seats in the Parisian Municipal Council.

⁶⁰ See Gréco (2019).

⁶¹ Ville de Paris (2015).

the backbone of preparations to update the city’s Climate Plan, which began in September 2016 via a broad and extensive citizen’s consultation, building on the momentum of the COP21 and the historic signing of the Paris Agreement.

Even though the city of Paris had voluntarily pledged to update its Climate Plan every few years, it was also under a legal obligation to do so. The adoption of new national legislation in 2015 (*loi de transition énergétique pour la croissance verte*—LTECV) established mandatory requirements for the elaboration of ‘Territorial Climate, Air and Energy Plans’ (*Plan Climat-Air-Énergie Territorial*—PCAET) under certain deadlines and following specific procedures. This constitutes an updated version of the previous *Plan Climat-Énergie Territorial* (PCET), and was accompanied by new rules for the preparation of GHG emission inventories or BEGES.⁶² The LTECV Law set out upgraded requirements on the elaboration process and follow-up, along with the main elements to be included in the development of both the new PCAET and the updated BEGES (see Chapter 4). Yet, local authorities still maintain a certain margin for maneuver, especially in the implementation phase of their PCAET. As previously discussed, in the American federal system, the national government and Congress cannot direct cities to elaborate specific types of local climate plans, since the latter falls under the purview of state-level authorities.⁶³ This points to a key difference between the

⁶² As examined in Chapter 4, following the adoption of France’s national LTECV Law, ‘public intercommunal cooperation entities’ of more than 50,000 inhabitants are under a legal obligation to prepare a *Plan Climat-Air-Énergie Territorial* (PCAET) since 2016 (and from 2018 for those with more than 20,000 inhabitants). While there are a number of differences compared to the previous *Plan Climat-Énergie Territorial* (PCET), one salient upgrade is that the PCAET must integrate an air quality component, hence the addition of ‘air’ in the new title. Likewise, the *loi portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République* (NOTRe, also passed in 2015), which forms part of the third phase of decentralization, established more specific requirements for the Greater Paris Metropolis and municipalities that compose it in the elaboration of their PCAETs.

⁶³ As indicated in Chapter 6, the federal Congress may enact general statutes, including on environmental matters, which can contain certain provisions applying to all entities across the US, including states, cities or even individuals in some cases. However, unlike the PCAET which is directly stipulated under French national law, the US federal government does not have the authority to impose the elaboration of policy frameworks targeting local governments in the same way.

American ‘dual system’ of local government, and the ‘fused system’ which characterizes the centralized French paradigm.⁶⁴

Following these new legal requirements, the city of Paris conducted an updated BEGES, which paved the way for the elaboration of its third and latest Climate Plan (constituting the city’s PCAET), finalized after ratification by the Municipal Council in March 2018. The plan was elaborated following widespread consultation with all relevant stakeholders (like New York City and Boston—see Chapters 6 and 7). This plan represents a bold and far-reaching vision, going beyond simply updating its predecessors. The PCAET sets out ambitious objectives corresponding to three distinct timeframes (2020, 2030 and 2050), with the ultimate goal of achieving carbon neutrality by mid-century. Regarding the 2020 timeframe, the updated Climate Plan maintained the objectives of its two predecessors, while seeking to accelerate the pace of policy implementation. The decade from 2020 to 2030 is defined as the ‘decade of ambition’, critical for reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.⁶⁵

For the year 2030, from a technical point of view, the updated Climate Plan seeks to reduce GHG emissions 50% for municipal operations,⁶⁶ decrease citywide GHG emissions 40%, as well as enhance energy efficiency by 35% (all from a 2004 baseline). Likewise, another goal for 2030 is to expand the share of renewable energy to 45% (including 10% produced locally), end reliance on domestic heating oil and ensure compliance with WHO guidelines on air quality. Moreover, in line with the objectives pledged in the ‘Paris City Hall Declaration’, the long-term targets for 2050 are defined as reducing GHG emissions from municipal operations by 100%, together with decreasing citywide GHG emissions by 80% (also from a 2004 baseline), while relying on carbon offsets for the remaining 20% so as to achieve carbon neutrality. The mid-century objectives also include expanding energy efficiency 50% citywide (again with a

2004 baseline), as well as augment the share of renewable and recovered energy to 100%, with 20% produced locally.

In order to achieve these objectives across three different timeframes, Paris’ third Climate Plan sets out 500 concrete measures that cover seven broad categories. Some of the main policies include⁶⁷:

- Produce 20% renewable energy locally by 2050, with a focus on developing solar photovoltaic, geothermal energy (especially for heating), as well as recovered energy from waste.
- Enhance cooperation with regional territories outside Paris to import energy not produced locally, so as to reach 100% renewable energy by 2050.
- Create a Parisian register to map out areas where developing solar photovoltaic is most propitious, especially on rooftops (with the aim to equip 20% of city rooftops by 2050).
- Establish a public service for energy data, so as to better take advantage of the possibilities offered by new digital technologies in the energy transition.

Buildings

- Eco-renovate 1 million homes and more than 50 million square meters in the service sector, with the objective to eco-renovate 100% of existing buildings by 2050, including in terms of improving insulation to address thermal leakage.
- The city of Paris is to become one of the main shareholders in the semi-public company *Île-de-France Énergies*, which supports the eco-renovation of buildings across the region.

⁶⁴ Hague and Harrop (2007).

⁶⁵ Ville de Paris (2018a).

⁶⁶ In its latest Climate Plan, the city of Paris refers specifically to ‘intramuros emissions’ (*émissions intramuros*). While this is very similar to and integrates the notion of ‘municipal operations emissions’ examined above, it appears to be slightly broader, as it also comprises other emissions linked to energy consumption or waste, produced directly within the city. Still, it remains much narrower compared to citywide emissions (*empreinte carbone du territoire*), which includes all indirect emissions related to food consumption, construction or external transport (such as air travel).

⁶⁷ Like Paris’ first two Climate Plans, the third update also incorporates policies in other sectors, such as social inclusion for example, which are beyond the ambit of this book however.

⁶⁸ Regarding the role of the energy sector for municipal sustainability, see Pincetl et al. (2020).

- 100% of new buildings constructed in Paris will have to be low-carbon and energy-efficient with new strict environmental standards (which comprises heating, insulation and thermal leakage).
- Create carbon-neutral and resilient eco-neighborhoods, such as ‘Saint-Vincent de Paul’.

Transport/Mobility⁶⁹

- Zero diesel vehicles by 2024 and zero gasoline vehicles by 2030 in Paris.
- Develop appropriate infrastructure to make Paris 100% cyclable by 2020, as well as considerably expand pedestrian streets and pathways.
- Develop wholly decarbonated public transport by 2025, with extensive electric bus lines.
- Provide financial incentives for purchasing cleaner vehicles. Ex: differentiated parking tariffs for more polluting autos, and reduced costs for buying electric/hydrogen vehicles.
- Reform the highway system surrounding Paris to support the use of cleaner vehicles, in cooperation with other echelons, including via the creation of additional restricted traffic zones (*zones à circulation restreinte*).⁷⁰

Food consumption

- Promote the ‘flexitarian’ diet and reduce meat consumption by 2050.
- Render 20% of usable agricultural surfaces organic in the larger Paris area by 2050.

⁶⁹ Regarding the importance of the transportation sector for municipal climate policies, see Hickman and Banister (2014).

⁷⁰ It should be noted that Paris instituted its first restricted traffic zone back in September 2015. The latter are also referred to as ‘low emission zones’ (*zones à faible émission*), and involve limiting the access of certain types of polluting vehicles within a number of predefined zones across an urban area or city.

Quality of life

- Enhance the greening of Parisian streets across all districts of the city.
- Increase the ratio of greening for citywide external surfaces by 40% up to 2050.

Waste management

- Recycle 100% of all city waste by 2050, including by promoting a circular economy and improving the sorting of waste at the source through eco-conception.

Finance

- Study the feasibility of a local carbon compensation platform in Paris, and develop green finance more generally.

Regardless of these impressive objectives, Paris’ climate policies still display several shortcomings. For instance, despite the enactment of three consecutive Climate Plans since 2007, the city’s share of renewable energies remains low at around 18.4% in 2019, with only 6.8% produced locally that year. According to the latest data, Paris has not been able to meet its objective of enhancing renewables and energy efficiency by 25% up to 2020 (from a 2004 baseline).⁷¹ Moreover, the city’s policies for renewables and energy efficiency,⁷² along with waste management, have not been systematic, and there is clearly scope for improvement in these areas.

Likewise, again according to the latest estimates at the time of writing, Paris failed to meet the GHG emissions target it had set for the year 2020 of reducing citywide emissions by 25% (from a 2004 baseline).⁷³ As explained in Chapter 7, this is similar to the situation in the city of Boston. In both cases, missed targets are problematic for municipalities that seek to play a leadership role on climate policy not only at the national level,

⁷¹ Sénégas and Richard (2021).

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ See Ville de Paris (2020). See also: Cosnard (2022).

but also on the global stage; they need to set the example by meeting their own objectives. Like Boston, however, Paris has come fairly close to meeting its 2020 objectives. In fact, these targets were very ambitious to begin with, perhaps unrealistically so, which may explain why both cities have not been able to achieve them. Even though Paris has not met several of its general targets for 2020, it has still succeeded in implementing most of the policies which had been set out for that year, across multiple sectors. As a result, like Boston, Paris is still broadly on track to achieve its medium-term targets for 2030, as well as its long-term objective of carbon neutrality by 2050.⁷⁴

Hence, despite these remaining inadequacies, Paris' third Climate Plan still constitutes one of the most far-reaching municipal policy agendas in the world, and is at least as ambitious when compared to the equivalent programs and initiatives adopted by New York City and Boston. In fact, the Climate Plans of all three cities in our sample share a number of similarities. Firstly, they have articulated policies that are specifically well adapted to the municipal level, focusing on sectors where cities can have the most impact in terms of reducing GHG emissions.⁷⁵ This includes buildings, transportation/mobility, infrastructure planning, the energy and power supply, as well as waste management and recycling; these constitute domains where cities have direct control over policy processes. While there are variations in terms of competence allocation at the local level in different countries, this applies to many municipalities around the world. Hence, different cities are often confronted with similar challenges in their attempt to enact climate initiatives. Mayors can play an essential role in terms of climate mitigation,⁷⁶ since they have the ability to enact policies that will directly impact a number of key sectors. This is especially important because municipalities consume over two-thirds of

⁷⁴ The fact that Paris, as the capital city at the heart of the French economy, has failed to meet its 2020 goals (in terms of GHG emissions reduction, renewables and energy efficiency) is arguably concerning. As will be examined in Chapter 9, France's national climate targets (in the form of NDCs) are already insufficient to achieve the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement to keep global temperatures below the 2 °C threshold by the end of the century.

⁷⁵ In this regard, see literature on sustainable urban infrastructure design across targeted municipal level sectors: Hamin Infield et al. (2018), Hickman and Banister (2014), Wheeler and Rosan (2021) and Pincetl et al. (2020).

⁷⁶ See Powell (2022), Johnson et al. (2017), Rosenzweig et al. (2018) and Sachs (2015).

the world's energy and account for more than 75% of global CO₂ emissions,⁷⁷ encompassing more than half the world's population; such trends are projected to accelerate over the next few decades. Consequently, as discussed throughout this book, while cities are key contributors to global warming, they also constitute vital actors for finding solutions to address climate change.

At the same time, each municipality is unique with its own characteristics, vulnerabilities and set of possibilities; hence, there are also some notable differences between our sample cities.⁷⁸ For instance, even though New York City's policies address all sectors that are relevant for municipal climate action, it still tends to prioritize the buildings sector. As discussed in Chapter 6, this was demonstrated by the fact that the CMA was enacted in April 2019 almost immediately after the release of the updated *OneNYC*, becoming New York's first major municipal ordinance following from the strategic blueprint. In fact, the CMA currently displays one of the boldest set of policies to reduce emissions in the buildings sector of any city in the world, surpassing Paris and Boston in terms of its scale and ambit for this sector. By contrast, climate policies and strategies enacted by Paris and Boston tend not to prioritize one sector over the others.⁷⁹ Paris' Climate Plan is the most comprehensive of our sample cities not only in terms of the number of concrete policies that are set out (five hundred), but also due to the breadth of sectors which are covered. This includes original and innovative policy fields such as 'quality of life', which are not specifically mentioned in the case of Boston and NYC.

All three cities in our sample initially sought to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century. In doing so, they aligned themselves with the more ambitious long-term objective set out in the Paris Agreement to keep global temperatures below 1.5 °C by the end of the century.

⁷⁷ UN Environment, *Cities and climate change*: <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities/cities-and-climate-change>.

⁷⁸ For a comparison with three other cities, see Jones (2018).

⁷⁹ As explained in Chapter 6, while the buildings sector represents a major source of emissions for all three cities in our sample, this is especially the case in New York, due to the proliferation of skyscrapers. Therefore, while the new NYC Mayor of Eric Adams has pledged to adopt a broader approach to environmental matters, the priority of his administration in terms of climate mitigation has still been to oversee implementation of the CMA, especially for preparing the launch of its first phase, scheduled to begin in 2024.

Paris, Boston and New York originally aimed to reduce citywide emissions by at least 80% up to 2050, and to offset the remaining 20% so as to achieve carbon neutrality. As examined in Chapter 7, Boston's new Mayor Michelle Wu has set out a far-reaching 'Green New Deal', which aims to achieve carbon neutrality for the city by 2040, a decade earlier than Paris or New York. If fully enacted, this would turn Boston into the most ambitious city in our sample, at least in terms of its timetable for achieving carbon neutrality.⁸⁰ However, Paris was selected (together with 8 other French cities and 100 European cities), to be part of an EU-funded project whose aim is to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.⁸¹ Municipal authorities in Paris have acknowledged that the objective is unrealistic and mostly aspirational because it is non-binding, but it may serve to galvanize the city to augment its level of ambition.⁸² This points to the possibility that Paris might upgrade its carbon neutrality pledge during the next revision of its Climate Plan scheduled for 2024 (see below), perhaps joining Boston's goal of carbon neutrality by 2040.

It is also interesting to observe that our three sample cities adopt very similar baseline years, even though there is still a one-year difference between New York and Boston (2005), as opposed to Paris (2004). As explained in Chapters 6 and 7, this choice is linked to the fact that a short baseline can be better adapted for measuring municipal emissions in targeted sectors like buildings, transportation or waste management, which characterizes the approach of our three sample cities. This is different from the more holistic approach adopted by higher echelons like Massachusetts or the state of New York, along with the French government or the European Union, for example, which usually opt for longer baselines like the year 1990.⁸³ Another similarity is that all three cities

⁸⁰ At the time of writing, it remains to be seen whether or not Wu will be able to legally enshrine this new target of reaching carbon neutrality by 2040, since enactment of her municipal Green New Deal has been challenging and has proceeded more slowly than expected during her first year and a half in office (see Chapter 7).

⁸¹ European Commission (2022, April 28). *Commission announces 100 cities participating in EU Mission for climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030*: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_2591.

⁸² See Langlois (2022).

⁸³ There are some notable exceptions to this however, since the US federal government, whether under Obama or Biden, has adopted 2005 as a baseline year for the American NDC (see Chapters 2 and 3). This indicates that short baseline years can also support policies at the national level in some cases.

have adopted an intermediary target for 2030. Yet, while Paris and New York chose to reduce GHG emissions 40% by that date, Boston chose a more ambitious target at 50%, which may be further upgraded under Mayor Michelle Wu. Paris and Boston have both implemented a similar GHG emissions target for 2020 (unlike New York City⁸⁴), which spreads their emission reduction objectives across three distinct temporalities in the short (2020), medium (2030) and long run (2040 and 2050).

In addition, there are a number of specific differences in terms of the policies chosen to achieve and enact these various climate goals. For instance, while Paris seeks to reach 100% renewable energy by 2050, New York City aims for 100% carbon-free electricity instead, while Boston's Mayor Wu has announced 100% renewable electricity for the city no later than 2030 under her 'Green New Deal'. Likewise, although both Paris and Boston sometimes make a distinction in their pledges between municipal (or *intramuros*) and citywide emissions, this is often not the case with New York City. Moreover, while NYC explicitly seeks to align itself with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Paris has tended to put more emphasis on its alignment with WHO guidelines for air quality.⁸⁵ Finally, another interesting difference is that both Paris and New York have included measures that specifically target food consumption and have attached importance to this issue, especially NYC Mayor Eric Adams who is a self-proclaimed vegan (see Chapter 6). Food has not been as much of a focus area for Boston over the last few years, even though Mayor Michelle Wu has paid more attention to this since coming into office.⁸⁶

Paris Mayor Hidalgo's leadership on climate issues has continued over the last few years since ratification of Paris' third Climate Plan in 2018. The 'plural left' coalition in the Municipal Council has worked rapidly to enact the 500 different measures set out in the Climate Plan. The

⁸⁴ New York developed a number of concrete policy objectives to be achieved by the year 2020, as outlined in the 2017 Strategy for aligning the city with the Paris Agreement's 1.5 °C objective. However, the difference with Boston and Paris is that NYC has not set out an explicit GHG emissions reduction target for the year 2020 (see Chapter 6).

⁸⁵ See World Health Organization (2021).

⁸⁶ 'Food justice' only appears towards the end of the list of priorities in Michelle Wu's 'Green New Deal' for the city of Boston. See Office of Boston City Councilor Michelle Wu (2020).

Mayor and her majority have also developed several more specialized programs that derive from and aim to complement, as well as support implementation of the main Climate Plan. These include, for example, the city's Cycling Plan (*Plan vélo*), the Local Program for Waste Management (*Programme local de prévention des déchets ménagers et assimilés*), the Plan for Sustainable Food Consumption (*Plan d'alimentation durable*), the Plan for Biodiversity (*Plan de biodiversité*), as well as the Mobility Plan for Parisian Administrations (*Plan de déplacement des administrations parisiennes*).⁸⁷

Due to the legal nature of the centralized French political system, there is an obligation of compatibility between all of these specialized plans and the city's main Climate Plan. This is similar to the obligation of compatibility between the SRCAE at the regional level and the various specialized policy plans which derive from it, as examined above. This also applies in a lateral manner to other sectors such as urban planning or territorial management, which have an impact on climate policy; in this case, French law makes a distinction between different levels of compatibility.⁸⁸ Thus, Paris' Climate Plan only needs to 'take into account' (*prise en compte*) the Local Urbanism Plan (*Plan local d'urbanisme*—PLU)⁸⁹

⁸⁷ The latest version of Paris' Cycling Plan was enacted in January 2021 (spanning the period to 2026), and its Local Program for Waste Management was passed in December 2017. Likewise, the latest version of the Plan for Sustainable Food Consumption was launched in June 2022 (spanning the period to 2027), while the Plan for Biodiversity was released in March 2018 (spanning the period to 2024). Finally, the Mobility Plan for Parisian Administrations was implemented in March 2017.

⁸⁸ See Collectif (2021). On the legal aspects of decentralization in France, see Verpeaux and Janicot (2021) and Faure (2021).

⁸⁹ As examined in Chapter 4, the national LTECV Law also integrated provisions impacting policy frameworks in other related sectors at the municipal level. It set out upgraded environmental and energy requirements in the elaboration of PLUs, which aimed to complement the specialized climate dispositions of the PCAET. Following these new legal rules, the city of Paris launched a process to update its PLU, whose current version dates back to 2006 (even though many adjustments were made over the years). The aim is to place climate change at the center of an upgraded 'Bioclimatic Local Urbanism Plan' (*Plan Local d'Urbanisme Bioclimatique*), to be finalized by the end of 2023 and enter into force in 2024.

or the Framework for Territorial Coherence (*Schéma de cohérence territoriale*—SCOT⁹⁰). By contrast, as examined above, Paris' Climate Plan must be compatible (*compatibilité*) with the SRCAE at the regional level, which is a stronger obligation under French law.

Again, this is very different from the American federal system, where the obligation of compatibility is more indirect, since local ordinances cannot be incompatible with state law under the doctrine of preemption, even though there is no direct obligation of compatibility per se in the elaboration process. Nonetheless, the French and US paradigms are similar in that the French obligation of compatibility usually applies from the bottom-up, instead of top-down; thus, it is Paris' Climate Plan which must be compatible with the SRCAE, not the other way around.

3.2 Paris Leads the Way, Galvanizing the Higher Echelons to Enhance Their Climate Ambition

Hidalgo's reelection in 2020 enhanced her level of ambition on climate policy. Environmental issues featured as one of the dominant themes of her campaign, and she was able to successfully renew her alliance with the Green Party as part of a 'plural left' coalition. What is more, the Green Party achieved a historic breakthrough in the 2020 municipal elections across France, winning many new cities for the first time. This momentum was also apparent in Paris, where the Greens more than doubled their number of seats in the City Council (from 11 to 23 seats), which has increased their political weight within the ruling 'plural left' coalition.

This happened at a time when other left-wing groups, including Hidalgo's Socialist Party, lost seats, while opposition groups such as the Conservative Party (*Les Républicains*), managed to increase their numbers.⁹¹ As a result of the 'green wave', Hidalgo's coalition pledged

⁹⁰ The Greater Paris Metropolis launched a process to elaborate a SCOT, taking into account the environmental and energy requirements of the national LTECV Law, scheduled to enter into force by the end of 2023.

⁹¹ Still, all three of Paris' Climate Plans received unanimous approval from the City Council. As examined in Chapters 4 and 5, climate change is not a polarizing issue in French politics in the same way as it is in the US, since French conservative parties do not deny climate science. Yet, without the 'plural left coalition' and its prioritization of environmental issues, Paris' Climate Plans would have undoubtedly been less ambitious, both in terms of their objectives, as well as with policies for their enactment over the short, medium and long run.

to accelerate implementation of Paris' latest Climate Plan by enacting a number of new policies, which were announced during the 2020 municipal campaign as part of a new agreement negotiated with the Green Party. This includes the maintenance of 50 km of 'corona bicycle lanes' that were established in the wake of the pandemic, limiting the speed limit to 30 km within Paris, increasing the number of pedestrian streets, or expanding the range of 'urban forests'. Despite several disputes with the Green Party, the 'plural left' coalition has held since Hidalgo's reelection, and they are mostly on schedule to enact the new measures pledged during the campaign.

Moreover, Hidalgo's decision to run in the 2022 French Presidential election as the Socialist Party candidate pushed her into further raising her level of green ambition. Like the municipal election in 2020, climate issues were at the heart of her Presidential campaign in 2022. Hidalgo relied on her mandate as Mayor of Paris to showcase her commitment to innovative and far-reaching environmental policies, which she pledged to translate at the national level. Although she received an historically low score in the Presidential race (1.75%), the campaign still motivated her to take proactive measures throughout 2021 and 2022 to accelerate implementation of Paris' latest Climate Plan.⁹² In addition to the measures mentioned above, other examples include the opening of a first-of-its-kind 'Paris Climate Academy' in September 2021 following a decision from the municipal council, with the aim of providing free education and raising awareness about environmental issues through the organization of regular seminars, conferences, tutorials, debates or exhibitions for citizens of all ages, with an emphasis on youth.

Another instance was the city council's decision in July 2022 to launch a new pact, referred to as 'Paris Action on Climate and Biodiversity' (*Paris Action Climat Biodiversité*), to associate private companies and Parisian/Metropolitan institutions more closely with the capital city's climate action plan. The pact seeks to reinforce collaboration between all types of actors, both public and private, to develop common green standards and share best practices so as to improve each actor's carbon footprint.⁹³

⁹² Although Hidalgo was knocked out of the first round of the election in April 2022, the green momentum she developed during her Presidential run has continued.

⁹³ This includes a catalogue of concrete measures established by the city of Paris, which signatories pledged to follow. See Ville de Paris (2022, July). *Pacte Paris Action Climat Biodiversité*.

Likewise, in October 2022, Hidalgo announced an updated plan⁹⁴ to eco-reno-vate private buildings, new financial aids (involving €58 million) along with free and personalized customer services for different project phases, under the aegis of the Parisian Climate Agency. The aim is to enhance the energy efficiency and use of renewables for buildings across the city by engaging in extensive eco-reno-vation projects⁹⁵ in order to reno-vate over 22,500 private homes by 2026, twice as many as under the initial 2016 version of the plan.

In addition, the city of Paris joined several public and private partners⁹⁶ to launch a semi-public company (*société d'économie mixte*) known as 'Seine Axis Renewable Energies' (*Axe Seine Énergie Renouvelables*), which held its first meeting in November 2022.⁹⁷ Another first-of-its-kind in France, this entity fosters the development, distribution and storage of renewable energies across the Seine axis territories. By prioritizing solar photovoltaic and wind power, its goal is to generate 230 MW of power through various new projects by 2028, a notable boost to local clean energy production. This green momentum has continued in 2023, with Paris launching a program (*EnergieCulteurs*⁹⁸) to deploy new solar stations on the roofs of fifteen municipal buildings, comprising 12,000 m² of photovoltaic panels. Preparations have also been made to update Paris' Climate Plan a fourth time following a large public consultation launched in fall 2022, with the goal of finalizing the new plan over the course of 2024. The aim is to enhance Paris' climate policies across all fields so as to put the capital city on a trajectory to reach carbon neutrality, perhaps sooner than the current 2050 objective, as discussed above.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Ville de Paris (October 2022). *Eco-rénovons Paris+ : encore plus d'aides à la rénovation pour les copropriétés*: <https://www.paris.fr/pages/plan-1000-immeubles-pour-la-renovation-thermique-3136>.

⁹⁵ Projects will be encouraged to go beyond mere thermal renovation by engaging in extensive upgrades with a strong environmental impact, including reliance on bio-source materials, renewable energies, vegetalization, etc.

⁹⁶ This includes the Métropoles of Paris, Rouen and Le Havre, along with private entities such as *Energie Partagée Investissement* and the *Banque des Territoires*.

⁹⁷ Métropole Grand Paris (2022, November 9). *Création de la SEM Axe Seine Energies Renouvelables: 1er outil public de développement des énergies renouvelables*: <https://www.metropolegrandparis.fr/fr/actualites/creation-de-la-sem-axe-seine-cne-rgies-renouvelables-1er-outil-public-de-developpement>.

⁹⁸ Ville de Paris (2023).

⁹⁹ Likewise, another objective is to transcribe at the municipal level new national climate and clean energy norms established under President Macron (see Chapter 5).

Paris' proactive stance and growing aspirations on climate policy over the last few years under the leadership of Mayor Hidalgo have had a catalytic effect in stimulating other sub-national actors across France. Setting the bar high, Paris became one of the first French cities to adopt a Climate Plan in 2007. Likewise, Paris was one of the very first French territorial communities to adopt a pledge for reaching carbon neutrality by 2050, confirming its position as a national climate pioneer.¹⁰⁰ As France's capital and largest city, Paris has played a key role in encouraging other cities and sub-state actors to follow its lead and high level of climate ambition. This confirms the capital city's key role as a driver of climate action, in both a vertical and horizontal manner. The horizontal dimension is apparent in the many other large cities or metropolises across France that have followed Paris' lead; this includes Lyon, Strasbourg and Marseille, which have been galvanized into articulating their own carbon neutrality pledges.¹⁰¹

The vertical dimension is notable when it comes to the higher echelons of governance directly above Paris. This applies to the 'Greater Paris Metropolis' (*Métropole du Grand Paris* - MGP), which constitutes a cooperative framework involving 130 *communes* located around Paris, in addition to the capital city itself.¹⁰² The MGP was established in January 2016, following several reforms enacted during the third phase of decentralization (2014–2015)¹⁰³; these reforms attributed specific competences to metropolises defined under the law, mostly transferred from *communes*, regions, but also from the national government. This represents a notable difference with the American cities/states in our sample. While the US

does have an intermediary echelon between the municipal and the state level in the form of counties, the latter do not hold sway over either New York City or Boston, for reasons examined in Chapters 6 and 7.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, French metropolises such as the MGP still possess relatively limited competences, which means they currently do not play a major role in the articulation of multilevel climate governance. In France, the three principal echelons remain the *commune*, *département* and region, even though the importance of metropolises is likely to increase over the next few years and decades.¹⁰⁵

In this regard, the Greater Paris Metropolis does have the requisite competences to enact its own version of the PCAET, referred to as the 'Metropolitan Climate, Air and Energy Plan' (*Plan Climat, Air, Énergie Métropolitain* - PCAEM); the final version was approved by the Metropolitan Council in September 2018.¹⁰⁶ As examined in Chapter 4, 'public intercommunal cooperation entities' (which mostly refers to groups of communes like metropolises) such as the MGP are under a legal obligation to enact a PCAET or PCAEM under a certain deadline and following specific procedures, as stipulated in the LITECV Law (when their population is over a minimum threshold). In addition to such legal requirements, it is clear that Paris' high level of ambition spurred the MGP into setting out its own climate plan at roughly the same time; the metropolis' PCAEM was finalized only six months following the adoption of Paris' latest Climate Plan.¹⁰⁷

This is also apparent in terms of their objectives and level of ambition, which are relatively well aligned. For instance, both the city of

¹⁰⁰ See Ville de Paris (2018a).

¹⁰¹ For instance, following Paris' adoption of the objective of carbon neutrality by 2050 via its upgraded Climate Plan in March 2018, several of France's largest cities including Lyon, Marseille and Strasbourg followed suit over one year later towards the end 2019.

¹⁰² Under French law, the precise designation for metropolises such as the MGP is a 'public framework for intercommunal cooperation with its own fiscal base' (*établissement public de coopération intercommunale à fiscalité propre*). Thus, they are not considered as territorial communities from a legal perspective, but instead represent frameworks enabling *communes* to collaborate and harmonize policies in specific areas.

¹⁰³ As explained in Chapter 4, this includes: 1. *Loi de modernisation de l'action publique territoriale et d'affirmation des métropoles* (MAPTAM, January 2014), or "Law modernizing territorial public action and affirming metropolises". 2. *Loi portant nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République* (NOTRe, August 2015), or "Law pertaining to a new territorial organization of the Republic".

¹⁰⁴ In the case of Boston, Suffolk County no longer possesses any political competences since 1999 and now mostly has a symbolic role, while in the case of New York, all five boroughs in the city represent separate counties, falling under the jurisdiction of the Mayor.

¹⁰⁵ While the MGP and other metropolises currently possess limited competences, their importance is likely to increase, since further decentralization is likely to be enacted by the French government in the near future. As examined in Chapter 4, the LITECV Law refocuses the elaboration of PCAETs or PCAEMs specifically for 'public intercommunal cooperation entities', which mostly refers to different types of groups of communes such as the MGP, instead of all territorial communities (as had been the case with PCETs under the *Grenelle II* bill).

¹⁰⁶ *Métropole du Grand Paris* (2018).

¹⁰⁷ As indicated above, Paris' latest Climate Plan also constitutes a PCAET, albeit one that is focused on the municipal echelon.

Paris and the MGP seek to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, expand their share of renewable energies and enhance energy efficiency, as well as reduce air pollution in line with WHO guidelines. The city of Paris and the Greater Paris Metropolis have been working together to establish a joint action plan to tackle air pollution, which includes the creation of common restricted traffic zones (*zones à circulation restreinte*), gradually phasing out polluting vehicles by 2030.¹⁰⁸ This emphasizes the ways in which municipal policy innovation can have an illustrative impact, inciting further climate action from the bottom-up, a key aspect of the contributions from sub-state actors within the climate regime.¹⁰⁹ Yet, due to the centralized nature of the French political system, the legal obligation of compatibility between the different echelons remains in the case of the Climate Plans enacted by the MGP and the city of Paris; this also explains, at least in part, their relatively effective alignment.

While Paris (and the MGP to a certain extent) surged ahead in their level of climate ambition under the impulse of Mayor Hidalgo, becoming one of the greenest urban centers in the world, the *Île-de-France* did not follow suit in quite the same manner. After more than seventeen years as President of the Regional Council at the head of a ‘plural left’ coalition, Jean-Paul Huchon did not seek reelection for a fourth term in 2015. The Conservative Party (*Les Républicains*) achieved an electoral victory that year, winning back control of the region for the first time since 1998. The new conservative majority in the Regional Council elected political veteran Valérie Pécresse to be its President; she began her mandate in late 2015, only a year and a half after Paris also experienced a change in leadership. While Hidalgo enhanced the climate policies begun under her predecessor, Pécresse and her new conservative majority have a mixed record on environmental issues.

Such a situation has impacted the effective articulation of multilevel climate governance. Since 2015, the latter has become more partial, after having been relatively well aligned for nearly fifteen years when both echelons of governance had ‘plural left’ coalition majorities. This confirms that multilevel climate governance is rarely static but evolves over time.

¹⁰⁸ During the global summit ‘Cities for Air’ held in 2016, Mayor Hidalgo and Patrick Ollier (President of the MGP) co-launched a ‘Global Urban Air Pollution Observatory’, with support from the WHO.

¹⁰⁹ See Hale (2018).

In Boston and Massachusetts, examined in Chapter 7, multilevel governance was well aligned for eight years under Mayor Menino and Governor Patrick, both of whom came from the Democratic Party. The election of Governor Baker, a moderate Republican, in 2014 rendered this multilevel framework more partial. This was due to Baker’s mixed environmental record during his first term in office, when the state was clearly trailing behind the city of Boston in terms of its level of climate ambition.

Despite many differences between the French and US political systems, Valérie Pécresse’s election as President of the *Île-de-France* Regional Council has triggered a similar state of affairs. The conservative majority in the Regional Council has been accused by the opposition of not prioritizing environmental issues, unlike the previous ‘plural left coalition’. For example, during the first half of her initial six-year mandate, the budget allocated by Pécresse for the energy transition was reduced by 75%. Pécresse stopped funding related to energy diagnostics, with the *Île-de-France* only spending €0.677 million on renewable energies, instead of €7.4 million that had been announced at the outset. Likewise, in 2017, the Regional Council provided just €2 million for energy efficiency (whereas €17 million had been promised). Pécresse was also initially opposed to the banning of diesel vehicles, as well as to regional aid for the replacement of polluting automobiles for people from underprivileged backgrounds.¹¹⁰

According to the latest estimates, the *Île-de-France* has failed to meet a number of the climate objectives it had set out in the SRCAE for the year 2020.¹¹¹ While it is true that Paris also did not meet all of its 2020 targets, these targets were far more ambitious to begin with, and the city has still made substantial progress in terms of implementing its climate objectives over the last decade; in contrast, the same cannot be said of the regional level.¹¹² As Pécresse’s first mandate came to an end in 2021, the

¹¹⁰ In addition, Pécresse and her conservative majority have also been sharply criticized by environmental groups for pushing through an industrial project in 2018, despite opposition from local inhabitants, which involved deforestation of the *Corniche des Forêts* in Seine-Saint-Denis. This was considered a unique reservoir of local biodiversity in the *Île-de-France*.

¹¹¹ See Airparif (2019).

¹¹² While it is true that the city of Boston and the state of Massachusetts have also not met their 2020 targets, the latter were more ambitious to begin with (similarly to Paris), and they have still made notable progress in terms of implementing climate objectives over the last decade (see Chapter 7).

Île-de-France remained one of the most polluting and energy-inefficient regions in France, with one of the lowest shares for renewable energies. This remains true even proportionally, taking into account the fact that the region has the highest population and level of economic activity.¹¹³ By contrast, the region of *Occitanie* in the south-west is usually considered one of France's national champions in terms of renewable energies. In 2018, up to 45.8% of electricity consumption in *Occitanie* came from renewable energies produced locally; by contrast, the equivalent figure for *Île-de-France* is less than 5%.¹¹⁴

Finally, under Pécresse's leadership, the *Île-de-France* was the last region in France to adopt an updated Energy and Climate Strategy in July 2018. Such a temporal gap may be interpreted as a lack of prioritization regarding environmental issues. In fact, during the six years of their first mandate, Pécresse and her majority appear to have rejected all amendments coming from the opposition, including suggestions from the Green Party to improve the region's climate policy framework. Thus, Pécresse and the Conservative Party have been accused by the opposition of prioritizing private interests, especially high-tech business growth, at the expense of environmental matters. Combined with the shortcomings highlighted above, this points to a number of issues with the conservative majority's environmental record during Pécresse's first term (2015–2021). Hence, at a time when Paris was surging ahead with its level of ambition under Hidalgo's leadership, multilevel climate governance between the city and the region became more partial on several counts following Pécresse's election.

These limitations need to be balanced against a number of other positive developments in the *Île-de-France*, which point to an overall mixed record. There is a notable difference between the climate skepticism of the Republican Party in the US and conservative movements in Europe, where climate change denialism is relatively uncommon, especially in

France. The shortcomings analyzed above reveal that the French Conservative Party has not prioritized environmental issues to the same extent as left-leaning political groups. Yet, like Charlie Baker in Massachusetts, Valérie Pécresse is generally considered to be a 'moderate' conservative, who has positioned herself on the progressive fringe of the French Conservative Party (*Les Républicains*). She has worked to put pressure on her conservative majority within the Regional Council to take environmental issues more seriously over the last few years.

Therefore, Pécresse was able to push through several climate initiatives at the regional level during her first mandate. This includes the 'Regional Plan for Air Quality' (*Plan Changeons d'Air*)¹¹⁵ to reduce air pollution, the 'Anti Traffic-Jam Plan' (*Plan Anti-Bouchons*),¹¹⁶ an 'Air-Wood Fund' (*Fonds Air-Bois*) to replace polluting furnaces, as well as a new Cycling Plan (*Plan Vélo*)¹¹⁷ to encourage greater reliance on cycling for transportation. Another important measure was the launching of '100 Ecological and Innovative Neighborhoods' (*100 Quartiers Ecologiques et Innovants*), a program which provides funding to eco-renovate up to one hundred neighborhoods across *Île-de-France*. Because the program sponsors several projects within the city of Paris, this points to some coordination in terms of multilevel climate governance under Pécresse.

In fact, the conservative majority within the Regional Council has found itself under pressure from the capital city to enhance its climate ambition. At a time when Hidalgo and her renewed 'plural left' coalition were leading the city towards a third, updated Climate Plan, Pécresse was concerned that the region might be falling behind. Climate issues have risen to become one of the top priorities for voters not only in the city of Paris, but also at the regional level.

Partly in response to criticism that the new conservative majority in the Regional Council lacked the same level of climate ambition as the city of Paris, Pécresse endeavored to improve her environmental record. Clearly, the city of Paris' proactive stance on climate policy under Hidalgo galvanized not only the metropolis (the MGP), but also the regional

¹¹³ Huchon and his 'plural left' coalition also bear some share of responsibility for this state of affairs, as they were in power for nearly 18 years before Pécresse. Since France remains a relatively centralized country, most of the population and economic activity is concentrated in the *Île-de-France*. These factors undoubtedly constitute a challenge in terms of transitioning towards a more sustainable growth model.

¹¹⁴ Observatoire de l'énergie en Occitanie. *La production d'énergie renouvelable en Occitanie*: <https://www.arec-occitanie.fr/la-production-denergie-renouvelable-en-occitanie.html>.

¹¹⁵ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2016).

¹¹⁶ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2017). *Plan Régional Anti-Bouchons et pour Changer la Route*.

¹¹⁷ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2017). *Plan Vélo Régional*.

level. As examined in the two previous chapters, this recalls the situation in the states of New York and Massachusetts, whereby New York City and Boston acted as catalysts to spur their respective states into enhancing their climate policies over time, so as to catch up with their capital cities. Governors Cuomo in New York and Baker in Massachusetts also initially had mixed environmental records, which they improved over the years until eventually becoming national climate leaders, partly in response to pressure from the municipal echelon. Once again, this indicates that multilevel governance may positively evolve over time, with cities acting as drivers within the climate regime, pulling the higher echelons upwards. Local policy innovation can have an illustrative impact, encouraging further action from the bottom-up, with cities setting the climate policy agenda within a multilevel framework.

In this regard, the parallels with the dynamics operating in New York are particularly notable. As examined in Chapter 6, although a personal rivalry had developed between former Mayor de Blasio and former Governor Cuomo, the rivalry may have been beneficial in the area of climate policy, since it motivated both men to enhance their climate ambitions.¹¹⁸ Likewise, while Huchon and Delanoë already did not get along on a personal level, the situation worsened under their successors Hidalgo and Péresse, who have developed an acute personal rivalry, made worse by the fact that they come from different political parties. This may have encouraged Péresse to enhance her climate ambition over time, so as to match Hidalgo's initiatives at the municipal level. Such institutional competition between mayors of large cities and their regional executives is prevalent both in France and the US, as well as in many other countries around the world.

Péresse has relied on her national political clout to encourage her peers within the French Conservative Party into putting more emphasis on environmental issues, developing her notion of 'positive' and 'realist' ecology. Partly in alignment with conservative values, this seeks to reward

green initiatives and entrepreneurship, while avoiding the 'punitive ecology' attributed to the 'plural left', accused of enacting mostly taxes and overly strict regulations that hamper the economy. Thus, Péresse has sought to mobilize the *Île-de-France* as an experimental arena to showcase her conception of 'positive' and 'realist' ecology, more apparent during the second half of her first mandate, underlining a clear progression over time.¹¹⁹ As will be examined in more detail below, this also became a central theme of Péresse's campaign during the 2022 French Presidential election, when she won the primary and became the official candidate for the Conservative Party (*Les Républicains*).¹²⁰

3.3 Effective Articulation and Remaining Shortcomings for Multilevel Climate Governance Between Paris and the Île-de-France

Effective articulation of multilevel climate governance between Paris and the *Île-de-France*, in the enactment of their respective climate policy frameworks, can be identified across several dimensions. For instance, Péresse has worked to prepare an updated 'Energy and Climate Strategy' (*Stratégie Énergie-Climat de la Région Île-de-France*) at the regional level, which represents the main climate policy framework enacted during her first term. Although she presented this as part of her concept of 'positive' and 'realist' ecology, it also constituted an attempt to match Hidalgo's updated Climate Plan at the municipal level.

As explained in Chapter 7, the city of Boston and the state of Massachusetts have not always been well-synchronized on a temporal level over the last few years. While this has also been true from a historic perspective for the city and the state of New York, they were still able to implement their Green New Deals at roughly the same time in 2019. Similarly, the final version of Paris' third Climate Plan was set out in

¹¹⁹ Again, this evokes the situation in Massachusetts under Governor Baker, a moderate Republican, who likewise succeeded in improving his environmental record over time and especially during his second term, attempting to bridge the partisan gap on climate issues in the US (see Chapter 7).

¹²⁰ In fact, the rivalry between Péresse and Hidalgo, including on climate issues, also played out during the 2022 French Presidential election, when they were both candidates for the conservative and socialist parties respectively, and openly highlighted their diverging political stances throughout the campaign.

¹¹⁸ NYC Mayor Eric Adams and Governor Kathy Hochul have endeavored to improve relations between the two echelons, and have sought to develop a close partnership since assuming office only a couple of months apart. Yet, despite a notable improvement compared to their predecessors, disagreements between the new Mayor and Governor persist, especially regarding budgetary matters where Adams was quite critical over budgetary cuts announced by Hochul in January 2023, for example (see Chapter 6).

March 2018, while the *Île-de-France's* new Energy and Climate Strategy was enacted in July 2018, only three months later. As indicated above, the Greater Paris Metropolis also adopted its own Climate Plan in September 2018, two months after the region. Clearly, this was not a coincidence, but highlights Pécresse's intention not to be left behind on climate issues. The latter demonstrates a good level of temporal synchronization between the city, the metropolis and the region, which is important for the articulation of multilevel climate governance.

In addition, and for reasons examined in more detail below, Paris' latest Climate Plan and the *Île-de-France's* new Energy and Climate Strategy are relatively well aligned concerning their medium and long-term objectives. Both rely on the same target years over the medium (2030) to long run (2050); they also share similar priorities, including in terms of enhancing energy efficiency and the share of renewables, along with lowering dependence on energy imports (like the Greater Paris Metropolis). For the year 2030, the *Stratégie Énergie-Climat de la Région Île-de-France* seeks to reduce by half its dependency on fossil fuels and nuclear energy by enhancing energy efficiency up to 20%, increase the share of renewable energies to 40%, as well as double the ratio of renewables produced locally (all from a 2015 baseline).¹²¹ For the year 2050, the Strategy aims to achieve carbon neutrality by augmenting energy efficiency up to 40%, by expanding the share of renewable energies to reach 100%, and by quadrupling the ratio of renewables produced locally (also from a 2015 baseline).¹²²

Following the enactment of this strategy, Paris and *Île-de-France* became better aligned in terms of their long-term objectives and share a similar level of ambition, since they both aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 (like the Greater Paris Metropolis¹²³), as well as transition towards 100% renewable energies. They also have a similar objective to increase the share of renewables by the year 2030. While Paris is slightly more ambitious since it aims for 45%, instead of 40% for the *Île-de-France*, the end result is relatively similar due to the difference in baseline years.

¹²¹ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2018).

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Therefore, like the city of Paris, both the Greater Paris Metropolis and the *Île-de-France* have sought to align themselves with the more ambitious long-term objective set-out in the Paris Agreement of limiting global temperatures below 1.5 °C by the end of the century.

When it comes to enhancing energy efficiency, their objectives also have a similar trajectory, both over the medium (2030) and long run (2050), with Paris being slightly more ambitious once again; this is not necessarily apparent however due to a different choice of baseline years (2004 for Paris and 2015 for *Île-de-France*). The same applies in terms of increasing the share of renewable energies produced locally, which broadly follows a similar orientation both at the city and regional levels. Yet, the former is expressed through precise percentages, whereas the latter is conveyed with a ratio against a baseline year. Therefore, the timing of enactment, as well as the level of ambition over the medium (2030) to long run (2050), illustrate how the Regional Energy and Climate Strategy allowed the *Île-de-France* to become relatively well aligned with Paris' third Climate Plan at the municipal level.

Like the city of Paris, the *Île-de-France* also set out an agenda of concrete policies to be implemented over the next few years, so as to ensure the achievement of its climate objectives over the medium to long run. As examined below, a number of these measures are well aligned with those at the municipal echelon. These regional policies have been divided into two main categories¹²⁴:

1. *Developing clean modes of transportation*

- Banning diesel vehicles within the Parisian agglomeration by 2025, and by 2030 for all of *Île-de-France*. This is well aligned with the objective of Paris' latest Climate Plan to ban diesel vehicles within the city by 2024 (see above).
- Phase-out gasoline vehicles by 2030 within the Parisian agglomeration, and by 2040 for all of *Île-de-France*. This matches with the goal of Paris' Climate Plan to ban gasoline vehicles within the city by 2030.
- Support cleaner transportation by developing cycling lanes, as well as pedestrian streets. This is well aligned with the objective of Paris' Climate Plan to make the city 100% cyclable by 2020, as well as expand pedestrian streets and pathways.

¹²⁴ Conseil régional d'Île-de-France (2018). Similarly to the SRCAE and Paris' Climate Plans, the Regional Energy and Climate Strategy also contains policies in a number of other sectors, which are beyond the ambit of this book.

- Upgrade all public transportation to make it more energy-efficient, with greater reliance on renewable fuels such as hydrogen, biogas or electricity in buses, for example. This is well aligned with the goal of Paris' Climate Plan to develop wholly decarbonated public transport by 2025, including extensive electric bus lines.
- Provide financial incentives for purchases of cleaner vehicles. This is well aligned with the objectives of Paris' Climate Plan to establish differentiated parking tariffs for more polluting automobiles, as well as reduced costs for purchases of electric vehicles.
- Create new lanes on the regional highway system dedicated to cleaner vehicles. This is in line with the goal of Paris' Climate Plan to reform the highway system surrounding the city so as to support cleaner vehicles, in cooperation with the higher echelons.

2. *Enhancing renewable energies and energy recovery*

- Gradual phasing out of nuclear energy.
- Call for projects to enhance renewable energies and energy recovery, with a focus on: geothermal power, solar photovoltaic, biogas, wind power, hydrogen, micro electricity, as well as energy recovered from waste. This is well aligned with the objective of Paris' Climate Plan to enhance cooperation with regional territories outside of the city, so as to import renewable energies not produced locally (still projected to be at 80% by 2050).
- Set up a solar land register to identify areas where the development of solar photovoltaic energy is most propitious, especially on rooftops. This is well aligned with the goal of Paris' Climate Plan to create a similar register in order to enhance the development of solar photovoltaic, especially on rooftops (with the aim to equip 20% of city rooftops by 2050).
- Support the eco-renovation of buildings across the region, both public and private, in collaboration with the semi-public company *Île-de-France Energies*. Since Paris is one of its main shareholders, this is well aligned with the ambitious objectives set out in the city's Climate Plan in terms of decreasing the carbon footprint from buildings (see above).

Overall, there is a relatively good level of convergence between the municipal and regional echelons for policies relating to the development of clean modes of transportation,¹²⁵ as well as renewable energies and energy recovery. Out of the 500 measures set out in Paris' latest Climate Plan, only 70 actually fall under the direct purview of municipal authorities,¹²⁶ partly due to the specificities of competence allocation for the capital city.¹²⁶ Hence, the vast majority of proposed policies depend on collaboration with other actors or higher echelons of governance, including the Greater Paris Metropolis and the *Île-de-France*. This points to the legal obligation of compatibility between the different echelons under the centralized French political system,¹²⁷ which enables a relatively high level of policy harmonization and tight coordination between the different levels of governance. It also means that there is less of a risk of conflict regarding policies enacted between the various echelons. The latter highlights some of the advantages of the hierarchical and stratified nature of the centralized French system in terms of the articulation of multilevel climate governance; this forms a relevant point of contrast to the US federal paradigm, where the requirement of compatibility between the state and city level is more indirect.¹²⁸

For these reasons, implementation of sectorial policies to achieve the objectives set out in the Regional Energy and Climate Strategy, along with Paris' Climate Plan, suggest a relatively effective articulation of multilevel governance between the two echelons. The *Île-de-France* has followed Paris' lead for a number of policies that had first been tested at the municipal level, especially in the fields of transportation and energy. Hence, much like New York City and Boston, Paris represents another example of how cities may act as 'laboratories of democracy', where innovative climate policies can be experimented at the local level, before subsequently being enacted by the higher echelons. This supports

¹²⁵ On the role of multilevel climate governance in the transportation sector, see Bache et al. (2015).

¹²⁶ On French territorial communities with a special status, see Kada and Fazi (2022).

¹²⁷ See Collectif (2021). On the legal aspects of decentralization in France, see Verpeaux and Janicot (2021) and Faure (2021).

¹²⁸ As explained in Chapters 6 and 7, under the doctrine of preemption, while state law will take precedence over local ordinances in cases of overt conflict, there is still no direct obligation of compatibility per se in the elaboration process, which can in some cases open the door to potential divergencies.

the pattern whereby cities act as pioneers within the climate regime, setting the climate agenda within a multilevel framework. It also reaffirms the notion that local policy experimentation can trigger upgrades in economic/technological arrangements from the bottom-up, which represents a key aspect of the contributions from sub-state actors within the climate regime.¹²⁹

Pécresse sought to further bolster her green credentials in preparation for the 2021 regional elections. For instance, the €1.3 billion regional stimulus package she presented in 2020 as a response to the recession stemming from the COVID pandemic included €238 million specifically to support and accelerate the ecological transition and sustainable transport, an unprecedented sum for the *Île-de-France*.¹³⁰ As a follow-up, Pécresse took the initiative to organize a regional ‘Conference of the Parties’ (COP) in September 2020. Relying on the fact that regions are ‘leaders in line’ (*chef de file*) for climate-related matters, the Energy and Climate Strategy had set out plans to organize a COP at the regional level, with the intention of bringing together relevant stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. The regional COP addressed a broad range of environmental issues, leading to the adoption of 192 proposals to reduce the artificialization of soils, as well as accelerate the transition to a circular economy and net-zero emissions.¹³¹

Building on this, Pécresse placed climate action as one of the main pillars of her policy manifesto during the campaign for the 2021 regional elections.¹³² This was especially apparent in the second round of voting, when the three main left-wing opposition parties chose to form an alliance under the leadership of the Green Party.¹³³ In response to criticism

¹²⁹ See Hale (2018).

¹³⁰ Thévenin (2020). This also included a pledge of €10 billion allocated to environmental issues for the period 2020–2024, a notable increase compared to previous periods.

¹³¹ Région Île-de-France (2020, September). *192 propositions dans le cadre du Plan de relance pour la reconstruction écologique de l'Île-de-France*: <https://www.iledefrance.fr/192-propositions-dans-le-cadre-du-plan-de-relance-pour-la-reconstruction-ecologique-de-ile-de>.

¹³² See Cosnard (2021) and Goth (2021).

¹³³ This includes the Green Party (*Europe Écologie Les Verts*—EELV), the Socialist Party (*Parti Socialiste*—PS), as well as the extreme left, known as *La France Insoumise* (LFI); this coalition placed environmental issues at the heart of their campaign and attempted to deny Pécresse a second term. While ultimately unsuccessful, they still managed to increase

from the left about her mixed environmental record, Pécresse pledged to accelerate and reinforce the climate policies launched during her first term. She focused on the development of clean modes of transportation to tackle air pollution, along with enhancing renewables and energy recovery, including via enhanced collaboration with the city of Paris. Such a strategy at least partly contributed to Pécresse’s relatively easy reelection in June 2021, since her conception of a ‘positive’ and ‘realist’ ecology appealed to a broad range of centrist voters. The results of the 2021 election provided the Conservative Party (*Les Républicains*) with a strong renewed majority in the *Île-de-France* Regional Council for a second mandate (2021–2027). This has enabled Pécresse to rapidly enact her updated climate policy agenda, pledging to raise the level of green ambition compared to her first term.

Pécresse relied on the *Île-de-France* region as a springboard to showcase her conception of ‘positive’ and ‘realist’ ecology. This constitutes an attempt to represent a more progressive strand within the French Conservative Party, which was apparent during her campaign for the 2022 French Presidential election, including during the primary of the Conservative Party.¹³⁴ To a certain extent, it may have been with the French Presidential election in mind that Pécresse moved to align the region with the more ambitious policies enacted at the municipal level in Paris. Thus, like Hidalgo, Pécresse’s decision to run in the 2022 Presidential election also played a role in terms of encouraging her to enhance her environmental policies. Like Hidalgo, Pécresse obtained a historically low score (4.9%). This still encouraged her to accelerate the enactment of the regional Energy and Climate Strategy by taking additional measures throughout 2021, 2022 and beyond.

For instance, a regional study group on climate change (*Groupe régional d'études sur les changements climatiques*—GREC), made up of non-partisan scientific experts, was launched in February 2021. Its role is to investigate the current impacts and anticipate future effects of environmental degradation across the *Île-de-France* to guide the

their collective number of seats, and have continued to put pressure on Pécresse and her majority to raise their level of green ambition during her second term.

¹³⁴ Pécresse distinguished herself during the primary of the conservative Party (*Les Républicains*) in the fall 2021 by emphasizing her conception for a ‘positive’ and ‘realist’ ecology, in contrast to most of the other candidates, including her main rival in the race Éric Ciotti, who prioritized security and economic growth.

region into enacting appropriate actions.¹³⁵ Likewise, in July 2021, the Regional Council adopted a blueprint known as ‘Acting for our Environment’ (*Agir pour notre Environnement*¹³⁶), which established concrete policy details to operationalize and hasten the implementation of the measures set out in the regional strategy, while also introducing several new proposals. These included the creation of a subsidy of €6000 for purchasing a clean vehicle, a €1000 subsidy to renovate furnaces in private homes, expanding the express regional biking network, along with additional measures to reduce the environmental impact of construction of large projects.

Furthermore, in November 2021, the Regional Council voted to update the SDRIF, with the objective of turning it into an environmental version referred to as *SDRIF-Environnemental* (SDRIF-E). Public consultations involving communes across the region (including Paris) were organized throughout 2022, with an initial version presented towards the end of 2023, for final approval in 2024.¹³⁷ As explained above, the initial SDRIF constituted an overarching policy framework for urbanism and territorial management in general, not climate policy specifically; hence, the decision to make environmental issues a focus area represents a notable development. One objective is to transcribe new national environmental and clean energy norms established under President Macron (see Chapter 5) at the regional level. Another goal of the SDRIF-E is to incorporate proposals from the 2020 regional COP, enhancing current policies and adopting new measures to achieve a circular economy, while accelerating the reduction of waste and soil artificialization, with the ultimate goal of net-zero emissions. Since the updated SDRIF-E has adopted 2040 as a temporal horizon, it is not unthinkable that the goal of reaching carbon neutrality might be advanced by one decade; however, this will probably depend on whether or not such a decision is taken firstly at the municipal level with the update of Paris’ Climate Plan, also scheduled for 2024.

¹³⁵ Région Île-de-France (February 2021). *Mise en place du GREC francilien, le Groupe régional d'études sur les changements climatiques et leurs impacts environnementaux*: <https://www.iledefrance.fr/mise-en-place-du-grec-francilien-le-groupe-regional-detudes-sur-les-changements-climatiques-et>.

¹³⁶ Conseil régional d’Île-de-France (2021).

¹³⁷ Région Île-de-France. *SDRIF-E: OBJECTIF 2040*: <https://www.iledefrance.fr/objecitif2040>.

Nevertheless, the above analysis should be nuanced by the fact that multilevel climate governance between Paris and the *Île-de-France* still suffers from a number of inadequacies. Despite effective coordination on a number of issues, there are several areas where the city and the region are still not well synchronized on climate policy. Like the American cities/states discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, this suggests that even ‘best case studies’ such as Paris have not always displayed effective coordination with the higher echelons, and still have room for improvement. Once again, this emphasizes that implementation of local climate initiatives for the cities in our sample may in some cases lead to problematic interactions between the different tiers of governance.

Firstly, the organization of a regional COP in September 2020 covered multiple issues, including how to make cities more environmentally sustainable. Yet, closer examination of participants indicates that very few representatives from the city of Paris took part in the event. This constitutes a rather peculiar situation, given the capital city’s predominant importance for the articulation of climate policies in the *Île-de-France*. This could be linked to the personal rivalry between Pécresse and Hidalgo, which might have encouraged the Mayor to boycott the event to undermine the environmental credentials of her conservative rival. This type of political calculation clearly undercuts effective multilevel climate governance between the municipal and regional levels.

Secondly, coordination problems arise from the fact that Paris and the *Île-de-France* have not chosen the same baseline years against which to measure the achievement of their climate objectives over the medium to long run. While Paris has chosen 2004 as a baseline year, the region initially adopted 1990 under the SDRIF plan, before opting for 2015 as a baseline year in the Regional Energy and Climate Strategy. Since both echelons aspire to the same long-term trajectory, including the achievement of carbon neutrality and 100% renewable energies by 2050, this is not overly problematic. Such a discrepancy recalls Boston/MA and New York/NY, where baseline years differ between the municipal and state levels, even though each echelon still aims for the same long-term trajectory of achieving carbon neutrality by mid-century.

As explained in previous chapters however, such a lack of alignment for baseline years can still be problematic in terms of the effective articulation

of multilevel climate governance.¹³⁸ It may lead to problems of policy coordination and harmonization, making it more difficult to monitor progress with implementation over time, and in terms of comparing climate objectives and results over the medium to long run. Such a difference in baseline years may conceal the fact that the city and the region are still not always well aligned in terms of their medium to long-term goals, since Paris remains slightly more ambitious. Examples include their respective targets both to enhance energy efficiency by 2030 and 2050, and to increase the ratio of renewable energies produced locally. Even when baseline years are not relied on, Paris is still ahead of the *Île-de-France* and the two are not always ideally synchronized; for instance, while the city aims to enhance renewable energies 45% by 2030, the region has a target of 40% instead.

A more apparent instance of multilevel discord between the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* relates to their specific competence allocation under French law. It is striking to what extent the regional Energy and Climate Strategy is limited when compared to the municipal Climate Plan. As indicated above, the regional Strategy focuses primarily on two main aspects of climate policy for the *Île-de-France*: developing clean modes of transportation, and enhancing renewables and energy recovery. By contrast, Paris' Climate Plan includes policies in a number of diverse sectors such as buildings, transport/mobility, energy, food consumption, quality of life, waste management, as well as finance. Likewise, the Regional Strategy does not establish specific targets in terms of GHG emission reductions for either 2030 or 2050 (even though it still commits to achieving carbon neutrality by mid-century). In contrast, Paris' Climate Plan sets out detailed emission reduction targets for both 2030 and 2050, which include a distinction between emissions from municipal operations (*émissions intramuros*) and citywide emissions (*empreinte carbone du territoire*).

As a result, the *Île-de-France*'s Energy and Climate Strategy is less ambitious in areas such as renewables, energy efficiency and waste management, and in terms of providing enough funding to achieve the

objectives it sets out. While Pécresse certainly has room for improvement on climate issues during her second mandate, especially with regard to the allocation of budgetary resources,¹³⁹ a number of these shortcomings are related to the limited competence allocation for regions under the centralized French political system. Despite four consecutive phases of decentralization where regions have seen their powers gradually increase, their competences remain quite narrow, and are limited on the whole to a few specific policy areas. This may hamper the ability of French regions to enact innovative and far-reaching measures in the field of climate change. By contrast, as discussed above, cities as *communes* continue to benefit from the 'general competence clause', allowing them to implement initiatives at the municipal level which go beyond the strict wording of competence allocation under the law in the name of 'local public interest'. French cities are not subjected to the tutelage of the regional echelon, since all sub-national actors are put at the same level under the French Constitution¹⁴⁰; this enhances their capacity to enact more innovative policies at the municipal level.¹⁴¹

Likewise, Paris' budget remains substantially larger than the regional budget of the *Île-de-France* (double the amount, in fact¹⁴²), even

¹³⁹ As previously explained and as part of a regional stimulus package to tackle the recession stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, Pécresse pledged to invest €10 billion on environmental issues for the period 2020–2024. However, this arguably represents a relatively small investment for a region of 12.21 million people and with a GDP of over €700 billion. It remains to be seen whether or not this represents a short-term response to an immediate crisis, or a long-term commitment towards enhancing the share of the regional budget to address climate change.

¹⁴⁰ See Collectif (2021). On the legal aspects of decentralization in France, see Verpeaux and Janicot (2021), Verpeaux (2020) and Faure (2021).

¹⁴¹ As examined in Chapter 6, this forms a point of contrast with the US federal system, whereby local governments such as cities fall under the purview of state authorities; this is exemplified by the doctrine of preemption, whereby state statutes have primacy over local ordinances in cases of conflict.

¹⁴² For instance, the budget of the city of Paris for the year 2022 was around €10 billion. The regional budget of the *Île-de-France* was half that amount for the same year, at around €5 billion. See Ville de Paris (2022). *Les données clés pour comprendre le budget 2022*: <https://www.paris.fr/pages/les-donnees-cles-pour-comprendre-le-budget-2022-19952>.

See also: Région Île-de-France (2021). *Budget 2022 noté, la Région Île-de-France poursuit sa dynamique de relance*: <https://www.iledefrance.fr/budget-2022-vote-la-region-ile-de-france-poursuit-sa-dynamique-de-relance>.

¹³⁸ This is exacerbated by the fact that, as examined in Chapters 4 and 5, the French government and the European Union have also tended to adopt 1990 as one of their main baseline years, which could generate further problems in terms of multilevel coordination and synchronization between the different echelons.

after four phases of decentralization.¹⁴³ Consequently, multilevel climate governance between the municipal and regional levels is necessarily more partial, since there is only so much the *Île-de-France* can do to support the city of Paris, beyond a few narrowly defined policy areas, such as transportation and energy (despite their obvious importance).¹⁴⁴

The contrast is especially apparent with regard to competence allocation for states operating under the American federal system.¹⁴⁵ As examined in Chapters 6 and 7, federal states benefit from substantial autonomy under US constitutional law, including through the exercise of both ‘reserved’ and ‘concurrent’ powers. This helps to explain why climate policies adopted by Massachusetts and the state of New York are more extensive, and involve a holistic policy framework, when compared to the narrower approach of the *Île-de-France*. The budgets possessed by the states of Massachusetts and New York are also substantially larger compared to their capital cities (Boston and NYC); as highlighted above, the opposite is true for Paris and the *Île-de-France*.¹⁴⁶

Because all three states/regions in our sample seek to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century, they have set ambitious targets to increase the share of renewable energies and energy efficiency by 2030 and 2050. However, the *Île-de-France* has not been able to establish precise additional intermediary GHG emission reduction targets, at least not in the same way as our three sample cities and the states of Massachusetts and New York. With regard to CLCPA implementation in New York state, 100% carbon-free electricity is scheduled to be reached by 2040, along

with specific goals for different renewable energy sectors such as offshore wind and solar power. An important clause of the CLCPA mandated the Climate Action Council to develop a ‘Scoping Plan’, which forms part of the states’ holistic approach. Released in December 2022, the Scoping Plan set out specific policy proposals in terms of how the state will achieve the general GHG emissions targets contained in the Act across all major sources—buildings, transportation, energy, as well as industrial, commercial and agricultural activities. This clearly goes beyond the rather limited ambit of the Energy and Climate Strategy adopted by the *Île-de-France*, with its focus on transportation and energy.

Likewise, the NGCR bill in Massachusetts established interim targets to reduce statewide GHG emissions 50% by 2030, and 75% by 2040 (from 1990 levels). It also mandated state agencies to develop additional statewide interim objectives every five years starting in 2025, along with GHG emissions targets for six major sub-sectors, which epitomizes a holistic approach. This includes the electricity sector, transportation, commercial and industrial heating and cooling, residential heating and cooling, industrial manufacturing processes, as well as natural gas distribution and services. Moreover, the NGCR enhanced the state’s renewable portfolio standard to ensure that at least 40% of the state’s electricity comes from renewables by 2030, and established specific goals for different types of renewables such as offshore wind and solar power. Once again, this represents a clear point of contrast to the limited scope of the Energy and Climate Strategy adopted by the *Île-de-France*.

The more holistic approach adopted by the states of New York and Massachusetts is made possible through to their extensive competences and level of autonomy under the American federal system.¹⁴⁷ State action represents an essential complement to the more targeted approach of the cities in our sample. While municipalities focus on sectors such as buildings, transportation, energy and waste management where they can have the most impact, there are certain policy areas such as agriculture, or several aspects of industrial and commercial activities that fall outside the ambit of municipal governance, which means that cities have limited control over them. Therefore, the fact that the *Île-de-France* possesses such narrow competences under the centralized French political system means that it cannot fully cover these sectors, which are also beyond

¹⁴³ This is not unique to Paris, since most prominent French cities tend to possess larger budgets than their respective regions, including Lyon (*Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes*), Marseille and Nice (*Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur*), as well as Bordeaux (*Nouvelle-Aquitaine*), for example.

¹⁴⁴ On the importance of the transportation sector for climate policies at the municipal level, see Hickman and Banister (2014). Concerning the role of the energy sector, see Pincet et al. (2020).

¹⁴⁵ On US federalism, see Fisher and Harriger (2019), Coleman and Leskiw (2018) and Robertson (2017).

¹⁴⁶ In fact, the budgets allocated to US states such as New York or Massachusetts are on a different order of magnitude compared to the much smaller budgets provided to French regions. This applies even in the case of the *Île-de-France*, France’s largest and most prosperous region. Although New York City is the largest and most prosperous US city, its budget remains substantially smaller compared to that of the state of New York, at \$227 billion for 2023–2024. Office of the State Comptroller.

¹⁴⁷ On the level of autonomy for states under the US federal system, see Fisher and Harriger (2019).

the ambit of municipal authorities.¹⁴⁸ This constitutes another example of the somewhat partial multilevel framework between Paris and the *Île-de-France*.¹⁴⁹

For all of these reasons, the states of New York and Massachusetts have been able to provide more extensive support to the municipal climate policies enacted by their capital cities (NYC and Boston); multilevel climate governance in these two cases is more developed and wide-ranging. This serves as a point of contrast to the somewhat partial framework between Paris and the *Île-de-France*, due to the limited competences possessed by French regions. This points to notable weaknesses in the French multilevel governance system when compared to its American counterpart.

At the same time, this means that the city of Paris may not have been as impacted by the mixed environmental record of the conservative majority in the Regional *Île-de-France* Council during the first part of Pécresse' first term. By contrast, the states of New York and Massachusetts have often trailed behind their capital cities in their level of green ambition, which has been more problematic. Due to the extensive powers afforded to states under the American federal system, they play an instrumental role in setting overall policy objectives for local governments, including those operating under 'Home Rule' because of the doctrine of preemption. As a result, while it cannot be said that the state level has prevented or hindered New York City and Boston from enacting far-reaching municipal climate policies, they might have been able to go even further, had their states demonstrated a comparable level of ambition sooner.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ As examined in Chapters 4 and 5, it is the national echelon in France which possesses the requisite competences to enact policies in these fields, while in the US, it is often shared between the federal and state levels.

¹⁴⁹ This represents a notable exception to a previously examined pattern whereby the higher-up the echelon on the multilevel governance pyramid, the more general and holistic policy approaches tend to become. While this is the case for the US cities and states in our sample, it clearly does not apply with Paris and the *Île-de-France*.

¹⁵⁰ At the same time, the current Governors of NY and MA—Hochul and Healey respectively—have set out a more proactive approach to tackling climate change, placing it as a central priority (see Chapters 6 and 7). Over the next few years, it is likely that the previous dynamic might evolve, with an effective alignment between the two echelons for Boston/MA, and perhaps a reversal of the dynamic in New York, since Mayor Adams does not appear to be as committed to ambitious climate action as Governor Hochul.

A final related point of contrast between the American federal system and its centralized French counterpart has to do with the diverging dynamics of their respective multilevel governance frameworks. Under French law, for example, each echelon is ascribed certain core competences in specific fields¹⁵¹, in areas where competences overlap, there has been a growing reliance on the role of 'leader in line' (*chef de file*), which assigns a coordinating role to one echelon over the others. This has tended to generate a heavily bureaucratic paradigm in terms of multilevel governance. For instance, despite greater reliance on the function of 'leader', the latter occupies a limited, non-coercive and vaguely defined 'coordination role'. Thus, in spite of improvements linked to more specific competence allocation through successive phases of decentralization, it is not always clear which echelon is in charge over which specific policy areas.

This has resulted in bureaucratic overlaps between the different echelons, which can reduce the effectiveness of multilevel climate governance. The latter is especially acute in policy sectors relating to the environment, since transportation, buildings, energy or waste management are often spread out across different echelons, which increases the risk of redundancies. Unnecessary complexity arises when it comes to the actual implementation of policies, making it more difficult to achieve climate objectives over the medium to long run. Such a paradigm forms a notable point of contrast to the American federal system, where multilevel governance tends to be more dynamic, since competence allocation is more clearly defined. All powers not expressly delegated to the federal government are reserved to states,¹⁵² and local governments and cities are legally under the authority of states, not the federal government. Such a framework helps to reduce duplication between the different echelons, which enhances the effectiveness of multilevel climate governance.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ See Collectif (2021). See also: Verpeaux and Janicot (2021) and Faure (2021).

¹⁵² On US federalism, see Fisher and Harriger (2019), Coleman and Leskiv (2018) and Robertson (2017).

¹⁵³ Nevertheless, as examined in Chapters 2 and 3, the American federal system also has its disadvantages, since there tends to be weaker level of policy harmonization and coordination. As exemplified by the US cities and states in our sample, this can in some cases open the door to potential disparities and conflicting rules or norms, since there is no direct obligation of compatibility between the different echelons, unlike in the centralized French system. While duplication involves the enactment of similar and overlapping rules between different echelons, conflicting norms lead to the opposite problem.

Overall, the elements examined above reveal that even ‘best case studies’, such as Paris, have not always displayed effective coordination in terms of multilevel climate governance with the higher echelons, and still have room for improvement. This highlights problems which can result from instances of partial multilevel climate governance between Paris and the *Île-de-France*. If even this ‘best case study’ located in a developed country is unable to foster an effective articulation of multilevel climate governance, then this does not bode well for the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement. On a general note, this chapter has argued that instances of interaction, including both effective collaboration and more problematic issues of synchronization, highlight the ways in which the city of Paris and the *Île-de-France* region constitute a particularly relevant paradigm in terms of the articulation of multilevel climate governance. The far-reaching climate initiatives developed by Paris especially clearly underline the ways in which sub-state actors may contribute towards closing the GHG emissions gap stemming from inadequate policies at the national level. As analyzed in Chapters 4 and 5, national climate strategies and frameworks enacted by the French government over the last few years under President Macron and his predecessors suffer from a number of inadequacies and shortcomings. These policies may be insufficient to reach national, EU and global climate objectives, including the long-term goal of the Paris Agreement to keep temperatures below the 2 °C threshold by the end of the century.

Therefore, the ambitious municipal and regional-level climate policies implemented by Paris and the *Île-de-France*, examined throughout this chapter, demonstrate the potential for sub-state actors to compensate for inadequacies within national frameworks, thus helping to close the emissions gap. Sub-national entities have also played a key role in terms of reducing GHG emissions in the years leading up to 2020 and beyond, whereas the official French NDC only began post-2020 under the rules of the Paris Accord. This is similar to the configuration involving the US cities and states in our sample. Yet, a fundamental difference is that there was no US NDC during Trump’s four-year Presidency, with the US only rejoining the Paris Accord under President Biden in February 2021. Thus, the compensatory role of American sub-state actors has been even more pronounced compared to the situation in France, where the national government has supported climate action more consistently.

4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined multilevel climate governance in France from the municipal to the regional echelon, relying on the distinct case study of Paris and the *Île-de-France*. More specifically, it has explored the different climate policies enacted by the city of Paris, and how this has impacted collaboration with the tiers of governance right above it, i.e., the Greater Paris Metropolis and the *Île-de-France* region. These represent the first echelon of the multilevel pyramid, an essential aspect of multilevel climate governance.

Taken together, Chapters 6, 7 and 8 examine the ways in which each city in our sample constitutes a distinctive paradigm of multilevel governance from the municipal to the regional/state level, providing for engaging and diverse comparative material. Differences in legal and constitutional frameworks oppose the American federal system to the more centralized French State, as do the vagaries of electoral politics; differences in policy platforms between Conservative and progressive Parties on both sides of the Atlantic have impacted enthusiasm for climate policy. A secondary factor, less essential, is the variations in personal relations and affinities between Mayors, Governors or Regional Council Presidents.

The last three chapters have highlighted a number of salient patterns in the articulation of multilevel governance, all the more notable given that the sample cities and states/regions are located on different continents.¹⁵⁴ Thus, New York City, Boston and Paris illustrate the ways in which municipalities may act as pioneers, leading the way with ambitious and far-reaching climate policies. States like NY and MA, or regions like the *Île-de-France* often strive to catch up, and may be galvanized by cities into raising their level of ambition over time. Municipalities may operate as ‘laboratories of democracy’, whereby innovative climate policies may be tested at the local level, before their subsequent enactment by the higher

¹⁵⁴ As explained in Chapter 6, these patterns bear many resemblances to those which were highlighted in Chapters 2–5. Yet, the latter had emphasized the role of sub-national entities more generally (cities and states or regions), and their interactions with the national echelon. Instead, this chapter and the two previous ones (Chapters 6 and 7) have focused more specifically on the importance of cities and the municipal echelon in terms of establishing these patterns, through interactions with the regional level in France and the state echelon in the US.

echelons. Another interesting pattern is the evolution of multilevel governance, which is not static but evolves over time, either due to changes in elected administrations at the city and state/regional level, or changes in policy platforms within the same administration over time. This confirms the role of cities like Paris, New York and Boston as focal points and essential building blocks within the global climate regime.

These explorations represent an original and distinctive contribution to the academic literature. A number of authors examined over the last three chapters such as Hale, Hughes et al., Lee, Fitzgerald, Bache et al. and Wurzel et al.,¹⁵⁵ have examined issues in related fields. This book offers a type of structured classification to analyze a broad range of patterns involved in the articulation of multilevel climate governance, as exemplified by the French and American cities and states/regions in our sample. By placing an innovative emphasis on the essential role played by municipalities in terms of establishing these patterns, this book analyzes the ways in which cities can set the policy agenda within a multilevel framework vis-à-vis the higher echelons.

As explained in Chapter 7 in the context of the US, the three municipalities and regions/states in our sample may not be entirely representative of the circumstances in different parts of the globe, especially in the Global South. Each city tends to possess unique characteristics and potential, which means that political, economic or social differences in local conditions may trigger varying types of responses. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize how municipalities throughout the world are faced with analogous challenges in responding to the impacts of climate change, which often result in the adoption of similar types of policies, including when it comes to the articulation of multilevel governance with the higher tiers.¹⁵⁶ As a result, even though there are exceptions to these patterns in developing countries which face very different conditions than their Western counterparts, a general trend is still distinguishable. Cities worldwide have an essential role to play as pioneers which can establish the climate policy agenda in a multilevel context, as demonstrated by the examples of Paris/*Île-de-France*, New York/NY and Boston/MA.

This substantiates the idea that the State-centric nature of international law can be seen as a constraint, but should not be considered as an impediment when it comes to the effective articulation of multilevel climate governance. The last three chapters have demonstrated how sub-national entities can circumvent State-centric processes by being very proactive with their own climate initiatives at the local level. Hence, it does not seem to matter whether sub-state actors can actually sign the Paris Accord, as long as they are able to be proactive in implementing ambitious local climate policies. The latter is arguably what is most important for reaching the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement.

Nevertheless, the material examined throughout this chapter has also revealed several weaknesses in the articulation of multilevel climate governance from the municipal to the regional level for Paris and the *Île-de-France*. Some of these shortcomings resemble those identified in Chapters 6 and 7 in the context of New York/NY and Boston/MA. These inadequacies involve disparities in terms of baseline years, the timing for the enactment of climate initiatives and discrepancies in terms of short-, medium or long-term policies and objectives. As noted in the two previous chapters, if even 'best-case study' municipalities like those in our sample fall short of consistent synchronization on climate policy with the regional/state level, then this means that the international community may be failing to provide for an adequate framework of multilevel coordination and support, needed to achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. Effective and consistent articulation is required, so that each echelon coordinates with and mutually supports the others in the enactment of climate initiatives. This chapter, and the two preceding ones, have revealed that multilevel climate governance between the cities and states/regions in our sample has tended to improve over time, despite occasional relapses.

Finally, this chapter has corroborated an important point developed in Chapters 4 and 5, namely that the centralized French paradigm displays both advantages and disadvantages in the effective articulation of multilevel climate governance. Chapter 8 has explored this observation from the point of view of municipalities and regional-level governance (Paris and the *Île-de-France* in our sample), with less of a focus on the national echelon. Once again, it is apparent that the French system possesses a high level of policy harmonization and tight coordination between the different levels. This is due to the obligation for sub-national entities to produce climate plans/frameworks under certain deadlines and following

¹⁵⁵ Hale (2018), Hughes et al. (2018), Lee (2016), Fitzgerald (2020), Bache et al. (2015) and Wurzel et al. (2020).

¹⁵⁶ For a comparison with three other cities, see Jones (2018).

specific procedures; their main components and follow-up processes are defined under the law, as is the requirement for such plans to be compatible with one another. Hence, there is less of a risk of conflict for policies enacted across the different levels. Cities are also not subjected to the regional echelon since all sub-state entities are placed at the same level under French law. Communes also benefit from a ‘general competence clause’, allowing them to go beyond the strict wording of the law to enact innovative municipal policies.

The example of the *Île-de-France* also highlights how the rigid, centralized French paradigm does not leave enough margin of maneuver to sub-national entities, especially regions, for enacting initiatives that are well adapted to the local context. In spite of several decentralization phases, there are still relatively few competences allocated to French regions. This hampers their ability to innovate and enact far-reaching policies, and also leads to a partial multilevel framework, since there is only so much regions can do to support municipalities. Likewise, competence allocation at the sub-national level is not always clearly defined, due to a highly complex and bureaucratic structure. There are apparent overlaps between the different echelons, which can reduce the effectiveness of multilevel climate governance. As highlighted in Chapters 5 and 7, the advantages and disadvantages of the centralized French paradigm stand as a point of contrast to those of the US federal system.

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