

Extreme Heat Cooling Recommendations for Action for COP31 Implementation by AIDMI

Ahead of COP31, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) shares practical recommendations to strengthen attention to extreme heat and access to cooling in climate action, humanitarian programmes and local planning. The proposals are offered for consideration by governments, local organisations, Charter signatories and other COP31 participants, in a spirit of learning and cooperation.

AIDMI has worked with communities on disaster risk reduction since 2001 and on extreme heat since 2014, particularly with small towns, small businesses and small farmers with focus on health and livelihoods. This experience has taught us that cooling is not simply a matter of comfort. For many families, workers and enterprises, it affects health, income, safety and forced displacement.

COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026, provides an opportunity to connect these concerns with the Presidency's ten Action Agenda themes. The proposals below focus on changes that governments, communities and humanitarian organisations could pursue together, including through commitments under the Climate and Environment Charter.

1. Opportunities for action across ten COP31 Action Agenda themes, with a focus on extreme heat

Zero waste: Better waste management can protect both the climate and people working in hot conditions. Segregated collection, composting and safe refrigerant recovery should be accompanied by protection for millions of waste workers, who often face direct exposure to heat and smoke.

Oceans and seas: For coastal communities, high temperatures and humidity can compound other hazards. Coastal adaptation plans could bring together marine heatwave warnings, protection of mangroves and wetlands, and practical measures for millions of people whose livelihoods depend on the coast.

Food security: Heat affects crop production, food storage and the working conditions of farmers in villages and market vendors in towns. Shaded markets, solar-powered cold storage, heat-tolerant crops and carefully designed temperature-linked insurance could help reduce losses, including for small producers and informal workers.

Climate-resilient cities: In small towns and low-income neighbourhoods, affordable changes to homes and workplaces can make a real difference. Cool roofs, better ventilation, shade and reflective materials deserve a stronger place in local planning and building guidance in all human settlements.

Climate implementation bridge: Cooling needs to move from small demonstrations to investments that local governments can maintain. Public drinking-water points, community cooling spaces and shaded shelters could be recognised as essential adaptation infrastructure and considered for appropriate municipal and climate financing now and in the future.

Youth and education: Schools should be places of safety during extreme heat. Simple school heat action plans, water access, ventilation and training for young people as community heat monitors or cooling technicians can combine immediate protection with longer-term technical skills.

Green industrialisation: Protecting workers must remain central to a greener economy. Shade, rest breaks, drinking water and practical heat-safety arrangements should reach informal and outdoor workers, not only those in formal workplaces.

Clean energy transition: Demand for cooling is growing, yet access remains unequal. Clinics, markets and other essential services need reliable, cleaner power for necessary cooling, while passive approaches—shade, airflow and better building design—should urgently come first wherever possible.

Rio synergies: Restoring ponds, trees, wetlands and agroforestry landscapes can support both local cooling and healthier ecosystems. These measures can be built into the plans of heat-exposed towns and surrounding rural areas near millions of water bodies.

Resilient health systems: Primary health centres need clear heat-illness protocols, rehydration supplies and locally appropriate triggers for alerts and cooling support. Special attention is needed for older people, pregnant women and those who work outdoors under extreme heat.

2. Three opportunities in wider COP31 discussions

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): Alongside emissions commitments, countries could report a small number of meaningful heat-resilience measures, such as access to safe indoor temperatures, cooling and early warning services, and information on heat-related displacement. These measures would help show whether adaptation is reaching people most at risk.

Climate finance and loss and damage: Dedicated financing for locally led heat adaptation could help small municipalities improve cooling, water access and safer workplaces. Repeated livelihood losses caused by extreme heat also deserve greater attention in discussions on loss and damage, including ways for local actors to access support.

Implementation and learning: Progress could be followed through a few visible outcomes—cooling spaces functioning on very hot days, small businesses and farms better protected, and essential health services remaining operational. These are practical measures that local communities can help assess and improve.

3. From recommendations to implementation

Translating the recommendations into practice requires routine budgeting, programme

design, locally appropriate triggers and measurable outcomes. The Climate and Environment Charter provides a shared framework for signatories; governments and other partners have complementary roles.

- Agree on a small set of adaptable heat-risk measures and response triggers that country teams can use in markets, schools, health facilities and shelters.
- Include affordable cooling measures—such as shade, ventilation and cool roofs—in standard programme designs, procurement and shelter guidance.
- Report a few shared, people-centred indicators, with space for communities to say what works and what does not.
- Explore joint financing arrangements for community and municipal cooling, rather than leaving each organisation to develop isolated pilots.
- Give informal workers, small farmers, local organisations and young people a meaningful role in designing, managing and reviewing heat responses.
- Coordinate these efforts with government heat action plans, national adaptation priorities and local authorities so that they strengthen existing systems.

4. Suggested outcomes for monitoring and learning

Implementation can be assessed through a small set of community-informed measures: functioning cooling spaces on very hot days; safer schools, markets and workplaces; reliable heat alerts and essential health services; and reduced disruption to small-business and farm livelihoods. Indicators should be adapted locally and include feedback from people facing the greatest exposure.

5. Selected AIDMI resources and practice references

The following publications, resources and workshop records provide further context and examples of practice. They are illustrative sources and do not constitute a comprehensive evaluation of the recommendations.

1. Key Local Resources on Cooling Extreme Heat (AIDMI resource collection, 2026)
2. When Home Becomes a Workplace: Rethinking Heat Resilience (AIDMI HAPA workshop reflection, 2026)
3. Small Heat Resilience Measures: Big Impact in Small Towns and on Small Businesses in India (Southasiadisasters.net, issue 228, 2026)
4. Locally Led and Adapted: Focus on Extreme Heat (AIDMI action brief, 2025)
5. Local Heatwave Action Planning (AIDMI action brief, 2023)
6. Heatwave preparedness guidance for schools, in multiple languages (AIDMI, 2024)
7. Assessment of Heatwave Impacts on Small Businesses in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (AIDMI learning workshop, 2024)