

# Sayel Cortes

sayel.cortes@gmail.com - linkedin.com/in/sayelcortes/

## PROFILE, EXPERTISE & SKILLS

- Well-rounded urban, climate and sustainability policy expert with over ten years of international professional experience in project management, policy design and analysis, basic & applied research, knowledge sharing & capacity building, and program coordination with public, private and academic stakeholders in multicultural environments.
- Doctor in Environmental Policy with a Master's in Economy, and a Master's in Global Studies and Police (International Cooperation for Development focus), as well as a Bachelor in Environmental Engineering. Additional formal training includes Project Management, Team Building, Complex Systems, and Scenario Analysis.

### Thematic expertise

- Resilience governance and finance
- Climate change
- Urban policies
- Sustainable mobility
- Urban development
- International cooperation

### Skills

- Policy & economic analyses
- Project management & team building
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis
- Research (basic & applied)
- Negotiation & strategic planning
- Capacity building & knowledge sharing

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### Consultant in Resilience Infrastructure and Finance / Nov 2022 – Present

*United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Remote.*

- Research and policy analysis on Integrated National Finance Frameworks (INFF) for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) for input paper to the G20 Working Group on DRR.
- Coordinated infrastructure resilience and resilience finance projects with partners in the UK, Australia, Costa Rica, and Trinidad & Tobago.

### Founding Associate & Senior Consultant (part-time) / March 2017 – Oct 2022

*Innovación en Política Pública y Desarrollo, A.C., México.*

- Coordinated and successfully completed projects on sustainable urban policies, including:
  - Research in urban sustainability policies for cities in Saudi Arabia
  - Policy analysis & indicators design for the Mexican national urban development program.
  - Research on open data for local environmental policies in Latin America.

### Senior Program Officer / Sep 2014 – Jun 2017

*CityNet, Seoul, South Korea*

- Led the Capacity Building Program, annually training 100+ local government officials from over five countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Coordinated the Safer Cities Program (in partnership with UN-Habitat and Seoul Metropolitan Government), including communication between international partners, strategic planning, and documentation.

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## **Consultant in Economy and Environmental Engineering (part-time) / May 2012 – Sep 2016**

*Independent Consultant, México & South Korea*

- Developed baseline and carbon reduction potential models to evaluate mobility and urban development policies.
- Managed knowledge-sharing mechanisms for Latin America and the Caribbean in climate finance and international mechanisms.
- Developed studies related to National Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs).

## **Young Professionals Program / Jul 2013 – Nov 2013**

*CityNet, Seoul, South Korea*

- Research on “*Transport Oriented Development as an Urban Green Growth Strategy: The Human Perspective.*”

## **Policy Research in Green Growth (Internship) / Sep 2012 – Dec 2012**

*United Nations Development Program – Seoul Policy Centre, Seoul, South Korea*

- Analyzed South Korea’s Green Growth Policy

## **Environmental Engineer and Economy Senior Analyst / July 2009 – April 2012**

*World Resources Institute’s EMBARQ Network – Mexico City, Mexico*

Urban Mobility and Development:

- Estimated greenhouse gas emissions and cost/benefits of urban development patterns and urban mobility in Mexico, as part of the “*Towards Low Carbon Competitive Cities*” Project.
- Developed indicators to evaluate urban and socioeconomic characteristics.

Air Quality and Climate Change:

- Developed a greenhouse gas emissions baseline and analyzed policies through different scenarios for the transport sector in Mexico.
- Designed international cooperation tools for climate change, such as Nationally Appropriated Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) for the transport sector.

## **Environmental Consultant / Jun 2007 – Ago 2007**

*Applied Research (Environmental Division), ITESO, Guadalajara, México*

- Support in hydrology simulations for environmental impact assessment studies of dams.

## **Project Management Director / Dec 2003 – Jun 2007**

*CartoData SA de CV, Guadalajara, México*

- Supervised or directly managed over 20 projects from conception to successful completion, including planning, managing human and material resources, monitoring and evaluating progress, and communicating with clients in Mexico, USA, Canada, Spain, and Ecuador. I had over 80 people in our three offices under my supervision.

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## EDUCATION

### PhD in Environmental Policy /2017 – 2022

*Wageningen University & Research, Environment Policy Group, The Netherlands*

- Thesis: “Understanding Heterogeneity in City Networks.”
  - Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) of 22 climate city networks and 55 of their programs.
  - Proposed a bottom-up approach to understanding the governance of decentralized heterogeneous polycentric systems.
- Lectures:
  - Course “Governance for Sustainable Cities” about Smart cities in Mexico and Asia (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022)
  - Course: “International Environmental Policy” about climate city networks (2021)
- Received a Wageningen Centre of Sustainability Governance 2019 incubator grant for the project “*Sustainable Governance Talks Without Jargon*,” linking PhD candidates with practitioners, 2019-2022
- Environmental Policy Group, PhD Representative (Sep 2018 – Ago 2019)
- Managed the institutional social networks (2018-2019)

### Master in Global Studies & Policy, International Cooperation for Development focus /2012 – 2014

*Yonsei University, Graduate School of International Studies, South Korea*

- Received PATH: Peaceful Advancement for Transforming Humanity Scholarship, spring 2013.
- Member of the Graduate Students Association (fall 2012, spring, and fall 2013).
- Founder and first president of the Mexican Students Association (Nov 2013 - 2014).

### Master in Economics / 2007 – 2009

*Universidad de Guadalajara (U de G), Mexico / the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), US*

- Thesis topic: “*Environmental Effects on Investment in a Dynamic Model of Population and Natural Resources*.”
- Exchange student at the University of Texas at Austin, Spring 2009

### Bachelor in Environmental Engineering / 2000 - 2004

*Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO), Mexico*

## SELECTED COURSES AND TRAINING

- **Climate Law and Governance Specialist Certification / 2022**  
*The Climate Law and Governance Initiative (online)*
- **Climate Reality Leadership Corps Training / 2020**  
*The Climate Reality Project (online)*
- **Professional Certificate in Public Management for Development / 2017**  
*edX Verified Certificate, License Course offered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*
- **Management of Development Projects / 2017**  
*edX Verified Certificate, License Course offered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*
- **Financing for Development / 2017**  
*edX Verified Certificate, License Course offered by the Open Learning Campus, World Bank Group*

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- **Policy Lessons from South Korea's Development / 2017**  
*edX Verified Certificate, License Course offered by the Open Learning Campus, World Bank Group*
- **Project Management Techniques for Development Professionals / 2016**  
*edX Verified Certificate, License Course offered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*
- **Course "Tools and Prospective Scenarios for Political Action" / 2010**  
*Virtual School for Latin America and the Caribbean – UNDP, Bogota, Colombia*
- **Complex System Course / 2006**  
*New England Complex System Institute (NECSI), Cambridge, MA, USA*
- **Diploma in High-Performance Team Building / 2006**  
*Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO), Jalisco. México*
- **Diploma in Project Management using PMI methodology / 2005**  
*Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO), Jalisco, México*
- **Postgraduate Studies in Environmental Impact Assessment / 2005**  
*Universidad Nacional del Mar de Plata, Mar de Plata, Argentina (100hr, on-line)*

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Spanish: Native
- English: Fluent
- French: Intermediate
- Korean: Beginner

## PUBLICATIONS

- Nila, K. & Cortes, S. (2023). "The Role of International City Networks in Advancing Cities' Climate Ambitions: A Case Study of Jakarta". In M Martinus, Q Jiahui, S Seah (Ed.), "Cities and Climate Challenges in Southeast Asia." ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, ISBN: 9789815011715
- Cortes, S, van der Heijden, J., Boas, I, Bush, S. (2022). Unpacking the heterogeneity of climate city networks, *Cities*, Volume 121, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2021.103512>.
- Sayel Cortes, Jeroen van der Heijden, Ingrid Boas, Simon Bush (2022); Exclusive Apart, Inclusive as a System: Polycentricity in Climate City Networks. *Global Environmental Politics* [https://doi.org/10.1162/glep\\_a\\_00657](https://doi.org/10.1162/glep_a_00657)
- Cortes Berrueta, S., & van der Heijden, J. (2021). Trading off benefits and requirements: How do city networks attract cities to their voluntary environmental programmes? *Environmental Policy and Governance*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/eet.1943>
- Monroy Chaparro, A. G. & Cortés Berrueta, S. (2021). "Gobernanza Climática en México: Vínculos Horizontales y Verticales de los Gobiernos Estatales y Municipales" in Solorio Sandoval, I. F. (coordinator), "México ante la Encrucijada de la Gobernanza Climática. Retos Institucionales", Mexico: UNAM. ISBN: 978-607-30-4702-9
- CTS EMBARQ México. *Modelación para la Identificación de la Línea Base para la Mitigación de Emisiones de Compuestos de Efecto Invernadero para el Desarrollo Orientado al Transporte en Guadalajara*. May 2016. Mexico. (co-author)
- Martínez, Soto, Cortes, et al. *Sustentabilidad de un esquema de pensiones basado en Contribuciones Definidas Nacionales: evidencia para México de un modelo de simulación estocástica*. Revista Ciencia y Universidad No. 31. México: 2014. P. 8-50.

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- Cortes, Sayel, and Sun-young Park. *Transport Oriented Development as an Urban Green Growth Strategy: The Human Perspective*. Presented at CityNet Young Professional Academic Conference.
- Acosta, Rangel, Cortes, et al. *Ciudades Competitivas Bajas en Carbono*. Memorias del XII Seminario-Taller Internacional de la Red Mexicana de Ciudades hacia la Sustentabilidad. México: 2011. P. 237-252
- Cortes, López y Rangel. *Efectos de las Características Urbanas en la Movilidad: Cálculo de las Elasticidades entre Indicadores Urbanos y de Movilidad en la Ciudad de Mérida*. Memorias del XII Seminario-Taller Internacional de la Red Mexicana de Ciudades hacia la Sustentabilidad. México: 2011. P. 271-288
- CTS EMBARQ México. *Hacia Ciudades Competitivas Bajas en Carbono, C2C2*. Mexico, 2011 (coauthor).

## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- Presentation “Actores Pequeños Frente a Problemas Globales: Ciudades vs el Cambio Climático” (Small Actors Against Global Problems: Cities vs Climate Change) at the 2023 ILAS-HUFS HK+ 3rd International Conference organized by the Institute of Latin American Studies at Hangkuk University of Foreign Studies and Central University in Chile, 16/01/2023.
- Presentation “Redes de Municipios y Cómo aprovecharlas” (City networks and how to take advantage of them) at the launching event of the city network of Nariño organized by the government of Nariño, Colombia, 10/09/2021
- Presentation “Cooperación internacional de gobiernos locales a través de las redes de ciudades” (Local governments international cooperation through city networks) at the conference cycle “Herramientas de Gestión Pública ante los Retos del Desarrollo” (Public Management Tools against the Challenges of Development) by the Universidad de Quintana Roo, Playa del Carmen campus, 23/04/2021
- Presentation “¿Qué son las redes de apoyo y cómo puedes aprovecharlas?” (What are support networks and how can you take advantage of them?) at the online event Reactivando el Turismo (Reactivating Tourism) organised by Innovación en Política Pública y Desarrollo, 04/03/2021
- Keynote lecture at the United Nations Model SIMUN 2021, hosted by the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM), 25/03/2021. <https://fb.watch/9O76Gf0tTM/>
- Presentation “Contexto de la Movilidad Sustentable” (Sustainable Mobility Context) in the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) 2020, 06/02/2021
- Experts Panel: “Exploring the Effects of Transparency in Multiple-level Climate Governance.” At the Climate Law & Governance Day 2019, December 2019, Madrid, Spain
- Panel “Resiliencia Urbana para Gobiernos Locales” (Urban Resilience for Local Governments) at the XVII Congreso Internacional, ICLEI 2019, November 2019, Puerto Morelos, Mexico.
- Presented “A Framework to Understand How City Networks Integrate Cities in the Climate Regime: Structure” (working paper) in the panel “Climate and the City: alternative Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Transnational Climate Change Governance” at the 60<sup>th</sup> ISA Annual Convention 2019, March 2019, Toronto, Canada
- Presented “Structure of City networks and Urban Climate Actions. What Promotes City Members Activity?” (working paper) on the panel “Climate Change Governance: Polycentricity, Municipalism, Transnationality” at Utrecht Conference on Earth System Governance Conference 2018, November 2018, Utrecht, The Netherlands.
- Panel on “Global Trends: Smart & Sustainable Cities” organised by the European Chamber of Commerce in Korea, Green Working Group. June 2017, Seoul, South Korea

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- 6<sup>th</sup> UCLG-ASPAC Congress 2016, Sep 2016. Jeollabuk-do, South Korea
  - UN-Habitat's Urban Planning for City Leaders Pre-Congress Session (moderator)
  - UN-Habitat's Public Space Side Event (panellist).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Women's Network Forum *Building Inclusive and Safer Cities for Women*. Sep 2016, Seoul, South Korea (panellist).
- "Reviewing the State of Safety in World Cities: Urban Solutions to Crime, Conflict, and Insecurity," Jul 2016. Geneva, Switzerland.
  - "The state of safety in cities: What have we learned about safety in cities over the last 20 years" (discussant).
- Cortes, Sayel. *South Korea's Role in the Global Environmental Regime: The Green Growth Initiative*. Presented at Yonsei Graduate School of International Studies Academic Conference, Dec 2013. Seoul, South Korea.

## SELECTED VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- International Legal Bar & Professionals Association (ILBPA), Environment International Coordinator and Representative in the Netherlands (Jun 2022 – present)
- MEXA: co-founder and member of the Association of Mexican students in Wageningen (May 2020 – present).
- Red Global MX:
  - Netherlands Chapter: Member (Jan 2019 – present)
  - Korean Chapter Co-founder and President (Dec 2017 – Dec 2018).
- Rotary International
  - Rotary Club Utrecht International: Recruitment and Membership Chair (Sep 2020 – July 2022), Member (Ago, 2019 – July 2022).
  - Wageningen Bergpoort: Member (Jan 2018 – Jan 2019).
  - Seoul Young Leaders Club: Co-President (Feb-Jun 2017), Fundraising Chair (Jan-Jul 2016), member (Sep 2015 – Jun 2017).
- Global Ecoleader program by Ecomom Korea (Feb – Nov 2013): Staff at the Green Growth Young Summit and as an Eco-mentor for middle school students to be a global leader in the environmental field
- Environmental Network Geo Juvenil México (2011-2012): Local contact point for Mexico City
- Advisory Council for Sustainable Development (managed by UNDP México), Mexico City (2011): substitute of Social Sector Representative.
- Titlalli, Guadalajara, México (2005-2010): Co-founder. I started and led two environmental knowledge-sharing platforms.

## SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Lecture about Sustainable Cities in the course Governance of Sustainable Cities at Wageningen University and Research, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
- Lecture about climate city networks in the course International Environmental Policy, 2021
- Webinar "Tool for Estimating Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Transport Oriented Development Projects" (in Spanish), Aug 2016.
- Lectured at the Innovative Governance of Large Urban Systems Executive Master and Modules for Global Leaders of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Seoul Module, 2015, 2016

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- Facilitated modules on Project Management at international workshops for local government officials (Vietnam, 2015; Seoul, 2016), CityNet.
- Teaching Assistant for Prof. Leonardo Gatica's Microeconomic I class at the Economics Master Program, Universidad de Guadalajara, 2008.

## STUDENT SUPERVISION

### Master thesis supervisor

- Sofie de Wit, "The Power of Discourse in Shaping Urban Environmental Governance: A Discourse Analysis of Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Policies Shared on the Urban Sustainability Exchange Platform," Wageningen University & Research, 2021
- Aletta Willemijn Versluis, "A Comparative Analysis of Northern European Cities' Strategies for Engagement in the EURO CITIES Network," Wageningen University & Research, 2019

### Master thesis reviewer

- Marco Antonio Torres Martínez, "Conciencia Medioambiental como Política Pública" (Environmental Awareness as Public Policy), Universidad de Guadalajara, 2022

### Master internship supervision

- Chiara Fiorino, Internship at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2021