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TECHNICAL PAPER FROM THE CPMR GENERAL SECRETARIAT

CLIMATE: A ROADMAP TO COP21

I. BACKGROUND

Climate change, although environmental in nature, constitutes one of the most important challenges for the sustainable human development of the 21st century, since it impacts on and/or is impacted by global issues of socio-economic nature, including poverty and inequality, economic development, population dynamics, energy production and provision, resource management and consumption & production patterns, and food security. At the very heart of the response to climate change, however, lies the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

In 1992, countries joined an international treaty, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to consider what they could do to limit global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with its impacts. By 1995, countries realised that emission reduction provisions in the Convention were inadequate. As a result, they launched negotiations to strengthen the global response to climate change and the first Conference of the Parties (COP 1) took place, while in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted. **The Kyoto Protocol** legally binds developed countries to emission reduction targets. The Protocol's first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012. The second commitment period began on 1 January 2013 and will end in 2020.

During the course of these negotiations, in 2010 (COP16) countries agreed that emissions needed to be reduced so that global temperature increases are limited to below 2 degrees Celsius. Countries also decided to make their emission reduction pledges official, in what was the largest collective effort to reduce emissions in a mutually accountable way.

Currently UN negotiations are underway to develop a new, broad, balanced and durable international climate change agreement strengthening the international climate effort; the aim is for an agreement that has "legal force," and is "applicable to all". However, the debate about the right of developing countries to growth remains, and many nations around the world will not commit to a legally binding global climate agreement, unless the framework secures them the required growth and prosperity for their economy.

The new agreement will be adopted in December 2015, at the Paris Conference of the Parties, and shall apply from 2020 onwards (i.e. post-Kyoto).

II. THE EU POSITION AND THE ROLE OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS REGARDING CLIMATE TARGETS

While the European Union is not far from meeting its climate targets for 2020, in the political guidelines set by Jean-Claude Juncker for the new European Commission the continuation of the European Union's leadership in the fight against global warming in view of and beyond the United Nations Paris meeting in 2015 is highlighted as a key issue. A central piece of the policy framework is the binding target to reduce, by 2030, EU domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below the 1990 level.

The European Commission believes that this target will ensure that the EU is on the cost-effective track towards meeting its objective of cutting emissions by at least 80% by 2050. By setting its level of climate

ambition for 2030, the Commission indicates that the EU will also be able to engage actively in the on-going negotiations on the post-Kyoto global climate regime that should take effect in 2020.

A number of municipal and regional governments worldwide and other public bodies have already put integrated approaches into place to reduce their CO₂ emissions on a voluntary basis – in Europe for instance through the Covenant of Mayors and the Pact of Islands initiatives. The CPMR has embraced the Pact of Islands initiative and nine of its Member Regions have signed up and have delivered action plans with the aim to reduce their CO₂ emissions by at least 20% by 2020. In addition, within its forthcoming General Assembly, the CPMR Islands Commission will host a session on climate, as well as a session on the Pact of Islands, including a signing ceremony for new island authorities that wish to sign up.

III. REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

Local and regional governments are recognised (Rio, 1992) as one of the nine major actors of civil society for the implementation of sustainable development. That recognition, on the one hand, and on the other hand the distance from negotiations that the specific classification as “civil society” entailed, were the starting points for local and regional governments to claim a more central role in international climate negotiations, in recognition of their essential actions on both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In close collaboration with citizens and civil society, local and regional governments are responsible for the development and implementation of laws, policies, strategies, standards, programmes and fiscal mechanisms in areas that directly influence the levels of greenhouse gas emissions and deal with the impacts of climate change. Experience during the last decades shows that the territorial dimension can enable tailor-made actions adapted in each case to the population dynamics and local realities and needs and can improve the successful formulation of climate policies and targets ensuring the most effective outcomes in tackling climate change at subnational level. In particular, various examples from Europe, Canada, USA, South America and Africa reveal very diverse climate change actions, for both mitigation and adaptation, and also a wide scope of exemplary territorial cooperation initiatives, among different levels of governance (local, regional, national), either within the same country or different countries, and either within the same continent or different. Therefore the path to successfully tackle climate change relies heavily upon the engagement and contribution by local and regional actors.

The strengthening of global networks, such as for instance the network of Unified Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD), the Climate Group and ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, has allowed local and regional governments to enhance their voice in intergovernmental organisations, which would result in an improved ability to speak and be heard during the international negotiations, as well as to be allocated a specific role in a future global climate agreement.

An important reference to the potential role of local and regional governments was eventually included in the pre-Lima (COP20) documents, which prepared the last round of multilateral negotiations last December 2014 (ADP Co-Chairs Text, ver. 11 November 2014):

- 37(a) Parties to further incentivize, in accordance with their national circumstances, climate actions by subnational authorities, including cities, by establishing effective regulatory frameworks and financing mechanisms needed to address barriers and leverage investment;
- 37(b) Subnational authorities, including cities, to scale up and replicate the existing ambitious policies, measures and action highlighted during the technical examination process.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE CPMR

The CPMR, both independently and through joint initiatives with other key actors, closely monitors the on-going process of the international negotiations on climate; through its Secretariat and Geographical Commissions the CPMR intends to develop a series of key actions over the coming months to ensure its strategic involvement on the road to COP21, as well as at the COP21 in Paris. These will include the:

- Preparation of a Position Paper on climate that will be presented at its Political Bureau in June 2015; the position will build on the outcomes of relevant initiatives organised by CPMR Members and will highlight the relation between the key priorities and concerns of its Members, such as tourism,

maritime industry, coastal zone management, adaptation policies etc. and the climate negotiations in view of the new agreement that will be adopted;

- Strengthening of alliances and participation in joint initiatives with key like-minded actors, e.g. intergovernmental networks and NGOs;
- Liaison with National Governments via its Member Regions;
- Liaison with key EU institutions;
- The participation in key events on the road to COP21, e.g. the World Summit of Territorial Climate Action with Civil Society (1-2 July 2015, Lyon, France).

V. CALENDAR AND KEY MILESTONES

- **24-26 June 2014:** The Regional Council of La Réunion, Member of the CPMR, hosted the International Conference “Islands and Climate Change: Opportunities, Resilience, Adaptation”. The Declaration “*La Réunion Communiqué*” was signed, setting out the expectations and concerns of the island territories.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5409392IslandsDeclaration.pdf>
- **23 September 2014:** The UN hosted the Climate Summit in New York, where the Compact of States and Regions, a collaboration by major global subnational government climate networks, was announced.
- **10-11 October 2014:** The R20 Regions of Climate Action, a non-profit organisation founded in 2010 by the former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and other global leaders in cooperation with the United Nations, organised the first World Summit of Regions for Climate in Paris, France, where the Paris Declaration, a series of concrete commitments on sustainable development and climate action for sub-national governments and the business and finance sector was adopted.
<http://regions20.org/diplomacy-in-action>
- **22-25 October 2014:** Guadeloupe’s Regional Council, Member of the CPMR, hosted a high-level international meeting on **biodiversity** and **climate change** in the **European Outermost Regions (OMRs)** and **Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)**, and in the **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** of the same geographical areas. The event is co-organised by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the European Commission, the French Government, Guadeloupe’s Regional Council (Guadeloupe Region), the Government of the British Virgin Islands (BVI), the Association of Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTA) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- **11 November 2014:** In the framework of the Med Cooperation Days - COASTGAP Final Conference and COM&CAP MarInA-MED Seminar “Towards the framework conditions for the Climate change adaptation in coastal areas and the Blue Growth in the Mediterranean”
[http://www.medmaritimeprojects.eu/download/MyTemplate/Pdf/20141007 - Save the date - Med Cooperation Days_EN_full_version_28.pdf](http://www.medmaritimeprojects.eu/download/MyTemplate/Pdf/20141007_-_Save_the_date_-_Med_Cooperation_Days_EN_full_version_28.pdf)
- **11 December 2014:** The Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, Member of the CPMR, hosts the Climate meeting of local and regional representatives of the Mediterranean, co-organised by the Region of PACA, the Mediterranean Commission of United Cities and Local Governments, the city of Marseille and the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission. The “Declaration on Climate by Local and Regional Authorities in the Mediterranean” was signed.
http://www.medmaritimeprojects.eu/download/MyTemplate/Pdf/141211_Declaration_on_Climate.pdf
- **8-13 February 2015:** Climate Change Conference (Geneva, Switzerland)
The conference comprised the eighth part of the second session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP 2-8).
<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/adp/adp2-8/>

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- **27 February 2015:** CPMR Political Bureau (including a session on climate) (Nantes, France)
- **26 March 2015:** Meeting of Mayors of European Capitals (Paris, France)
- **12-14 May 2015:** European Climate Change Adaptation Conference 2015 (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- **3-15 June 2015** UNFCCC annual sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (Bonn, Germany)

- **4-5 June 2015:** Meeting MEDCOP21 Mediterranean Climate (Marseille, France)
- **8-10 June 2015:** ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability organises Resilient Cities 2015 6th Global Forum on Urban Resilience & Adaptation (Bonn, Germany)
- **12 June 2015:** CPMR Political Bureau (adoption of a Political Position on climate) (Crete, Greece)
- **25 June 2015:** General Assembly of the CPMR Islands Commission (Brussels, Belgium)
- **28-30 June 2015:** The Almedalen Political Week: Climate (Gotland, Sweden)
- **29 June 2015:** UN General Assembly High-Level Event on Climate (New York, USA)
- **1-2 July 2015:** World Summit of Territorial Climate Action with Civil Society (Lyon, France)
- **30 November – 11 December 2015:** Conference of the Parties (COP21) (Paris, France)

VI. FURTHER RESOURCES - LINKS

CPMR Secretariat

- **Technical Paper from the CPMR Secretariat: Current challenges on climate and energy policy**
http://www.crpm.org/pub/docs/432_cpmr-tp_energy-ga2014.pdf

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- **21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21)**
 - Official website: <http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en>
 - Secretariat for COP21 established by the French government:
<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en/media-facilities/press-room/creation-dun-secretariat-general-la-preparation-et-lorganisation-de-la>
- **State of international negotiations**
 - Reporting services by the International Institute for Sustainable Development: www.iisd.ca
 - Summary of the Bonn Climate Change Conference on 20-25 October 2014:
<http://www.iisd.ca/vol12/enb12605e.html>

European Union position

- **Council conclusions on preparation for the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties**
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/145508.pdf