CPMR Climate Working Group
15 November 2023 | 16.30 – 17.30
51st General Assembly of the CPMR
(Palais du Grand Large – Bouvet Room, Level 1 – Saint-Malo)
The meeting was held in English

Minutes

DECISIONS APPROVED
During the meeting of the CPMR Climate Working Group, the members present, representing over 40 CPMR Member Regions, decided and approved:

- The agenda of the meeting;
- The minutes of the first meeting of the Climate Working Group;
- The two-year Action Plan of the Climate Working Group;
- The endorsement of the CPMR to the LGMA position paper towards UNFCCC COP28.

OPENING SESSION
Sergio Arjona, Deputy Minister of Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy, Junta de Andalusia, as Chair of the CPMR Climate Working Group welcomed participants and noted the importance of achieving the targets of the Climate Working Group. He presented the agenda of the meeting which was unanimously approved. Mr Arjona also presented the minutes of the first meeting of the Climate Working Group that took place on 29 September in Brussels. The minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved.

SESSION 1: BRAINSTORMING SESSION ON CPMR POLITICAL PRIORITIES AND FUTURE ACTION
This session was moderated by Giuseppe Sciacca, Director for Maritime Affairs and Climate, CPMR.
Sergio Arjona, Deputy Minister of Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy, Junta de Andalusia, as Chair of the CPMR Climate Working Group (CWG), started the first session by presenting the main political priorities. According to what was presented during the previous meeting of the Climate Working Group, the CPMR CWG will focus on improving knowledge, access to EU funds, and impactful advocacy campaigns. Mr Arjona outlined the political priorities during the meeting. He emphasised that climate change stands as one of the paramount challenges. Subsequently, the Deputy Minister introduced the concept of establishing the Online Knowledge Inventory (OKI) as a pivotal component of the inaugural year’s action plan. Following this, Mr Arjona presented the Roadmap, underlining the significance of engaging with policy-makers at both national and international levels. Prior to initiating the ensuing deliberations, he underlined the imperative need to shift attention to adaptation policies. Recognising the adoption of nature-based solutions as integral, he affirmed their key role in addressing both climate change adaptation and mitigation.
Debate with participants

Arjan van de Lindeloof, Landscape Architect, Provincie Zuid-Holland, expressed gratitude to Mr Arjona for providing a thorough explanation of the Roadmap. He highlighted the significance of collaborative efforts with European think tanks, emphasising the importance of exploring additional networks and leveraging external knowledge sources. Furthermore, he urged collective decision-making on scheduling meetings dedicated to advancing the outlined objectives and seeking support to propel the initiatives forward. Additionally, he raised a concern about the Netherlands’ lack of emphasis on drought preparedness, expressing a keen willingness to address this gap. Despite the acknowledged challenge, there was a strong commitment to remain actively involved and contribute to the on-going initiatives.

Roberto Montanari, E.Q. Coordination of Coastal Protection Activities for Plans and Programmes, Emilia-Romagna Region, completely agreed with the outlines for the Action Plan presented by Mr Arjona. Mr Montanari also introduced additional considerations regarding the first pillar closely linked to the enhancement of knowledge. He proposed an inclusion to advocate for heightened awareness within European institutions regarding the imperative need for a dedicated fund on adaptation, encompassing aspects such as coastal management, responses to natural disasters, and drought. He underlined the current absence of such a specifically earmarked fund. Expanding on the first pillar, Mr Montanari suggested an incorporation related to past disasters in Europe. This addition aimed to analyse the impact of these events on climate change in the respective territories, seeking clarity on the sources used for this assessment. Addressing the financial aspect, he addressed the funding for the reconstruction of past disasters, prompting a discussion on the economic considerations involved. Highlighting the collaborative nature of the initiative, he proposed engaging with the European Commission and providing support through proposals. The focus here was on fostering a collective effort to address the cost implications of non-intervention for adaptation, aligning with discussions on the second pillar. In conclusion, he emphasised the need to explore future contributions to improving knowledge and strategising on the compilation of experiences in intervention adaptation. The proposed measures aimed to foster a comprehensive and collaborative approach to addressing the challenges outlined in the second pillar.

Henrik Qvist, Regional Councillor from Central Denmark Region, emphasised two crucial aspects in the discussion. Firstly, he expressed concern about the substantial rise in ground levels in Denmark, specifically pointing to the challenges posed by excessive water. This observation underlines a growing issue related to water management and the impact of elevated ground levels in the region. Secondly, he stressed the imperative of addressing problems that have been collectively created. This statement suggests the need for collaborative efforts to confront challenges, possibly in the realm of environmental or climate-related issues. The emphasis is on shared responsibility and coordinated solutions to tackle issues that affect the community at large.

Luigi Cipriani, Responsabile P.O. Pianificazione Integrata della Costa, Tuscany region, shared his perspectives with the group. Expressing contentment, Mr Cipriani conveyed his willingness to share the experiences gained from the HORIZON project, indicating a commitment to contribute valuable insights to the collective effort. Furthermore, he shared some experiences according to what the Tuscany region is developing under the project REGIONS4CLIMATE. Acknowledging the well-crafted Roadmap, Mr Cipriani commended the efforts put into its development, expressing approval and support for the outlined strategic direction. Looking ahead, he informed the group about a new project scheduled for 2024, which will focus on the resilience of a “blue strategy.” He expressed interest in sharing the outcomes and lessons learned from this up-coming initiative with the Working Group. Furthermore, Mr Cipriani highlighted collaboration with the Matise Island project, specifically in the realm of coastal protection and adaptation to climate change. He noted the use of European funding for this collaborative effort and mentioned that the strategy, centred on climate adaptation topics, will be ready for presentation at the next General Assembly.
**Martjin Lucas**, Coordinator of European Affairs, Noord-Holland, contributed to the discussion with some remarks. Addressing the OKI, he proposed the creation of a structured agenda for this platform. He regarded this as a positive step toward refining the inventory into a more specific and actionable tool. Inquiring about the next steps, he raised the question of how to effectively follow up on the initiatives discussed. He emphasised the importance of establishing mechanisms for on-going knowledge exchange among regions and sought more information on the processes through which regions can actively engage and follow up on shared knowledge. Mr Lucas’ inquiry aimed to ensure a sustained and effective exchange of information and experiences among the participating regions.

**Renaud Layadi**, Adviser, Regional Council of Brittany, pointed out several key considerations during the discussion. He began by questioning the distinctiveness of regions in the realm of climate adaptation, drawing attention to their non-institutional and regionally oriented nature in contrast to the Committee of the Regions (CoR). He emphasised the need for regions to convey a strong political message, highlighting concern about the level of intervention when sharing best practices, particularly with initiatives like the Online Knowledge Inventory. He raised a crucial query about the creative autonomy of regions, questioning whether they are sufficiently innovative in designing their own tools and ideas rather than solely responding to suggestions from the European Union. In the context of impactful advocacy campaigns, Mr Layadi stressed the importance of partnerships and the potential value of importing information from outside Europe. He advocated for collaboration with individuals engaged in adaptation work and think tanks, emphasising the need for a global perspective in advocacy efforts. Reflecting on the evolution of discussions around adaptation, he noted that a decade ago, it was not a prominent topic. However, he observed a significant shift, with adaptation now occupying a central position on the agenda. This recognition underlined the heightened importance of adaptation in response to current global challenges.

**Giuseppe Sciaccia**, Director for Maritime Affairs and Climate, CPMR, thanked all participants for their interventions and concluded the first part of the session with some remarks. According to the European Commission, the funding available is considered an added value. However, he pointed out a challenge when it comes to regional authorities. While it is perceived as added value, the current funds may not be sufficient to address significant damages, such as those incurred by floods. Mr Sciaccia suggested that this funding may not be entirely suitable as an "added value funding" for regional authorities. There was a proposal for a new tool to assist authorities in securing additional funds for on-the-ground interventions. Regarding the OKI, he highlighted the importance of an internal database that facilitates pragmatic access for regions to use in their activities, including lobbying efforts. The OKI is envisioned as a tool that regions can leverage for lobbying and other strategic activities. A new sub-group on carbon sinks, specifically a blue and green sub-group, was introduced as a potential avenue for future mitigation tools. Mr Sciaccia emphasised the need to initiate a reflection on this matter, exploring the added value in terms of cooperation and outlining the development plan for this sub-group. In terms of lobbying efforts, he announced the start of hearings with some European Parliament (EP) candidates. There are plans to establish a CPMR delegation to meet with these candidates in Brussels with the objective of engaging with new members and advocating for the group’s priorities.

**SESSION 2: REGIONAL DIMENSION OF NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLANS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

This session was moderated by **Maria Regueiro Puigdevall**, Policy Officer on Climate, CPMR.

**Massimo Sbriscia**, Head of Sector Energy Sources, Waste, Quarries and Mines, Marche Region, thanked all participants and opened the second session highlighting Marche Region’s active participation in COP25 and COP27, characterising both experiences as insightful. These participations provided Marche with valuable connections to pertinent organisations addressing similar challenges. Stressing the crucial role of regions, Mr Sbriscia expressed the conviction that more action is not only necessary but imperative. Looking ahead, he mentioned that Andalusia is set to participate in COP28. This forthcoming engagement presents a timely opportunity to underline the significance of regional participation.
Mr Sbriscia emphasised the importance of adopting the position of the LGMA constituency towards the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This alignment is seen as a strategic step in reinforcing the voice and influence of regions in addressing climate-related issues on a global scale.

Sergio Arjona, Deputy Minister of Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy, Junta de Andalusia, as Chair of the CPMR Climate Working Group, announced Andalusia’s active participation in COP28 and the Local Climate Action Summit. He conveyed the region’s intent to seize the opportunity to share the outcomes and insights gained from these events. This engagement underlines Andalusia’s commitment to contributing to the broader discussions and initiatives surrounding climate action on both the global and local levels.

Maria Regueiro Puigdevall, Policy Officer on Climate, CPMR, presented the main points about the potential for the CPMR to join the LGMA Position Paper. This document, to be announced during the LGMA COP28 press conference on 20 November 2023, addresses the need for urgent climate action at all government levels, echoing the challenges in transitioning from climate planning to implementation. The main points of the LGMA Position Paper were presented for discussion. She highlighted the importance of recognising sub-national leadership in driving climate action and noted the alignment with the "Local Climate Action Summit" during COP28. The key areas of focus encompassed mitigation efforts, the necessity for financial support in locally-led adaptation strategies, means of implementation, and addressing loss and damage, particularly in vulnerable countries. Moreover, the Position Paper acknowledged the leadership and commitment of non-party stakeholders in climate action. Ms Regueiro Puigdevall emphasised the significance of fostering cooperation and establishing a structured dialogue for effective collaboration among stakeholders. The session aimed to facilitate a debate among participants on these crucial points, aligning with LGMA’s overarching goal of advancing climate action at various governance levels.

Closing remarks by Antonella Passarani, Responsible for Marche Region Brussels office. Ms Passarani conveyed updates on their participation in COP27 and discussed the prevailing policy landscape at European level, particularly highlighting the Green Deal as the overarching policy framework. She noted that the presentation of the region’s Position Paper, originally intended to be conducted by Mr Aguzzi, faced unforeseen circumstances leading to his absence. Despite the challenges, she underlined the necessity for preparedness in presenting the region’s perspective amid the on-going programming period. In conclusion, she acknowledged the demanding nature of the current period, recognising the importance of strategic readiness and active engagement.