

Dunkerque 2010 Call on Climate Action

Considering that the global negotiations in Copenhagen did not deliver a strong, comprehensive and global post 2012 climate agreement as was hoped for by local and regional governments and that further global negotiations are scheduled in 2010 in Cancun, Mexico and 2011 in South Africa;

Acknowledging that the Copenhagen Accord sets the objective to limit global warming to 2°C increase and invite Parties to submit their national pledges in form of reduction targets in industrialised countries and in form of mitigation actions for developing countries for the period after 2010 to achieve this goal; that many Parties have done so but that collectively their commitments are clearly not sufficient to ensure a limitation of global warming to the objective of 2°C increase;

Acknowledging that the EU is pressing ahead with implementing its climate and energy package and that it becomes part of a larger Europe 2020 Strategy;

Stressing that European local and regional governments have a long track record in developing and implementing sustainable and innovative climate policies and that they will actively continue to deliver action on the ground, for example, through the Covenant of Mayors and other initiatives;

Concerned by the fact that the goal of creating a low carbon, resource efficient, climate resilient and green economy in Europe can only be reached if local and regional governments are a fully integrated partner in a broad bottom-up Europe 2020 Strategy with increased access to funding;

Requesting that the roles and experiences of local and regional governments shall be recognised at European and international level and supported through formal climate agreements and decisions;

Recalling that the European Council of 29-30 October 2009 endorsed the Council Conclusions of the Environment Council of 21 October 2009 on the EU position for the Copenhagen Climate Conference, and that these, in paragraph 4, "highlight the role which local authorities will play in implementing mitigation and adaptation actions and calls for recognition of that role in the Copenhagen Agreement"; recalling that the European Parliament in its resolutions of 25 November 2009 asks for greater recognition of the role of local and regional governments in climate action; recalling that the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in its recommendation of 18 March 2010 asks its member states "to allow local and regional authorities direct access to the diplomatic process relating to the climate, and therefore to include them in the national delegations that throughout the year 2010 will be taking part in negotiations on a climate change agreement, and to involve them in the pre-negotiation phase as key partners in the activities to be carried out" and that the Committee of the Regions in its resolution of 18 June 2009 renewed its call in a similar way;

Agreeing that the intensive advocacy that was undertaken at COP14 and COP15 by local and regional governments and their networks worldwide towards negotiators of European and international level will continue on the way to COP16 and COP17;

Local and regional governments gathering in the framework of the European Sustainable Cities and Towns Conference, Dunkerque 2010, unite to request the following:

To the European and national level:

1. Any strategies or measures at European and national level intended to overcome the current economic and financial crisis must actively pursue and support the transformation of our economy to become low carbon, climate resilient and sustainable;
2. We request to recognise that local and regional governments implement 50 to 80% of the climate mitigation actions and that 85% of the EU's GDP is generated in European cities; consequently, as major actors driving and accompanying transformation in Europe, the role of local and regional governments in the 'Europe 2020 Strategy', as well as in the planned 'Roadmap for low carbon economy by 2050' must urgently be considered, specified, enhanced and supported;
3. With a view to avoid that inappropriate strategies are adopted or to avoid a disperse in essential climate actions and expected results, we expect a coherent, multi-level governance approach between European, national, regional and local levels of government and ask for a systematic consensus-seeking process and dialogue on joint action on climate change;

4. With a view to define and implement innovative financing for mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing countries as in accordance to the Copenhagen Accord, European financial support should be made available to enhance and support the cooperation on climate actions between European and non-European local and regional governments in developing countries;
5. The principle of subsidiarity must be actively applied when European financial instruments are re-channelled, readjusted or newly created; in particular, we expect rapid decision making to re-channel unspent EU funding with a priority to energy efficiency and decentralised renewable energy projects. We are pressured by our citizens and business to move ahead, particularly in these sectors, but are heavily affected by the current credit crunch;
6. Following the existing recognition of the EU and its member states of the essential role of local governments in mitigation and adaptation we seek the implementation of financial mechanisms for local governments that allow them to undertake innovative and experimental measures through local legislation. We ask for a political reflexion on financial mechanisms for local governments that are part of the new incomes that will become available from the auctioning of emission permits from European companies from 2013 onwards;
7. The European Council, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe should re-call upon the international negotiators to recognise the key role of local and regional governments as “governmental” stakeholders in implementing mitigation and adaptation policies and to seek innovative financing to support their actions and mutual cooperation.

To the international negotiators of the Conference of Parties (COP):

The key role of local and regional governments must be recognised in future international climate agreements and decisions; our active involvement must be ensured to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the existing UNFCCC Convention and its Kyoto Protocol through long-term cooperative action now, up to and beyond 2012; therefore in the current text under negotiation, we request the following:

1. The “Shared Vision for Long-term Cooperative Action” must recognise and include local and regional governments as key governmental stakeholders in climate mitigation and adaptation;
2. The “Enhanced action on mitigation” must include all levels of government to minimise negative impacts of climate change both in developed countries and in developing countries;
3. Under “Adaptation”, local and regional governments must be included as key governmental stakeholders for implementation of adaptation actions, both in developed countries and in developing countries;
4. The definition and funding of “Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAS)” by developing country Parties must include projects and programmes at the local and regional level that combat climate change;
5. Under “Financing”, developing countries should be provided with long-term, scaled-up and new additional assistance to implement urgent, short, medium and long-term adaptation actions, programmes and projects at local, regional and national level;
6. The “Enhanced action on technology and innovation”, as well as the identification of technology needs should be guided by the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC Convention, the principle of learning by doing, the best available science and the broad participation of stakeholders at national, local and community levels;
7. Under “Capacity building”, local, sub-national, national or regional capacities, skills, capabilities and institutions must be strengthened to address emerging capacity-building needs, particularly those related to the enhanced implementation of the UNFCCC Convention;
8. City-to city cooperation on climate mitigation and adaptation must become a fundamental part of the implementation of capacity building and should receive appropriate direct funding;
9. The provisions of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) should be revised and capacity of local governments increased so that they have a better access to global carbon financing.

Adopted in Dunkerque, 21 May 2010