

nrg4SD Feedback to the High-Level Champions on the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development – nrg4SD, believes that an effective response to climate change can only be achieved through strong collaboration between Parties and non-Party-stakeholders. Therefore, we strongly support the work of the Marrakech Partnership and the High-level Champions to strengthen this collaboration in order to lower emissions and increase resilience against climate impacts.

As part of the Collaboration Forum and co-focal point of the human settlements thematic group, nrg4SD welcomes the invitation by the High-level Champions to provide feedback on their work so far and the way forward, for which we have followed the proposed structure and questions.

1. Priorities

The priorities described in the indicative 2019 Marrakech Partnership work programme recognise the requirements for enhanced climate action. Now we would like to see how these priorities are translated into concrete actions by the High-level Champions, with the support of the different actors within the Marrakech Partnership.

nrg4SD supports the aim to further strengthen interaction between Parties and non-Party stakeholders and promotes the integration of action among all levels of governments. Subnational governments play a crucial role in climate action as architects of ambitious and innovative climate policies, which sometimes exceed the level of aspiration of their own states or the pace of the international society. The Talanoa Dialogue in 2018 proved to be a successful collaborative process and we believe that organising interaction between Parties and non-Party stakeholders in the future, could be developed along this methodology.

In addition, increased engagement of Parties in the work of the Marrakech Partnership is highly desired and would benefit both groups. It will strengthen the Partnership itself through better alignment between Parties and non-Party stakeholders, increase communication and interaction between those two and could facilitate better access to relevant experts and resources.

We further welcome broadening the participation of non-Party stakeholders in the Marrakech Partnership in regions and sectors and believe this could be achieved through increased transparency on the different actors of the Partnership, especially regarding the Collaboration Forum. Knowledge about who is involved could motivate other non-Party stakeholders to participate or support them in finding partners and representation entities within the Partnership. The Climate Action Leadership Network could also be activated to support progress in the process.

The implementation of the Paris Agreement requires action from Parties and non-Party stakeholders. We will not limit climate change nor adapt to it without working together for these common goals. In this regard, multi-level governance and vertical integration of policies is key. Internationally agreed goals and targets most often are implemented at the subnational and local levels. Therefore, it is crucial to involve subnational authorities in the planning and implementation process of climate policies. Subnational governments are able to transmit their populations' needs to the national level, hereby providing valuable information to national decision makers. Further, they are able to translate the national strategies and policies to their inhabitants and implement them on the ground, achieving increased acceptance of policies on the ground.

On the other hand, adequate resources need to be provided to subnational and local governments by their national counterparts. This is not only with regards to financial resources but also capacity-building opportunities for the subnational level should be made available, together with adequate access to climate data. In addition, a subsidiary approach to decentralised planning and implementation processes can support the implementation of the Paris Agreement nationally.

2. Thematic and cross-cutting areas

nrg4SD supports the structure of the Marrakech Partnership around the seven thematic and the cross-cutting areas, as well as the particular focus on specific SDGs each year. nrg4SD not only works in the field of climate change but also on biodiversity, the 2030 Agenda and the localisation of the SDGs. In this regard, we believe it crucial to integrate climate action with other global agendas, especially the 2030 Agenda.

Further, and as part of the human settlements thematic group, which touches upon all other areas, we encourage the Marrakech Partnership to further enhance the exchange and cooperation between the different thematic areas, not only within the Marrakech Partnership, and especially with regards to the development and implementation of the NDCs.

3. Regional climate weeks

Although nrg4SD did not attend past editions of the regional climate weeks, we believe them to be an important occasion for Parties and non-Party stakeholders to come together in a context specific to the different regions and without the pressure and spirit of negotiations. In addition, they offer those stakeholders, who are normally not able to attend the COPs, valuable opportunities to showcase climate action, to discuss about successful solutions, as well as to share specific challenges and needs.

However, the specific role of the Marrakech Partnership within the regional climate weeks and participation opportunities for its stakeholders should be made more transparent and communicated in a broader way. It is sometimes difficult to determine the influence and responsibilities the Marrakech Partnership holds in their planning and organisation.

Additionally, with this year's regional climate weeks being aligned with the UN Secretary-General Climate Summit in September, we hope for more influence of the Marrakech Partnership in terms of topics and stakeholders within the next years.

4. Technical examination processes on mitigation and adaptation

We welcome the participative approach of the TEMs in integrating different stakeholders, and value them as important platforms for non-Party stakeholders to provide profound input on their topics. They provide excellent examples of solution-oriented discussions and we strongly believe their outcomes are useful to Parties.

5. Tracking and reporting voluntary action

nrg4SD welcomes the revamp of the NAZCA portal following a period of standstill. The portal plays a crucial role in gathering information on climate actions and in showcasing ambition of non-Party stakeholders. However, the portal only features the mitigation side of climate action. We believe that the relevance and role of the portal could be enhanced through including adaptation data of non-Party stakeholders. Since 2016, nrg4SD, through its RegionsAdapt initiative and in cooperation with CDP, annually reports on adaptation actions and policies. We would welcome the possibility to include the data of our members in the portal.

6. Marrakech Partnership activities at COPs

nrg4SD values the continuous improvement of the Marrakech Partnership activities at COPs, especially with regards to the thematic action events and roundtables and we welcome the transformation of thematic days to thematic events. In addition, the setting of the cross-cutting and SDG roundtables provides for fruitful discussions. Further, we think that the Action Hub with its dynamic sessions constitute a success, which we would like to see continued in the future.

However, in order to make events more impactful, participation of Parties on stage, as well as in the audience should be enhanced. We believe that with further interaction between Parties and non-Party stakeholders and increased involvement of Parties in the Marrakech Partnership, this would come more naturally, nonetheless additional steps should be taken.

7. The United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Summit in 2019:

In 2019, the year of ambition before the next round of NDCs in 2020, the UN Secretary-General Climate Summit is one of the most important events to call for more ambitious climate actions and to showcase what has been achieved already.

We hope for substantial opportunities for the Marrakech Partnership and its stakeholders in the preparation of, as well as within the Summit itself. We encourage the High-level Climate Champions to engage with the facilitators of the different action portfolios to ensure involvement of and support from Marrakech Partnership stakeholders.

8. Post-2020 outlook

The implementation of the Paris Agreement in the following years requires effective interaction and collaboration of Parties and non-Party stakeholders more than ever. In this regard, by passing into the post-2020 world, the Marrakech Partnership will not lose its right of existence, rather it will enforce its need to do so and the High-level Champions play a crucial role in this regard. Therefore, we recommend the continuation of the Marrakech Partnership and its High-level Champions post-2020.

Nonetheless, it is worth exploring if future High-level Champions necessarily need to come from the political arena or if Champions with other backgrounds might be more suitable.

About nrg4SD

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development -nrg4SD is a global association that represents regional governments in the international agendas on climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. Established in 2002, today it has over 50 members from 26 countries in 4 continents. The nrg4SD is the only international network on sustainable development matters representing solely subnational governments. It serves as the voice of regional governments at the United Nations (UN) negotiations, European Union initiatives and global discussions. The nrg4SD facilitates cooperation projects and partnerships between members and with international experts, as well as promotes expertise exchange, capacity building and knowledge transfer to assist in the implementation of international commitments. In addition, the nrg4SD advocates for recognition and supports further engagement of regional governments in the global agendas. The nrg4SD also acts as Secretariat of the RegionsAdapt initiative.