



CITIES & REGIONS  
IN THE UNFCCC PROCESS



## Second meeting of the Technical Dialogue (TD1.2)

### Inputs to Inform the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice First Global Stocktake



**Regions4**

Sustainable Development



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

---

The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency thanks the UNFCCC for allowing the participation of non-Party stakeholders in the Technical Dialogues of the Global Stocktake (GST), held at the Bonn Climate Change Conference. LGMA welcomes the decision of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to design the GST in the spirit of inclusive, open and year-round Talanoa Dialogues which responds to the urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action recognised by the Glasgow Climate Pact.

#### **Context**

The Paris Agreement underlines the need to limit global warming to 1.5°C and for all stakeholders to play a role in helping achieve this common ambition. The Glasgow Climate Pact clearly highlighted in its preamble the "urgent need for cooperative and multi-level action".

The IPCC 2022 report on impacts, adaptation and vulnerability stresses the need for effective multilevel governance, alignment of policies and incentives, strengthened local and regional government and community adaptation capacity, supported by appropriate financing and institutional development.

Cities and local and regional governments are the first to be impacted by climate change, and have become natural leaders in some of the necessary transformations, particularly due to their direct connection with their inhabitants and capacity to mobilise and engage with all local actors. In fact, 82% of the 96 regions and states, representing 499 million people, who have reported to the [2021 CDP states and regions summary report](#), have said that they face increased climate risks, including hotter days and more frequent heatwaves, rainfall, droughts, coastal erosion and sea level rise. In the EU, the losses from frequent climate-related extreme events already average over EUR 12 billion per year. The effects of these losses are further exacerbated by being

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability serves as the focal point for the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency. The LGMA works on behalf of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, a joint global policy advocacy initiative of the major international networks of local governments, in the area of climate.



distributed unevenly, harming regions and cities that may already face challenges like low growth or high youth unemployment.

National governments will only be able to reach their climate targets if cities and local and regional governments reach their full potential. Most adaptation actions are implemented at subnational or local level, and many cities and local and regional governments are already delivering ambitious and innovative solutions that can be scaled up and inform pathways towards increasing ambitions on adaptation and reporting on the UNFCCC adaptation goal. These actions come in synergy with mitigation measures, adding greater benefits, to achieve the current reductions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement goals.

### **Leadership of cities and local and regional governments**

Cities and local and regional governments have developed a wide range of initiatives to integrate climate action into local and regional planning, incorporating climate change considerations on a continual basis. The latest UNDP estimates that an important part (50% to 80%) of the adaptation and mitigation actions necessary to tackle climate change are or will be implemented at the subnational or local level of governance.

Out of the 96 regional governments that reported to the CDP States and Regions 2021 summary report, 47% have developed adaptation plans and 94% collaborate with national governments or intend to do so in the next two years. Within the EU, 161 cities across 21 Member States have submitted action plans on adaptation under the [Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#), while 51 have also submitted monitoring plans. The EU has recognised the importance of local and regional authorities in driving ahead with adaptation action and has rooted its [new strategy on adaptation to climate change](#) in subnational action. This approach was also globally represented in the official [Adaptation Communication of the European Union](#), submitted to the UNFCCC in the build-up to COP26.

In the wider European framework, as of April 2020 nearly 123 million people in the EEA's 38 member and collaborating countries live in local authority areas committed to adaptation action. The Lombardy region for instance has an ambitious adaptation strategy and is developing its Climate Law which considers both adaptation and mitigation to climate change and provides for the participation of civil society following the principles of equity and justice.

Cities and local and regional governments are leading the way when it comes to adaptation action outside of dedicated strategies or pledges. The [EIB Municipalities Survey of 2021](#) highlights that almost two-thirds of EU municipalities planned to increase infrastructure investment from 2020 through 2025, with particular focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation. These trends do not come as a surprise: in Europe, the number of local climate adaptation strategies has steadily been growing and has tripled between 2011 and 2016. Local and regional adaptation strategies can also be the foundation of National Adaptation Plans – the Greek National Adaptation Strategy is delivered through 13 Regional Adaptation Action Plans (RAAPs) to account for the different climatic, socio-economic and environmental conditions throughout the country. Each RAAP



defines its priority areas on the basis of the characteristics identified for the region.

Many cities and local and regional governments are often tasked with the implementation of both climate mitigation and adaptation policies and have called for them to be integrated in a holistic manner, thereby enhancing resilience whilst also transforming production and consumption cycles (for instance, by promoting circular economy systems<sup>1</sup>). This is exactly why innovative programmes, such as the Horizon Europe missions, are targeting sub-national levels as the foundation for tackling climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The [EU Mission for Adaptation to climate change](#) is a good example of ways to bring solutions to adaptation challenges at subnational level. The Mission was launched in March 2022 and will support at least 150 cities and regions in the EU by providing direct and targeted funding for research and innovation actions. The funding, as well as technical assistance, will cover a range of innovative solutions so that the regions involved can pave the way to resilience through methods such as mainstreaming nature-based solutions or developing user-driven technologies to close the data gap. These innovative solutions will be replicable by other regions in the EU and at global scale, depending on their own situation. The Mission will also provide networking opportunities, exchange of good practices between regions and local authorities, and support to engage local residents. For instance, the Mission will help regions organise citizen assemblies to bring the public's views into the development of adaptation policy.

Cities and local and regional governments are leading actions on adaptation, notably concerning community engagement and education, flood mapping, incorporating climate change issues into long-term planning documents and strategies, crisis management (including early warning and evacuation systems) and real time risk monitoring. The state of Maharashtra in India, for instance, developed The Majhi Vasundhara initiative (my Earth Mission in English) intending to achieve climate resilience in the state through six flagship initiatives that bring together local administrations, businesses, NGOs and people of all age groups to enable climate action amongst all stakeholders. The six initiatives seek to raise climate literacy and awareness in the state, capacity building, supporting new and innovative technologies for climate adaptation and mitigation, and imparting green values to future generations.

Cities and local and regional governments have also played an active part in collaborating with other actors at local and regional levels, such as in the case of the Government of Jalisco, Mexico, which has collaborated with the Tequila Industry and Regulatory Council (CRT) to improve the sustainability of the sector. In a similar manner, the Polish city of Łódź has transformed from a textile industry centre into the greenest city in Poland by active cooperation with producers, civil society and the general public alike. Their comprehensive strategy, labelled as an "eco pact", highlights the need to involve businesses, universities, NGOs and even neighbouring municipalities in developing a more resilient community.

---

<sup>1</sup> Local and regional governments' report to the 2021 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 5th report

ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability serves as the focal point for the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency. The LGMA works on behalf of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, a joint global policy advocacy initiative of the major international networks of local governments, in the area of climate.



Ecosystem-based approaches that enhance adaptive capacity and reduce carbon emissions while acting as natural buffers against disasters have been developed by several cities and local and regional governments. There are several successful examples of how "building with nature" in urban areas has reduced the intensity of urban heat islands and urban floods. Approaches to protecting, conserving and restoring nature have also helped contain environment degradation and biodiversity loss.

For example, the Metropolitan City of Milan has started a comprehensive plan to take stock of existing green infrastructure and cover the most critical areas in terms of the urban heat island effect, committing to plant 3 million trees by 2030. This ambitious approach would not be possible without the full buy-in of citizens and unless the local authority had engaged a wide variety of stakeholders.

The government of Cross River State in Nigeria has developed the sustainable forest management project which has allowed for cooperation between the federal government, three regional governments, two funding agencies and other stakeholders (including the private sector, civil society, academia and the forestry community) to improve climate resilience, energy, food security and water availability through forest restoration and reforestation.

Another example is the new Flemish Adaptation Plan (currently being approved) which aims to ensure that Flanders is sufficiently resilient to be able to cope with the effects of climate change by 2050, implementing nature-based solutions for a green, de-paved and water resilient Flanders. With these nature-based solutions, Flanders not only wants to contribute to a climate resilient environment and society but also to reduce further climate change, provide a healthy living environment, increase and reinforce biodiversity and contribute to the recovery and protection of ecosystems.

Furthermore, cities and local and regional governments such as the government of Quebec have developed innovative financial mechanisms for generating financing to fund adaptation and mitigation activities at their level. In Quebec, since 2013, using the revenue generated by the Quebec carbon market, more than 3.9 billion dollars have been used to finance measures helping businesses, municipalities and individuals to mitigate emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Local and regional authorities can also generate tailored funding solutions to address specific issues. The city of Capannori, for example, has partnered with a non-profit crowdfunding platform to boost private investments and citizen engagement in small-scale climate mitigation and adaptation projects.

Nevertheless, there are still barriers to increasing ambitions regarding adaptation at subnational, local and city level. Knowledge of local impacts of climate change that can be used to inform planning and decision needs to be developed and supported in order to help regional and local governments plan and manage climate risks.

National governments need to make further efforts to strengthen capacities for climate action at all levels of government, by developing robust coordination mechanisms, strengthening



institutional capacity, technological innovation, as well as transfer and mobilisation of finance to the subnational and local levels, and notably in developing regions and cities.

## **LGMA recommendations on adaptation**

As per Decision 19/CMA.1, paragraph 36, the sources of input for the Global Stocktake will consider information on the state of adaptation efforts, support, experience and priorities, including the information referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 2, 10, 11 and 14, of the Paris Agreement, and the reports referred to in Article 13, paragraph 8, of the Paris Agreement. Sub-national data and experiences are vital to deliver on the objectives of the Global Stocktake as outlined in paragraph 34.

In order to achieve the goal defined in Articles 2.1(b) and 7.1 of the Paris Agreement, the LGMA makes the following recommendations:

- The two-year Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation and the Technical Dialogues on the Global Stocktake should cooperate and work in synergy in order for the former to inform the GST and bring coherence to the adaptation agenda in the UNFCCC.
- Climate-related risks and hazards are heavily context dependant. Given the key role that cities and local and regional governments play in planning and implementing climate action, they must be involved in shaping the adaptation goal and be represented in multilevel coordination mechanisms at international and national level. This will enable them to influence the design, coordination and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and implementation of the COP26 financial adaptation commitments.
- Shifting the trillions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement is essential, and national governments must provide credible targets and plans for deploying capital to developing countries and at regional and local level. At COP26, parties welcomed the new financial pledges made to the Adaptation Fund and regional and local governments were encouraged by the creation of the Global Subnational Climate Fund. Mechanisms to allow local and regional governments to directly access international climate finance opportunities still need to be reinforced and made more transparent and accessible at the decentralised level.
- Regional and local governments need to be involved in the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme through more formal recognition of their important role as key partners in the fight against climate change. This should start with formal inclusion of regional and local adaptation contributions to complement the NAPs and increased reporting on the NAPs and NDCs on adaptation, which should include a section on the climate adaptation commitments, actions and achievements undertaken by subnational, city and local governments.



- Regionally and Locally Determined Contributions on adaptation and the commitments taken by cities, local authorities and states through the Race to Resilience and Race to Zero campaigns need to be included, recognised and monitored through the UNFCCC processes such as the NDCs, NAPS and the global climate stocktake reports to inform progress on the adaptation goal and resilience.
- The LGMA constituency recognises the inclusion of the two new public registries that showcase NDCs and communications on the means of adapting to climate change impacts (ADCOMs) as key instruments in delivering the Paris Agreement. The registries should, in the spirit of the Glasgow Climate Pact, be expanded to allow the inclusion of contributions and communications at subnational level.
- Measuring progress on adaptation remains a key challenge for all actors, and regional and local governments can bring their expertise and methodologies to inform the global debate and stocktake on this issue. They call for the adaptation goal to allow for a common framework of analysis to determine whether adaptation policies have been effective, as well as research, methods and good practices that can be applied at both national and decentralised levels of governments.
- Cities and regions play a major role in funding education and developing skills-related policies, which is a crucial component in ensuring a workforce ready to adapt to extreme climate and environmental conditions. In order to build the capacity of those most affected, we need inclusive capacity building of governments at all levels, the private sector and civil society.

Local and regional governments will work closely towards COP27 and beyond to show that multilevel action delivers and to partner with their national and local counterparts to ensure further progress on adaptation to lead the way to a climate-resilient future.

Through Regions4, ICLEI, Climate-Kic, UCGL, Under2 Coalition and other international networks, cities and local and regional governments are committed to the Race to Zero campaign focused on mitigation, and to the Race to Resilience campaign that aims to accelerate their work on adaptation and resilience. By 2030, they want to catalyse action by non-state actors that builds the resilience of 4 billion people from groups and communities who are vulnerable to climate risks.