

## Input into the UAE - Belém Work Programme for the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience



European Committee  
of the Regions



**Regions4**

Sustainable Development

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The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency, Regions4, and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) thank the UNFCCC for allowing the participation of non-Party stakeholders in the workshops of the Glasgow Sharm-el-Sheikh work programme that led to the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, and in the consultation process related to the UAE-Belém work programme.

The LGMA welcomes the fact that Decision -/CMA.5, in the preamble, states that ‘adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions’, that in paragraph 10(b) it refers to the importance of ensuring that ‘by 2030 all Parties have in place country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent national adaptation plans’, and that in paragraph 14 it emphasises that ‘adaptation action should be continuous, iterative and progressive and be based on [...] locally led and community-based adaptation’.

Within this submission, the LGMA constituency calls for further integration of subnational governments (regional, states, provinces, cities) in the deliberations and development of indicators for measuring progress achieved towards the targets outlined in the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience and calls on the Parties to take into account the input and recommendations in this document.

### **Subnational governments first to be impacted by climate change**

Cities, local and subnational governments are the first to be impacted by climate change. In fact, 81% of the 108 regions and states, representing 543 million people, that reported their data for the [2022 CDP states and regions summary report](#), said that they face increased climate risks, including hotter days and more frequent heatwaves, rainfall, droughts, coastal erosion and sea level rise.

In Europe, 2022 saw the hottest summer on record, and the years 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 all saw record-breaking heatwaves, often combined with extreme droughts. The extreme



heatwaves of 2022 were associated with 60 000-70 000 excess deaths in Europe<sup>1</sup>. The effects of these losses are further exacerbated by being distributed unevenly, harming cities and regions that may already face challenges like low growth or high youth unemployment.

Simultaneously, climate change is having a growing impact on the African continent, hitting the most vulnerable hardest and contributing to food insecurity, population displacement, and stress on water resources. This vulnerability stems from a combination of factors, including geographical location, socio-economic conditions, and limited adaptive capacities, making the African continent stand as the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

### **Recognising and including the contributions of subnational governments in leading actions on adaptation and informing global processes**

The Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report provides evidence that adaptation is taking place in all regions and sectors and that the vast majority of these responses are taking place at the local level.

Cities and regions have become natural leaders in advancing climate action, particularly due to their direct connection with their inhabitants and capacity to mobilise and engage with all local stakeholders. They are leading and financing actions on adaptation, notably including community engagement and education, flood-mapping, nature-based solutions, city planning and infrastructure, incorporating climate change issues into long-term planning documents and strategies, culture- and heritage-based climate action, crisis management (including early warning and evacuation systems) and real time risk monitoring.

As the [RegionsAdapt progress report 2021–2022](#) underlines, regional governments have a better understanding of the risks. Some 93% of disclosing regions in 2021 reported an increasing number of socio-economic risks due to climate change, which reflects the widespread impacts of current climate change, and the awareness of those impacts, on society and the economy. Out of the 108 regional governments that reported to the 2022 CDP states and regions summary report, 66% have a climate action plan or strategy in place and 85% collaborate with national governments

They are also driving actions to support those left behind, in fact, the Regions4-led adaptation initiative *RegionsAdapt* published a report in 2023 on [Regional governments driving climate resilient development](#) that looks at 16 ‘stories of impact on climate justice integration’ within regional policies, that can come to inform global processes.

Within Europe, over 300 regions and communities, covering some 40% of the EU, have signed up to the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change and have committed to working together to accelerate the transformation to climate resilience. Within the EU Covenant of Mayors, as of June 2023, over 4 500 of the 11 700 signatories – representing more than 230 million inhabitants – have

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<sup>1</sup> [European Climate Risk Assessment — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](#)

made commitments to act on adaptation to climate change.

Experiences at the city level can come and inform targets of the new framework, notably for targets on water and human settlements of paragraph 9 (a) and (e).

In fact, C40 cities are taking high-impact actions by committing to High-Impact Accelerators. These accelerators are designed by C40 to help cities implement science-based solutions that address climate challenges while creating more equitable and resilient communities. C40 has two accelerators that focus on adaptation and resilience, the Water Safe Cities Accelerator and the Urban Nature Accelerator.

For the Water Safe Cities Accelerator, there are 17 signatory cities. Designed targets based on cities' high-impact actions. Each participating city pledges to a fundamental commitment, to protect their most vulnerable communities from the severe risks of flooding and drought by 2027. This includes:

1. Establishing comprehensive early warning systems in all high-risk, low-income areas.
2. Developing robust emergency response plans to ensure safety and basic necessities for all during critical events.

Additionally, each city will choose to follow at least one of three dedicated pathways:

1. Universal Clean Water Access: Ensuring equitable access to clean water for all citizens.
2. Flood Protection Measures: Implementing strategies to protect against significant flood events.
3. Net-Zero Water and Wastewater Systems: Aiming for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in water and wastewater management.

No concrete numbers as this is the first year of the accelerator. It will be the first accelerator to bring a Chinese C40 city on board.

For the Urban Nature Accelerator there are 41 signatory cities. They commit to have:

1: Amount of Nature: Increase the overall amount of nature to reach 30-40% of the total built-up city surface area. PATHWAY 2: Access to Nature: Ensure 70% of the city population has access to a green or blue space within 15 minutes. For each pathway, around half of signatory cities have already met their 2030 targets. Most cities met their commitments in the last two years, including Athens, which embedded the accelerator targets into their climate action plan; and Delhi NCT, which aims to raise green cover from 23% to 25% in two years

### **Multi-level governance as a key condition for the effective implementation of the Global Goal on Adaptation**

The effective implementation of national adaptation plans (NAPs) and adaptation planning/actions depends on the effective integration of the Parties needs of empowerment and distribution of capacities to local and subnational governments in the development of regional and local adaptation plans and strategies, and the corresponding collaboration mechanisms with national governments to enhance action.

[The review and latest analysis by the NAP Global Network](#) reveals that 92% of the reported NAPs mention local and community action, and 56% mention mechanisms of vertical integration. The integration of local and subnational governments in planning for adaptation and inclusion in targeting resources to the local and regional level remains a significant challenge.

In the EU, seven Member States indicate that the monitoring and evaluation of actions implemented on a subnational scale are conducted in conjunction with the NAPs and the national adaptation strategies (NAS), while 13 other Member States state that municipalities and regions are responsible themselves for the implementation and evaluation of their respective strategy or measures at regional and local level.

So, in most countries, the subnational monitoring and evaluation process is not formally linked to national-level planning<sup>2</sup>. It is still a challenge to make local actions visible in national reports, despite the contribution of local actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In this context, successful climate adaptation requires adaptation options to be integrated into the local context, with accountable, transparent and coordinated governance that is equitable and participatory and informs and reports to national and global processes.

In this regard, we note that multilevel governance is a cross-cutting matter relevant to measuring progress achieved towards each of the seven thematic targets referred to in paragraph 9 of decision 2/CMA5 and to each of the 4 targets of the iterative adaptation cycle (covering impact, vulnerability and risk assessment; planning; implementation; and monitoring, evaluation and learning) set out in UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience paragraph 10. For example, there are strong linkages between the adaptation of cultural heritage (GGA paragraph 9(g)) and subnational governments and multilevel governance.<sup>3</sup>

### **Locally-led indicators and targets for successful adaptation and to inform global processes**

Finding the right data, metrics, indicators, and methodologies for tracking progress in adaptation continues to be a significant barrier. Globally defined indicators often do not reflect local context or priorities and ignore existing systems, which are crucial for adaptation. Knowledge of local impacts of climate change needs to be developed, strengthened and supported in order to help regional and local governments plan and manage climate risks, as well as knowledge on solutions, mobilisation of and access to adequate financial and technical resources, and stakeholder mapping and engagement.

Engaging stakeholders, including subnational governments, is an important component of developing indicators to ensure the right indicators are elaborated and to gain feedback, knowledge and information on effectiveness of the indicators. Overall, the involvement of stakeholders along the adaptation process tends to foster the sense of ownership of adaptation actions, increase the acceptability of adaptation outcomes, help understand local risks and adaptation needs and

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<sup>2</sup> [Report on the implementation of the EU strategy on adaptation to climate change, European Commission \(2023\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [UCGL, Culture 21, The Role of Culture in Climate Resilient Development](#)

facilitate data collection and assessment of progress.

Exact indicators vary across contexts and depend on objectives/target. There are several indicator examples to take inspiration from in a list provided in Annex 2 of the European Committee of the Regions' report on [Climate adaptation: Measuring performance, defining targets and ensuring sustainability](#). No matter what the exact indicators selected are, the report also highlights a useful checklist of the criteria that 'good' adaptation indicators should meet:

- Relevance: The indicator should have a strong link to the adaptation goals.
- Familiarity: The indicators should be easy to understand by the users.
- Data availability: Data for the indicators should be easily available and be gathered at reasonable costs.
- Measurability: The identified indicators should be capable of being measured, preferably as objectively as possible.
- Reliability: The results of the indicators should have a limited degree of uncertainty and margin of error (factors to consider are good quality of the underlying data, clear and specific definition of the indicator and a transparent and direct calculation methodology).
- Non-redundancy: Indicators within a framework should not measure the same aspect and must be transparent.
- Completeness: The total set of indicators should consider all aspects that affect the adaptation goals.

Other considerations stated by LGMA partners are :

- Rationale and purpose of the indicator: The indicator must be underpinned by a clear rationale for what it is meant to be tracking - is it to measure progress internally? To communicate progress publicly? etc.

The Committee of European Regions' report also provides practical experiences from five examples: three cities (Athens, Kielce and Stockholm) and two regions (Flanders and North Rhine-Westphalia) and looks at how they measure their adaptation actions and strategies, which could be of use for establishing the global indicators for paragraphs 9 and 10 of Decision -/CMA.5.

### **LGMA recommendations for the UAE - Bélem work programme**

In order to achieve the goals and targets set in Decision -/CMA.5 and the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, the LGMA constituency makes the following recommendations, for consideration in the work programme:

- **The UAE - Bélem work programme should include representatives of the LGMA constituency in its mandated workshop** to allow subnational governments to provide inputs and ideas, and to share learnings for subnational governments on how to measure adaptation.
- **The choice of indicators should be based on, when possible, existing sub-national, national, and other MEL systems** in order not to overburden countries. Indicators should



accurately reflect the progress made towards adaptation goals, incorporating environmental, social and economic factors.

- **Metrics need to be adaptable to different regional contexts, competences and scales**, as a one-size-fits-all-approach is not an effective way to address adaptation issues. They should be flexible, contextual and comparable, and be just and fair bearing in mind the capacity constraints of different countries. Data should be public and free (available on the network). It should be capable of being measured and not need further process, calculation nor interpolation. Also, it should be easy to understand for the users. Guidelines should be created to assist in the aggregation process and aid understanding of progress.
- **The new Framework's measurement system should allow for the consideration of progress and commitments by non-party stakeholders, notably subnational and local governments, connecting thus with the [Sharm-el-Sheikh climate adaptation agenda](#).** Actions taken by cities and regions through the Race to Resilience and Race to Zero campaigns need to be included, recognised, and assessed in adaptation communications, NAPs and reviews.
- **The Framework should include a mandate and common target for the Parties to systematically step up their efforts towards effective multilevel climate governance** and ensure effective and long-term coordination mechanisms for measuring progress achieved towards each of the targets referred to in paragraphs 9–10 of decision 2/CMA5 and more generally to support the the implementation of the Paris Agreement at regional and local levels, with national governments. **A specific indicator should be taken into account for looking at inclusive and sustainable multi-level coordination mechanisms within the NAPs allowing for coordination between all levels of governments**, and between existing policy documents at each level, **when looking at adaptation planning and implementation and as part of the NAPs or adaptation communications.**
- **A specific target and indicator should be provided for national governments and climate international finance institutions to support the capacity of local and regional government in accessing adaptation finance** by: enhancing the advisory services about the available financing options; supporting the capacity building of subnational governments to access the available funds; providing targeted training and advisory services on the use of financial instruments; and facilitating the use of different funds and financing options for investing in climate action.
- **A specific mention and target should be included for targeting those most left behind.** Regional authorities have a key role in diagnosing, assessing and acting based on the best available data regarding climate risks and the impact on population and territories, as well as key socio-economic data. Data and indicators registered at regional level should be used for validation within decision-making processes at the supra-regional and international level.
- **Adaptation efforts should complement and be integrated into other national and international development initiatives.** This includes aligning with the



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broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in order to look at progress regarding the implementation of nature-based and eco-system based solutions, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and enabling the alignment of indicators.