

From: Anne-Sophie Doernbrack [adoernbrack@theclimategroup.org]

Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 1:19 PM

To: Anne-Sophie Doernbrack

CC: Libby Ferguson; Amy Davidsen; Evan Juska; Jean-Charles Seghers; Subaskar Sitsabeshan; Virginia Bagnoli; Aditi Dass

Subject: Join RegionsAdapt - commitment and launch

Attachments: invitation letter_RdJ_Catalonia_RegionsAdapt.pdf; RegionsAdapt_Commitment_versionCOP21.pdf; Regions Adapt initiative_outline_versionCOP21.pdf; invite3DEC_EN[1].pdf

Dear colleagues

On behalf of the Government Rio de Janeiro State and Catalonia, it is with great pleasure that I invite you to **join *RegionsAdapt*, an initiative that aims to provide a cooperative framework for states, regions and provinces to share best practices on climate adaptation and collaborate in their response to this global challenge.** Please find a letter to your political leadership from André Corrêa, Secretary for the Environment, Rio de Janeiro State and Santiago Vila i Vicente, Minister for Territory and Sustainability, Government of Catalonia attached. Nrg4SD and The Climate Group support *RegionsAdapt* as network partners.

Many thanks to those who have already expressed their government's interest in the initiative. I am now attaching the **final public commitment text of *RegionsAdapt* as well as an internal outline document** providing more background. Please let me know **by November 30 if your government is joining the *RegionsAdapt* initiative** as a founding signatory.

Joining *RegionsAdapt* at COP21 implies:

- Signing of the commitment by your political leadership;
- Endorsing the importance of the commitments; and
- Supporting nrg4SD and The Climate Group in developing the detailed work program and reporting requirements in 2016 to ensure it is valuable and feasible for you. Support could either mean active participation as a lead partner or basic feedback to recommendations.

The **launch of *RegionsAdapt* will take place on December 3 from 6:30-8pm at the Maison de l'Europe** (please see invitation with registration email attached). If your government is not available on December 3, we are also offering a signing opportunity during our General Assembly on December 7. Please let us know if you want to participate.

Please let me know if you would also like to receive the commitment text and launch invitation in French, Spanish or Portuguese and I will forward it to you separately.

I also wanted to clarify that we will continue our Adaptation Peer Forum while making sure that we are not duplicating efforts. We want our existing work on adaptation and *RegionsAdapt* to support and strengthen each other, and we will work closely with the participants of the Adaptation Peer Forum to ensure that aims and activities are aligned.

Best regards
Anne-Sophie

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Leading the #CleanRevolution

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Invitation letter

Dear regional leaders,

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to join the **RegionsAdapt** initiative: a new global commitment to support and report efforts on adaptation at the state and regional level. By signing, state and regional government commit to adopt or review plans on adaptation within two years, to implement an adaptation action in one of a series of thematic areas to be agreed, as well as to report on the progress of the adaptation initiatives through the Compact of States and Regions platform.

On the initiation of Rio de Janeiro and Catalonia, this new initiative aims to establish a cooperative framework for regions to exchange experiences and best practices on their actions and challenges when adapting to climate change. Therefore, joining the **RegionsAdapt** will provide the unique opportunity to confirm and showcase the leadership of regional governments at the forefront of concrete climate action on the ground.

The 21st Conference of Parties (COP) in Paris December 2015 configures a landmark moment to the discussions on the global climate regime, since it is expected to result in an urgently required international climate agreement that could limit global warming to below 2°C. In addition to the urgent need for all actors to contribute to the mitigation efforts, it will be equally important to call upon the attention to adaptation, especially considering many existing and foreseen unavoidable climate change effects. Particularly on that, regions need the adequate support and recognition of their key role.

RegionsAdapt will be launched on December 3rd alongside the COP21, 18.30h at La Maison de l'Europe de Paris (35-37, rue des Francs Bourgeois 75004).

Yours sincerely,

André Corrêa
Secretary for the Environment
Rio de Janeiro State Government

Santiago Vila i Vicente
Minister for Territory and Sustainability
Government of Catalonia



RegionsAdapt Initiative

A Subnational Partnership on Adaptation to Climate Change

Background

Even if anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions were immediately stopped, humanity will have to endure climate change and its associated impacts for centuries. Climate change amplifies and creates new risks for natural and human systems, which are associated with a wide range of impacts already observable, such as floods and droughts, increased frequency and magnitude of heat waves and heavy rains, coastal erosion and melting glaciers, damaged ecosystems and biodiversity loss, as well as reduced crops and frequent epidemics. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recognizes, these risks are unevenly distributed across territories, and generally greater for disadvantaged people and communities. A temperature increase of around 2°C will result in significant global annual economic losses equivalent to 0.2% to 2% GDP¹.

To manage and reduce the risks of climate change, while contributing to climate-resilient pathways for sustainable development, adaptation and mitigation are crucial and complementary strategies. Adaptation can reduce the mean net value of climate change impact by 30%, from \$1240 trillion (impact without adaptation) to \$890 trillion (impact with adaptation)². At the same time, the global costs of adapting to climate change could reach \$150 billion by 2025/2030 and \$250-500 billion per year by 2050, even if the temperature rise is kept below 2°C³. Therefore, long-term planning including financial planning, as well as the development of new and improved funding mechanisms are essential. More importantly, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on policies and measures across all levels of government, business and society.

A strong adaptation response is particularly important at the subnational level. Subnational governments play a fundamental role to enhance coordination and cooperation across all levels of governments, to boost policy coherence, and to ensure concrete results of adaptation actions. In this sense, adaptation measures must also be implemented in order to avoid economic losses at the regional level.

¹ IPCC Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers, p. 13.

² The figures have been calculated by summing up the impacts and costs of the adaptation from 2000 to 2200 and discounting them back to 2000, in a business as usual scenario. "Assessing the costs of adaptation to climate change", Grantham Institute for Climate Change, 2009.

³ UNEP Adaptation Gap Report, 2014.

However, international support and collaboration for regional action on adaptation remains underexplored. While many subnational governments have already developed long-term adaptation strategies and innovative solutions to increase climate resilience, a number of on-going constraints and challenges limit their ability to respond effectively. These include scarce financial and human resources, lack of integration and coordination between levels of government, insufficient management practices, research and tools to monitor adaptation effectiveness, and, critically, the absence of medium to long-term adaptation planning.

Commitments

Based on the aforementioned considerations, and recognizing that legal responsibilities as well as technical and financial capacities vary widely among different jurisdictions, the signatories of the **RegionsAdapt** initiative (hereinafter referred to as “the Participants”) commit to join efforts to improve the effectiveness of subnational governments in adapting to climate change. With this aspiration, the Participants express their intention to:

1. Adopt a strategic approach to adaption and prioritize adaptation actions, e.g., through adopting or reviewing a regional plan or strategy on climate change adaptation within two years of joining the initiative;
2. Take concrete action on adaptation in at least one of the key priority areas identified by the regions. These could include: water resources and management; resilience and disaster risk reduction; agriculture and zootechnics; forestry, protected areas and biodiversity; infrastructure (including transport and the energy sectors) and territorial planning; economic impacts and opportunities; social adaptation and impacts;
3. Report data on the progress of the adaptation actions on an annual basis through the Compact of States and Regions reporting platform.

As an international cooperation initiative, **RegionsAdapt** aims to provide a framework to facilitate and support collaboration between state and regional governments and other relevant international partners, undertaking joint efforts based on solidarity principles. Nevertheless, with a view to the particular circumstances and capacities of each Participant, it is fundamental they have own specific plans tailored for their territorial priorities and reality.

This is neither a contract nor a treaty.



RegionsAdapt **Program Outline Document**

Please note that this is a work in progress document. The structure for implementation and deployment will be further defined early 2016 in close collaboration with signatories and partners.

Although the extent of the impact of climate change is largely connected to the world's capacity to reduce the GHG emissions and keep global warming from reaching 2°C above the pre-industrial temperature, climate effects are witnessed in specific territories. The potentially severe impacts of climate change merit particular attention by policymakers because they endanger social, economic, biological and geographical systems.

Regional actions on adaptation are therefore essential to reduce the damage caused by climate change and ensure more resilient territories to present and future impacts. State and regional governments, in particular, have responsibility for areas of climate action that directly impact on people's everyday lives and they provide the link between strategic and local action. State and regional governments can also include climate risk in their financial investment decisions. They therefore play a critical role in delivering the adaptation commitments made internationally.

While national governments are at different stages of preparing, developing and implementing national adaptation strategies, in the past years, a stronger focus on adaptation with increased actions and measures being taken at regional and local levels became evident. Indeed, an increasing number of subnational governments are beginning to anticipate and plan for climate change impacts.

On a regional level, specific and tailored action is needed, as the conditions, capacities and nature of the impacts of climate change across territories differs considerably. Additionally, different social, economic and environmental scenarios make each region unique, entailing varied vulnerabilities and needs. Therefore, specific adaptation strategies and plans are required at the regional level.

However, there is a crucial gap between the provision of support and capacity of subnational authorities to act on the ground and the dedicated response that is

needed. In terms of capacity building, funding, expertise sharing and the establishment of appropriate methodologies, regional governments could greatly benefit from the collaboration with other regions and networks, in order to strengthen their existing capacity for action.

International cooperation initiative

At the initiation of the Government of Rio de Janeiro State and in collaboration with Catalonia, state and regional governments are launching the **RegionsAdapt** initiative, within the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP), which is taking place from 30 November to 11 December 2015, in Paris, France.

The **RegionsAdapt** initiative aims to provide a cooperative framework for states, regions and provinces with different capacities and experiences on climate adaptation to share best practices and collaborate in their response to this global challenge.

The Participants of the **RegionsAdapt** initiative aim to join efforts to ensure improved conditions to achieve resilient territories and prevent irreparable situations and damage to their respective economies, environments and citizens. Therefore, the Participants will collaborate, exchange knowledge and share best practice policy models that foster adaptation and resilience to climate change, pursuing multidimensional and innovative methods, as for example ecosystem-based approaches.

RegionsAdapt reinforces previous initiatives and resolutions made by subnational governments, particularly the Subnational Global Climate Leadership MOU (Under2MOU) and the Compact of States and Regions. In addition, it recognizes the interlinkages of different international agendas, and particularly seeks to explore the synergies and relevance of the UN Agenda 2030, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Commitments

Reflecting on the common challenges and varied situations, and yet the importance of taking action on adaptation, governments joining the **RegionsAdapt** initiative express their intention to:

- 1.** Adopt a strategic approach to adaptation and prioritize adaptation actions, e.g., through adopting or reviewing a regional plan or strategy on climate change

adaptation within two years of joining the initiative;

2. Take concrete action on adaptation in at least one of the key priority areas identified by the regions. These could include: water resources and management; resilience and disaster risk reduction; agriculture and zootechnics; forestry, protected areas and biodiversity; infrastructure (including transport and the energy sectors) and territorial planning; economic impacts and opportunities; social adaptation and impacts;

3. Report data on the progress of the adaptation actions on an annual basis through the Compact of States and Regions reporting platform.

Actions on climate change adaptation

There is a broad range of actions that can be adopted and implemented for adapting to climate change impacts. From infrastructure to policy solutions, many areas under the responsibility of regional governments are affected by climate change, particularly due to new and extreme weather events.

The **RegionsAdapt** initiative Secretariat will, dependent on securing sufficient resources, support Participants to:

- 1.** Develop regional adaptation strategies or plans utilizing the government expertise within the initiative, and based on the region specific reality;
- 2.** Report adaptation actions through the Compact of States and Regions;
- 3.** Submit the reported data to the NAZCA platform;
- 4.** Establish regional metrics, indicators and methodology for monitoring and follow-up according to the territorial specific vulnerabilities and conditions;
- 5.** Promote global peer learning and sharing of best practice models for addressing adaptation issues; and
- 6.** Embed and mainstream actions.

In order to facilitate the initial deployment of **RegionsAdapt**, the following overarching themes are being considered as priority themes:

- A.** Water resources and management;
- B.** Resilience and disaster risk reduction;
- C.** Agriculture and zootechnics;
- D.** Forestry, protected areas and biodiversity;

- E.**Infrastructure (including transport and the energy sectors) and territorial planning;
- F.** Economic impacts and opportunities – employment and engagement with the private sector;
- G.** Social adaptation and impacts, focused on the needs of the most vulnerable people, including protection of human health, aspects related to air quality and raising-awareness.

These priority themes shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

Coordinating partners

The **RegionsAdapt** initiative will be based on the efforts and leadership role of the Participants. This includes knowledge exchange and learning between Participants on specific thematic areas, facilitating the scaling up of innovative models and mobilizing states and regions worldwide to develop adaptation plans.

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) will provide the secretariat to **RegionsAdapt**.

The Climate Group will act as an implementation partner.

Next steps 2015-16

November 2015: government consultation and recruitment of founding governments

December 2015: launch of initiative at COP21

January – April 2016: full development of project plan based on data provided through the Compact of States and Regions and government survey

April – September 2016: launch of first peer forums based on member survey

October 2016: workshop alongside Habitat III

December 2016: review of progress at COP22.





Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia



Maison de l'Europe de Paris

The ***Government of Catalonia*** and ***La Maison de l'Europe de Paris***
invite you to the launch of the



The event will take place on Thursday, December 3 at 18.30
at La Maison de l'Europe 35-37, rue des Francs Bourgeois 75004 Paris.

Please join us for a cocktail immediately following the event.

RSVP at +33156812929 or france@gencat.cat