Special Thanks from ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability to

Host Committee

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), Germany
City of Bonn
State of North Rhine-Westphalia
Deutscher Städtetag
Engagement Global

Global Advisory Group

UNFCCC Secretariat

COP23 Presidency

Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Registration and Venue

Registration - UNFCCC badge & Summit badge

Please note that each guest is required to pick up his or her UNFCCC accreditation badge in person at the UNFCCC registration desk at the entrance of the Bonn Zone (Rheinaue). Please bring your acknowledgement letter and an ID (e.g. passport).

In addition, please note that each guest is required to pick up his or her Summit badge in person at the Summit registration desk.

Registration time

UNFCCC badge
4 - 17 November, 08:00-19:00 at the Bonn Zone, (Rheinaue)

Summit badge
6 - 10 November, 08:30 - 18:00 at the Cities & Regions Pavilion, in the Bonn Zone
11 November, 08:30 - 13:00 at the Cities & Regions Pavilion, in the Bonn Zone
11 November, 15:00 - 18:30 at the Kunstmuseum, Friedrich Ebert Allee, 4
11 November, 19:00 - 21:30 at the Bundeskunsthalle, Friedrich Ebert Allee, 4 (during the Buffet Reception offered by the City of Bonn)
12 November, 08:30 - 18:00 near Room 8 & Room 6, in the Bonn Zone

Summit venue - Room 8 & Room 6, in the Bonn Zone (Rheinaue)

Please note that due to capacity limitations:

- speakers and guests with YELLOW or BLUE lanyards are invited to use Room 8.
- guests with GREY lanyards are invited to use Room 6 throughout the Summit.
  In the case that capacity allows, guests with GREY lanyards may also be invited to use Room 8 during sessions 1 - 4.

Please note that additional transmission of the Summit Opening (9:30-11:15) and Closing (17:15-19:00) will be provided in the Cities & Regions Pavilion.

We kindly inform all guests that for security reasons, doors of any room that has reached full capacity will close.
Local and regional governments are strengthening their resolve to curb climate change and prepare for its effects. They are coming together at COP23 in Bonn to launch key initiatives and strategic coalitions that shape global climate action.

The Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders on 12 November 2017 is the premier gathering of local and regional governments at COP23. It is co-hosted by the City of Bonn and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and attended by more than 1,000 delegates, including over 330 political leaders from more than 60 countries. It is the first time that such a joint Local and Regional Leaders’ Summit is held on the UNFCCC premises, with such diverse representation, to discuss climate and sustainability in a holistic manner.

The Summit is the jumping off point for strategic initiatives and partnerships in support of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, demonstrating that when cities, regions, businesses, communities and all levels of government join forces, it makes climate action stronger and more effective. This is the way forward for climate action across the world, and in climate vulnerable areas of the Global South and in small island nations in particular.

The Summit takes place right in the middle of a full two-week program at the Cities & Regions Pavilion, the home base for local and regional governments at COP23, and is the flagship event of the Summit Dialogues, a stretch of heightened activity featuring meetings, events and interactions with negotiators that will help shape and deliver messages to nations and key climate stakeholders.

It is a pleasure and an honor to welcome you to Bonn and to have you join us on this important occasion. Together we will bring forward at COP23 what you are doing across your communities worldwide and accelerate action towards 2020 and beyond.

Bula vinaka!
Welcome to Bonn!

Gino Van Begin
Secretary General
ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability
Greetings and Handover from the Leaders’ Summit COP22
Mohand Laenser, President, Fes-Meknès Region; President, Moroccan Association of Regions

Welcome Remarks - Government of the Federal Republic of Germany
Hans-Joachim Fuchtel, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany

Special Address
Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor, State of California, USA; Co-Founder, Under2 Coalition; COP23 Special Advisor for States and Regions

Local and regional governments have stepped up to help the world reach the 1.5-degree global target. In the opening remarks of the Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders, leading figures highlight how local and regional governments have contributed to climate action and what they aim to achieve by and beyond 2020 when nations update their Nationally Determined Contributions. This COP23 can and should be a turning point at which nations, regions, cities and climate stakeholders join forces to meet and push beyond current national commitments.

Closing Session – We are all uniting for climate
Reception by the State of North Rhine-Westphalia
Venue: MS RheinEnergie Boat at the Rhine river, UNFCCC Bonn Zone
SESSIONS DESCRIPTIONS // SUNDAY 12

11:15 - 12:30  Session 1 - New global frameworks, new models for action: Integrating climate and sustainability across all sectors

The three new international frameworks – the Paris Climate Agreement, the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals – are designed to shape global development in an increasingly urban world. At the local and regional levels, interconnections between climate and sustainability are a part of day-to-day operations. As nations prepare to implement the goals set out in these global frameworks, there are plenty of lessons to be drawn from practices at the subnational level. By linking urban development programs and frameworks with national efforts on climate and sustainability, nations can help ensure local and regional action is even more impactful.

**FORMAT:** In a panel discussion, speakers set the context and explain how they create linkages between climate and sustainability initiatives at the local and regional level. They will discuss concrete examples of transformations and the challenges on integrating actions, sending the message to nations that systematic integration is needed at all levels.

**Session Chair**
Dieter Salomon, Lord Mayor, Freiburg, Germany; Member of the Executive Board, Deutscher Städtetag (Association of German Cities)

**Panel**
Mpho Parks Tau, Councilor, Johannesburg, S. Africa; President, South African Local Government Association (SALGA); President, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
Calisto Cossa, President, Municipal Council, Matola, Mozambique
Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, Scotland, UK
Daniël Termont, Mayor, Ghent, Belgium; President, EUROCITIES; Member of the European Board, Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy
Huaqing XU, Deputy Director General, National Centre for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC), People’s Republic of China

12:30 - 14:00  Summit Lunch

14:00 - 14:20  Special Address
Bertrand Piccard, Explorer; Chairman of the Solar Impulse Foundation

14:20 - 15:15  Session 2a - Collaborative climate action: Forging ahead through community engagement

Local and regional governments are engaging in new ways to stimulate innovation in partnership with their communities. Their approach demonstrates that the most effective partnerships are diverse, inclusive and span across sectors and all levels of society and government.

**FORMAT:** A moderated debate with local and regional leaders and civil society representatives, looking at how to enhance public and community collaboration – and what models are available for climate action. Speakers briefly present their perspectives before entering into a debate format.

**Session Chair**
Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, Head, Climate and Energy, WWF; Former Minister of Environment, Peru and COP20 President

**Panel**
Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad (AFPAT)
Raymond Johansen, Governing Mayor, Oslo, Norway; European Green Capital 2019
Clara Doe-Mvogo, Mayor, Monrovia, Liberia
Stefano Bonaccini, President, Emilia Romagna Region, Italy; President, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
Session 2b - Collaborative climate action: Integrated planning and sustainable investment in cities and regions

As public authorities, local and regional governments are increasingly implementing integrated planning and sustainable investments to address climate challenges, in collaboration with the private sector and the financing community, capitalizing on their skills and assets.

Format: A moderated debate that brings together local and regional leaders with representatives of private sector and finance community. A first round with initial statements, followed by short presentations of selected Summit initiatives and response by the speakers.

Moderator
Christoph Beier, Member of the Executive Board, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Panel
Thomas Kufen, Mayor, Essen, Germany; European Green Capital 2017
Frank Cownie, Mayor, Des Moines, USA; Member, US Climate Mayors, US Conference of Mayors, Member of ICLEI Global Executive Committee
Ede Ijjasz-Vasquez, Senior Director of Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice, the World Bank Group
Tom Steyer, Founder and President, NextGen America
Jiangqing YIN, Deputy Director-General, Development and Reform Commission, Jiangsu Province, People’s Republic of China
Célestine Ketcha Epse Courtes, Mayor, Municipality of Bagangté, Cameroon; President of the Network of African Local Elected Women (REFELA)

Presentation of select Summit initiatives

Closing Remark
Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Session 3 - Joining forces for transboundary climate action

Collaboration across borders is being leveraged to meet the critical needs of local and regional governments, including the climate vulnerable areas of Africa, Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. As these partnerships take shape, it is critical that nations, financial institutions and other key climate players also rally behind these partnerships as they respond to the challenges of a changing climate.

Format: Local and regional leaders engage in paired storytelling with presentations to explain the issues and solutions they are tackling through their joint collaboration on a given project or initiative.

Session Chair:
Dr. Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, Deputy Executive Director, UN-Habitat

Speaker grouping: City-to-city Twinning
Leon Thomas, Mayor, Portmore, Jamaica

Speaker grouping: Region-to-Region Twinning
Robert Didier, Senator President, La Réunion, France; Vice-Chair for Africa, Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4sd)
Henryk Mercik, Vize-Marshall of the Silesian Voivodeship, Poland
Franz Untersteller, Minister of Environment, Climate and the Energy Sector, Baden-Württemberg, Germany; Co-founder of Under2 Coalition

Speaker grouping: Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy
Maty Mint Hamady, President, the District of Nouakchott, Mauritania; Vice-President, the Global Fund for Cities Development (FMDV)
Mercè Conesa i Pagès, President, the Province of Barcelona, Spain; Member of the European Board of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy
As nations review their Nationally Determined Contributions, they are looking at what has been accomplished so far and what remains to be done to achieve global climate targets. Right now, it is crucial that all levels of government co-create a truly inclusive, coordinated climate action process, which secures a central role for local and regional action in national goals and policies. By accounting for the commitments and actions of local and regional governments and working alongside them, nations will be better positioned to not only meet their goals but also raise the bar on what they aim to accomplish.

Local and regional governments are proven leaders whose dedication will help fast track global advancements in climate action and sustainable development. They are committed to building strong partnerships – with their communities, with the private sector and with nations and the international community. Now, as national governments define the most effective means for implementing the Paris Climate Agreement, one thing is clear: We can go further and faster together.

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Co-Host of the Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders

Ashok Sridharan  
Lord Mayor, Bonn, Germany  
ICLEI First Vice President

Armin Laschet  
Minister-President, State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

Special Thanks to:

Patricia Espinosa  
Executive Secretary, UNFCCC

Frank Bainimarama  
Prime Minister, Republic of Fiji, COP23 President

Master of Ceremony

Cathy Oke  
Councillor Melbourne, Australia  
ICLEI Global Executive Committee Member

Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
Governor, State of California, USA  
Co-Founder, Under2 Coalition, COP23 Special Advisor for States and Regions

Bertrand Piccard  
Explorer  
Chairman of the Solar Impulse Foundation

Special Addresses

H.E. Barbara Hendricks  
Federal Minister, Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), Germany

Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice President, European Commission  
Co-Chair, Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
R20 Founding Chair

#UNITING4CLIMATE
The Bonn-Fiji Commitment of Local and Regional Leaders to Deliver the Paris Agreement at all levels

12 November 2017

(Final version to be presented for adoption by acclamation)

We, the Local and Regional Leaders meeting at COP23, acknowledge that, with the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in 2016, a new era in global climate action has started, building on the engagement of Parties with all levels of governments worldwide and domestically.

We will raise our climate action ambition and

1. Implement the Paris Agreement goals in our jurisdictions. As of today, 1,019 local and regional governments from 86 countries, representing 804 million people, have reported their emissions reduction targets on the carbonn Climate Registry, which, once achieved, would result in a reduction of 5.6 gigatons of CO2 equivalent (GtCO2e) by 2020 and 26.8 GtCO2e by 2050, compared to levels going as far back as 1990. The aggregated impact of cities and local governments committed to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy (GCoM) could collectively reduce 1.3 GtCO2e per year from business-as-usual in 2030. (Additional reports are available from other subnational reporting platforms, with some overlap in reporting.)

2. Affirm our resolve to enhance the resilience of our communities. We underscore the need to assess the direct and indirect impacts of climate change, reduce disaster risks and implement adaptation planning and measures.

3. Commit to cooperate with many more local and regional governments globally. In doing so, we will accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement at all levels of government and strengthen the momentum of our global initiatives like the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and the Under2 Coalition.

4. Commit to work with Parties and identify concrete opportunities for greater climate ambition. Where applicable, we will establish our own Locally and Regionally Determined Contributions to help national governments achieve and exceed existing Nationally Determined Contributions; we will support enhanced mechanisms for transparent reporting by the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency; we will communicate opportunities for greater ambition to the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue, when nations first take stock of global progress.

5. Implement the Paris Agreement goals in coherence with all elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Finance. We aim to do so through a circular, inclusive and shared economy that acts in harmony with nature, and by solidifying the implementation of these global agendas through enhanced policy planning and coordination mechanisms.

6. Encourage governments at all levels to mainstream the Paris Agreement goals into policies within their jurisdiction. Doing so will ensure greater policy coherence, align priorities, minimize contradictory or disconnected processes and maximize synergies between the strategies and plans developed in different policy fields.

Our commitments, ambitions and actions:

1. Implement the Paris Agreement goals in our jurisdictions.
2. Affirm our resolve to enhance the resilience of our communities.
3. Commit to cooperate with many more local and regional governments globally.
4. Commit to work with Parties and identify concrete opportunities for greater climate ambition.
5. Implement the Paris Agreement goals in coherence with all elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
6. Encourage governments at all levels to mainstream the Paris Agreement goals into policies within their jurisdiction.

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4. We will commit to work with Parties and identify concrete opportunities for greater climate ambition.
5. We will implement the Paris Agreement goals in coherence with all elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
6. We will encourage governments at all levels to mainstream the Paris Agreement goals into policies within their jurisdiction.
7. Join forces with all stakeholders in our communities and territories, leaving no one behind. Together we will accelerate innovative and transformative solutions, inspired by the outcomes of the 2017 Agadir Climate Chance Summit and OECD Seoul Forum, among other platforms that elevate multi-stakeholder engagement on climate action.

8. Prioritize and expand our support and partnerships across borders and continents, including North-South, North-South-South, city-to-city, region-to-region linkages. We particularly aim to build connections with all levels of government in Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and Africa.

9. Initiate, support and use project preparation facilities, subnational financial hubs of expertise that support the development of bankable projects and pipelines for local infrastructure projects. We aim to enhance access to climate finance from public and private sources, and from various levels, that help bring forward our best climate and sustainability proposals.

10. Enhance the active engagement of the LGMA Constituency in official global climate bodies and Parties. This includes engagement in the work of the UNFCCC Secretariat, the COP Presidencies and their High Level Champions, as well as the relevant UNFCCC negotiation bodies. We will leverage our collaboration with the Parties through a revamped ‘Friends of Cities’ at the UNFCCC, all in light of an inclusive and renewed United Nations.

Our calls to the Parties of the UNFCCC and the Nations of the UN

In relation to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), we

1. Urge Parties to conclude the Paris Agreement Implementation Guideline by 2018 and thus reassure the global community that climate action is advancing, evolving and accelerating.

2. Encourage Parties to seize the opportunity of the ‘Urban World’ by collaborating with all levels of government and by positioning integrated, sustainable urban and territorial development as an important tool to accelerate the implementation of the NDCs.

3. Invite all friendly Parties to demonstrate leadership by strengthening the urban, regional and territorial dimensions of their NDCs. We invite Parties to make use of vertical and horizontal integration to connect climate action at and across all levels of government, and to set up inclusive consultations processes domestically with their local and regional governments towards and at the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue.

4. Urge Parties to work with all levels of governments and follow the guidance of the latest scientific findings, including the outcomes of Cities IPCC Conference in March 2018. Doing so will raise the ambition of current NDCs and can incorporate contributions from local and regional governments brought forth by initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy and the Under2 Coalition, as appropriate, and present progress to the UNFCCC by 2020 at the latest.

In relation to an inclusive and ambitious global climate architecture, we

5. Call on the global finance community to prioritize capacity building, technology transfer, project preparation, decentralized cooperation and strategic plans and investments for integrated, sustainable urban and territorial development as important pathways for low-emission, high-resilient development. This involves greater mobilization of a wide variety of resources, instruments and channels, including from private finance, in line with the Marrakech Roadmap for Action on Localizing Climate Finance.

6. Call on Parties to increase the funding to the UNFCCC finance mechanisms and for innovative, climate friendly solutions and infrastructure. We call on Parties to acknowledge the innovative modalities that local and regional government have adopted to access financing and to strengthen the role of dedicated financing intermediaries for local investment, such as Municipal Development Funds, particularly in climate vulnerable communities.

7. Call upon Parties to recognize the increasing frequency and intensity of climate related hazards and therefore accelerate financing of risk reduction, resilience and adaptation plans that are customized with the priorities of the related communities and respective governments. In particular, we note the importance of protecting oceans and enhancing coastal resilience.

8. Commend the COP Presidencies, their High Level Champions and the UNFCCC Secretariat on the progress achieved through the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action to increase cooperation between nations, local and regional governments and other non-Party stakeholders.

9. Call upon Parties to engage in the UN reform process and leverage the role of local and regional governments and other non-Party stakeholders in the implementation of the global sustainability agendas and within the overall UN development system.

10. Invite all friendly Parties and interested partners to collaborate with our constituency in the implementation of these calls, as well as during other global milestones towards 2020. These milestones include the 3rd UN Environment Assembly, the Global Climate Action Summit 2018, the 2019 UN Climate Summit, the High Level Political Forums under ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly, as well as in the agendas of G7, G20 and One-Belt-One-Road processes.
Our concrete and joint initiatives

We, the local and regional leaders meeting at COP23, have organized ourselves in networks and partnerships to implement and strengthen the following initiatives as our further contributions to the implementation of the Paris Agreement goals:

City Climate Planner – GBCI, WRI, ICLEI
The City Climate Planner program raises the global talent base of city climate planning professionals through training and professional certifications, which form the building blocks of local climate planning and policy development.

Climate Reporting Partnership – ICLEI, carbonn Climate Registry, CDP
This new partnership brings together CDP and the carbonn Climate Registry, two of the leading climate reporting platforms in the world, in an effort to build a robust database of self-reported climate commitments, actions and performance tracking by public and private actors.

Coalition for Urban Transitions, including the new Global Urban Leadership Council
The Urban Leadership Council is a group of representatives from city networks, urban think tanks and the private sector aiming to build high-level political commitment to sustainable urban development in rapidly urbanizing countries and provide guidance to the Coalition for Urban Transitions.

Collaboration for multilevel climate governance – NDC Partnership, ICLEI
ICLEI and the NDC Partnership are now working together to design, implement and align climate action strategies across all levels of governments.

CONNECT – PLATFORMA
CONNECT is a pan-European coalition representing over 100,000 local and regional governments. Designed to strengthen the technical expertise needed in municipalities and regions, CONNECT carefully crafts and monitors the outcomes of peer-to-peer knowledge and skills-based matches.

Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa: Launch of the Political Commitment Document and the recruitment campaign of Sub-Saharan Cities – CEMR
The Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA), a regional body of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy, is, through its Political Commitment Document, opening the door for more Sub-Saharan cities to commit to the CoM SSA. Participation strengthens city capacity to expand access to sustainable and efficient energy services.

From Action to Transaction: The Africa Subnational Climate Fund – R20
The African Subnational Climate Fund bridges the gap between high infrastructure demands and the low number of bankable projects reaching investors. The fund provides ready-to-invest projects and financing to support the implementation of at least 100 infrastructure projects by 2020.

Front-Line Cities and Islands – ICLEI, GLISPA
Front-Line Cities and Islands is a coalition of coastal cities and islands on the front lines of the impact of climate change, working to build resilience coastal city-to-island partnerships. It is designed to increase exposure to innovative resilience strategies and creative financing mechanisms.

Green People’s Energy for Africa – BMZ
Green People’s Energy for Africa will improve access to reliable, climate-friendly energy and productive use through community-driven, decentralized renewable energy projects. In this way, it will accelerate the transformation and decarbonization of the African energy sector, empowering rural communities and local actors to participate in the energy system and supporting the development of effective national framework conditions.

Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy
The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy formally brings together the Covenant of Mayors and the Compact of Mayors to form the largest global coalition of over 7,400 cities from six continents and 121 countries advancing city-level transitions to low emission and climate resilient economies through voluntary action.

Mobilization of the African civil society at territorial level in the fight against climate change – Climate Chance
This initiative aims to mobilize African cities and regions to respond to climate change-related challenges across the continent, by encouraging their commitments to collective action and through an exchange of good practices to advance implementation of the Paris Agreement.

One Planet City Challenge – WWF, ICLEI
By combining a friendly biannual competition, capacity building, technical support and public promotion, the One Planet City Challenge provides a way for cities to engage in long term reporting of their climate performance.

Planners for Climate Action – UN-Habitat
Planners for Climate Action helps ensure urban and regional planners can play a strong role in advancing global climate and sustainability goals. To this end, this initiative will improve urban and regional planning practice and planning education.
RegionsAdapt – nrg4sd
RegionsAdapt is the first global initiative for regional governments to take concrete action, cooperate and report efforts on climate adaptation, focusing on key priority areas such as water resource management, disaster risk reduction, agriculture and biodiversity.

SDG Indicators for Municipalities – DST
SDG Indicators for Municipalities hones the Sustainable Development Goals to craft indicators for the municipal level in Germany, to ensure local governments align and track progress towards global targets.

SuRe Standard – Global Infrastructure Basel (GIB Foundation)
The SuRe Standard is designed to strengthen sustainable and resilient infrastructure development by guiding project owners in accounting for social, environment and governance criteria, while enabling them to communicate benefits to potential investors.

Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative (TUMI) – BMZ
Through TUMI, 11 acclaimed institutions offer technical and financial support for cities’ efforts in emerging and developing countries to implement sustainable mobility projects and programs, thereby aiming to advance global climate action and provide better and more equitable transport access to urban inhabitants.

West African Economic & Monetary Union (WAEMU) Regional Partnership for Localizing Finance – FMDV
This initiative focuses on West Africa and advocates for fiscal decentralization and innovative financing strategies and mechanisms, while building the case for public and private investments by preparing a pipeline of sustainable local infrastructure projects and matching them with funding sources.

Urban Transitions Alliance – ICLEI, RVR
The Urban Transitions Alliance is a group of industrial and former industrial cities making a shift to become global leaders in sustainable urban development by defining shared challenges, co-creating locally relevant solutions and developing transition action plans.

#UNITING4CLIMATE
Essential background on UNFCCC and COP

Part I. Decision making process at the UNFCCC

1. What is the UNFCCC?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted at the Earth Summit held in Rio in 1992, and entered into force in 1994. National governments become Party to the UNFCCC or its supplementary agreements by ratifying these through their domestic legislative channels. Parties, primarily through ministries of environment or climate change, are responsible for its implementation. Because many of the provisions of the UNFCCC are inspirational, two supplementary documents provide further guidance. The Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 2005, primarily focuses on mitigation of greenhouse gases by developed countries. The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015 and entered into force in 2016, defines roles for all countries and stakeholders and encompasses all elements of climate action. Because of this universal scope, it has become an integral element of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015.

2. What is the COP?

The Conference of Parties (COP), held for two weeks, is the annual meeting of the national governments as the highest level decision making body by Ministers to monitor and enhance progress on the implementation of the UNFCCC. The UNFCCC Secretariat, seated in Bonn, Germany, provides technical support to Parties on implementation.

Each year, one national government is elected by Parties as the President of the COP to provide political guidance in the work of the Secretariat and Parties on implementation. A COP President conducts informal consultations and meetings of heads of delegations all-year round, focusing on key negotiation issues. To ensure continuity, COP presidencies of two consecutive years work hand-in-hand. The role of COP President usually is assumed by either the Minister of Environment or Foreign Affairs, depending on the decision of the hosting Party, and it sometimes can be at the level of Heads of State/Government. As of 2015, the COP President also appoints high level climate champions to bridge the negotiations process and the climate action by all stakeholders.

3. Year-round process for intergovernmental negotiations

The topics to be discussed and draft decisions to be adopted at COP meetings are prepared and guided by two subsidiary bodies focusing on implementation (SBI) and scientific and technical guidance (SBSTA). These bodies meet for two weeks twice a year. In addition, a number of technical groups, focusing on various technical details such as finance, adaptation and capacity building, which meet throughout the year, subject to availability of resources and work load of their agenda items.

Part II. Engagement of local and regional governments at the UNFCCC

1. Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency

The Agenda 21 adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 introduced an innovative concept by defining nine Major Groups of society as essential partners of the implementation of global agreements. Local authorities are recognized as one of these nine groups and in the UNFCCC context, they are gathered under Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency. The LGMA Constituency is one of the three groups that have been engaging in the UNFCCC process since COP1 in 1995. As of 2017, more than 20 organizations are involved in the LGMA Constituency and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability has acted as the LGMA focal point since its inception.

Through the LGMA Constituency, local and regional governments contribute in the UNFCCC negotiations by sharing their views on various negotiation topics. They provide written or oral interventions, nominate representatives to technical workshops, participate at the UNFCCC negotiation meetings as observers, engage in the consultations of the Presidencies and convene specific events at the official meetings. This work of the LGMA Constituency played an instrumental role in the adoption of specific COP decisions related to local and regional governments in 2010 and 2013, followed by historic recognition of the importance of engagement of all levels of governments enshrined in the Paris Agreement and recognition of cities and other subnational governments as a dedicated group within Non-Party Stakeholders of the UNFCCC process.

2. Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

At COP17 in Durban in 2011, Parties recognized the inadequacy of the action and commitments of national governments in meeting the goals of the UNFCCC and started to explore ways to engage stakeholders. The 2014 UN Climate Summit held by the UN Secretary General introduced major progress in relationship between the United Nations with various stakeholders, including appointment of Michael Bloomberg, former mayor of New York City as the UN Special Envoy for Cities and Climate Change. In the same year, the UNFCCC Secretariat launched the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA), an online platform to demonstrate actions by stakeholders, followed by creation of Lima-Paris Action Agenda.

In 2015, all these efforts were embedded in the COP21 Decision for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and COP Presidencies are assigned to designate High Level Climate Champions to guide these efforts. In 2016, Marrakech Partnership was launched as a more systematic approach to engage global climate action in the work of the UNFCCC, through year-round engagement in thematic content groups, release of a Yearbook, supported by a Leadership Network. In 2017, Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor of California was appointed as the COP23 Special Advisor for States and Regions, which provided additional support to this engagement. The Climate Chance Conference, held annually since 2015, provides an additional contribution by mobilizing bottom-up initiatives among Major Groups.

3. Friends of Cities Group at the UNFCCC

While the work of LGMA Constituency and engagement in the action agenda present a unique added value, the decision-making process under the UNFCCC is still, and will continue to be, under the authority of national governments. In 2013, the LGMA Constituency invited friendly national governments to gather under the Friends of Cities Group at the UNFCCC to create an informal mechanism to exchange information and provide more substantial inputs into the negotiations. The Friends of Cities Group will be instrumental in securing a prominent role for local and regional governments in the full implementation of the Paris Agreement.
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