



## POSITION PAPER

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



**Regions4**

Sustainable Development



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

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The Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency thanks the UNFCCC for allowing the participation of non-Party stakeholders in the first 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 to help 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 multi-level governance, alignment of policies and incentives, strengthened local and regional government and community adaptation capacity, that would be supported by appropriate financing and institutional development.

Cities, local and regional governments are first impacted by climate change, and have become natural leaders in some of the necessary transformations, particularly due to their direct connection with their citizens and capacity to mobilize and engage with all local actors. In fact, 82 percent of the 96 regions and states, representing 499 million people, who have reported in the [2021 CDP states and regions summary report](#), express facing 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 because they are 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, local and regional governments, bring in their full potential. Most adaptation actions are implemented at the subnational or local level, and many cities, 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 Paris Agreement goals.

### **Leadership of cities, local and regional governments in taking action**

Cities, local and regional governments have developed a wide range of initiatives to integrate climate actions into local and regional planning, incorporating continuously climate change considerations. The latest UNDP estimates 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% percent have developed adaptation plans, and 94% percent collaborate with national governments or intend to in the next 2 years. Within the EU 161 cities across 21 Member states have submitted action plans on adaptation within the [Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#) framework, while 51 have also submitted monitoring plans.

In the wider European framework, as of April 2020 nearly 123 million of the population of the EEA 38 member and collaborating countries live in local authority areas committed to adaptation action. In this context, 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 foresees the participation of civil society following principles of equity and justice.

Cities, local and regional governments are leading when it comes to adaptation action also outside of dedicated strategies or pledges. The [EIB Municipalities Survey of 2021](#) highlights that almost two-thirds of EU municipalities planned on increasing infrastructure investment from 2020 through 2025, with a particular focus climate change mitigation and adaptation. These trends do not come as a surprise – in Europe, the amount of local climate adaptation strategies has steadily been growing and has tripled between 2011 and 2016.

Many cities, local and regional governments are often tasked with the implementation of both climate mitigation and adaptation policies and have called for their integration in a holistic manner, thereby enhancing resilience whilst also transforming production and consumption cycles



(for instance via the promotion of circular economic systems<sup>1</sup>). This is exactly why innovative programmes, such as the Horizon Europe missions, are targeting sub-national levels as the foundation to tackling climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The [EU Mission for Adaptation to climate change](#) is a good example of ways to bring concrete solutions to adaptation challenges at the 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 to research and innovation actions. The funding, as well as technical assistance, will cover a range of innovative solutions so that the regions involved with the Mission can pave the way to resilience through for instance, 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 context. The Mission will also provide networking opportunities, exchange of best practices between regions and local authorities, and support to engage citizens. For instance, the Mission will help regions organise citizen assemblies to bring citizen views into the development of adaptation policy.

Cities, 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 citizens of all age groups to enable climate action amongst all stakeholders. The six initiatives are aimed at raising 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, 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 citizens 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.

Ecosystem-based approaches that enhance adaptive capacity, reduce carbon emissions, while acting as natural buffers against disasters have been developed in several cities, local and regional governments. Several successful examples exist 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 co-benefited in containing environment degradation and biodiversity loss.

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<sup>1</sup> LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS' REPORT TO THE 2021 HLPF5th 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.



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 the engagement of a wide variety of stakeholders by the local authority.

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, the 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 (in process of approval) which aims to create a resilient Flanders against the effects of climate change in 2050 by the implementation of 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, to provide a healthy living environment, to increase and reinforce biodiversity and to contribute to the recovery and protection of ecosystems.

Furthermore, cities, 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, with the revenues generated under the Quebec carbon market, more than 3.9 billion dollars, have been used to finance measures to support businesses, municipalities and citizens 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, barriers still exist when increasing ambitions regarding adaptation at the 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 put further efforts to strengthen capacities for climate action at all levels of government, through developing robust coordination mechanisms, strengthening institutional capacity, technological innovation, as well as transfer and mobilization of finance to the subnational level and local levels, and notably in developing regions and cities.



## LGMA recommendations on Adaptation

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

- 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 synergies in order for the first 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, local and regional governments play to plan and implement climate actions, they must be involved in shaping the orientations of the adaptation goal, and be represented in multilevel coordination mechanisms at international and national level, 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 the 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 for local and regional governments to directly access international climate finance opportunities still need to be reinforced and made more transparent and accessible at the decentralized level.
- Regional and local governments need to be involved in the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work program. through a more formal recognition of the important role they play as key partners in the fight against climate change. This should start with formal inclusion of regional and local adaptation contributions to complement to NAPs and for 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, cities 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, recognized 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.
- 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, best practices that can be applied at both national, and decentralized 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 Multi-level action delivers and to partner with their national and local counterparts to ensure further progress on adaptation to lead to a climate-resilient future.

Through Regions4, ICLEI, Climate-Kic, UCGL, Under2 Coalition and other international networks, cities, 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, calling by 2030, 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.