Dear members of the ENVE commission, dear colleagues:

The start of 2021 has not been easy. Even though the ongoing vaccination campaign should allow us to put an end to the pandemic soon, the socio-economic and environmental consequences are here to stay for some time.

As elected leaders, we joined forces to respond in our local communities to the challenges of the health crisis; always in a spirit of solidarity and subsidiarity and adapting each response to the characteristics and needs of each region.

We have a long recovery process ahead in which the role of regional and local authorities is paramount, and which also needs to be approached from a green perspective. The devastating effects of this pandemic have only highlighted the close relationship that exists between public health and the environment, and emphasised the need to take urgent measures to ensure the care of the environment, the fight against pollution and the ecosystem survival.

Given the impossibility of achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal and climate neutrality by 2050 without close coordination between all local communities, the CoR launched a roadmap for 2021 in addition to the 200 best practices already collected on the CoR portal.

On February 15, the fourth meeting of the Green Deal Going Local working group took place, which focused on the renovation of buildings, the decarbonisation of transport and increasing the creation of urban green areas, in the context of Smart Cities and Communities and the Just Transition Mechanism.

ENVE commission is also working on the "Fit for 55" package of measures, aimed at ensuring that the post-COVID-19 recovery includes the transition towards climate neutrality as one of its main axes in its strategies.

I look forward to our next meeting of the ENVE commission on March 26, and I trust that we will join forces making sure the recovery that will mark the course of 2021 and the coming years is in line with the Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals.

In the hope that you will enjoy this newsletter,

Kind regards,

Juan Espadas Cejas
Mayor of Seville
Chair of the ENVE commission
On 26 March from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Brussels time), the next ENVE commission meeting will take place fully remote via INTERACTIO.

Voting on the amendments and opinions will take place online from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Brussels time) on the two consecutive working days (Monday 29 and Tuesday 30 March). The meeting will start hosting two debates with guest speakers. One Green Deal debate on the green recovery; and one debate on climate action in the global context: on the road to Glasgow. Additional information on these debates is available in each of the background notes available on the Members' Portal.

It follows the discussion and adoption of the following opinions:

- **Powering a climate-neutral economy: An EU Strategy for Energy System Integration** by rapporteur Gunārs ANSIŅŠ (LV/RE)
- **Stepping up Europe’s 2030 climate ambition towards COP26** by rapporteur Vincent CHAUVET (FR/RE)
- **Safe and sustainable chemicals for a toxic-free environment in Europe’s cities and regions** by rapporteur Adam STRUZIK (PL/EPP)
- **Local and regional authorities protecting the marine environment** by rapporteur Emma NOHRÉN (SE/Greens)

Special guests of the meeting will include:

- **Maria SPIRAKI (EL/EPP)** is a member of the European Parliament (MEP) for Nea Dimokratia party; and a Greek journalist. Ms SPIRAKI, who is also co-chair of the Intergroup Climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development, will participate in the debate on climate action. She is also co-rapporteur for the Parliament’s Resolution on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability and will be the guest speaker for the debate on the CoR opinion on EU Chemicals Strategy.

- **Arantxa Tapia OTAEGI**, President of Regions 4 Sustainability and Development; and Minister for Economic Development, Sustainability and the Environment, Basque Country (Spain). Ms Tapia will attend the ENVE commission meeting as guest speaker to the Green Deal debate on the green recovery.

- **Arno BONTE** served as Vice-Mayor of Rotterdam (The Netherlands) for sustainability, clean air and energy transition since 2018. Mr Bonte is also member of ICLEI's European Regional Executive Committee; representing the city of Rotterdam and ICLEI – Europe in meetings with the EU institutions on energy, in relation to cohesion policy funding. He is guest speaker to the Green Deal debate on the green recovery.

More information and meeting documents are available in the Members' Portal dedicated page.
APRIL

21/04 **Launch event of the 2nd Chamber of the Covenant of Mayors.** The CoR and the European Commission, together with the Covenant of Mayors Office will launch the 2nd Chamber of the Covenant of Mayors, composed by 27 CoR members acting as National Covenant Ambassadors

28/04 **“Green Deal Going Local” Working Group's 5th meeting.** Members of the working group will meet to discuss, among others, the upcoming key CoR opinions that related to the European Green Deal

MAY

31/05-04/06 **EU Green Week 2021** will be dedicated to the “zero pollution ambition”. The CoR is co-organising with DG ENV one session (1 June, 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.) on the contribution of the Green City Accord to achieve zero-pollution

JUNE

01/06 **European Week for Waste Reduction Awards** As pre-conference event of the Green Week, the CoR is co-organising the online ceremony for the EWWR annual awards. The awards will be given to the best projects of the EWWR of 2020, whose focus was "invisible waste”. **Mr Stelpstra (NL/ECR)** has been proposed as jury member. More information: https://ewwr.eu/

SEPTEMBER

9-10/09 (tbc) **External ENVE commission and ENVE conference** José Manuel Cabral Dias BOLIEIRO (PT/EPP), President of the Regional Government of the Azores, will host – if the pandemic and travel restrictions allow – the 9th ENVE commission meeting and the external ENVE conference on energy production and consumption in outmost regions

OCTOBER

11-24/10 **UN CBD COP15 (hybrid)** The 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations’ Convention on Biological Diversity is confirmed to be in hybrid mode. No information is available at the moment on the modality of 7th Global Summit of Local and Regional Leaders on Biodiversity (21-23/10), where CoR delegation should participate

NOVEMBER

1-12/11 **UNFCCC COP26 (tbc)** The Scottish Event Campus (SEC) in Glasgow, Scotland, will host the COP26. However, there is still no confirmation on the modality of negotiations nor of the side events in the blue and green zones

**Edinburgh Declaration**

Join more than 115 local and regional leaders’ request to the United Nations’ Convention on Biological Diversity to adopt at the upcoming UN CBD COP15 a plan of action dedicated to subnational governments by signing the Edinburgh Declaration. To sign, send an email to enquiries-subnationalworkshop@gov.scot, with the signatory information [name, organisation, position, country, level of representation (e.g. subnational, regional, city, local authority)]. More information at this link.
EU-South Africa Dialogue on nature and biodiversity's best practices

CoR participates in the EU-SA Dialogue on nature and biodiversity. Selected ENVE members will contribute to a toolkit on best practices to protect and to restore nature and biodiversity in metropolitan areas (urban and peri-urban). The aim is to share them with South African counterparts also via ad-hoc online workshops (max. six workshops) throughout the year. The outcome of the Dialogue will be presented at the UN CBD COP15 during the 7th Summit of Local and regional leaders on biodiversity. If you are interested, please contact enve@cor.europa.eu

Contact us: enve@cor.europa.eu