

**2019 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
INTERVENTION OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES MAJOR GROUP  
AT THE REVIEW OF SDG IMPLEMENTATION AND INTERRELATIONS AMONG GOALS:  
DISCUSSION ON SDG 13 – CLIMATE ACTION**

Friday, 12 July 2019

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Regions4 and the Local Authorities Major Group.

The IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C revealed that global warming has almost reached 1°C and is currently increasing by 0.2°C per decade due to past and ongoing emissions. The impacts of this are already being experienced by cities and regions around the world, with the heatwaves in Europe and India being only the latest examples of weather extremes that could occur more often in the future due to climate change. Limiting global warming to 1.5°C should therefore be the ultimate goal to be pursued by all stakeholders.

Despite this, only five of the NDCs currently registered under the UNFCCC are compatible with a 2°C scenario, and only two are in line with the 1.5°C aspiration<sup>1</sup>. While all countries are expected to present more ambitious NDCs by 2020, to date, only one (the Marshall Islands) has formally submitted a revised and more ambitious NDC<sup>2</sup>.

Fortunately, local and regional governments are stepping in for many years now, proving that ambitious climate action is possible and that they are key actors in implementing the Paris Agreement<sup>3</sup>. Increasing ambition on climate change demands a decentralized multi-level governance approach, recognising the key role of local and regional governments. National governments need to work with other levels of government on comprehensive vertical integration and alignment of climate policies at the national, regional and local level, as well as on mainstreaming climate change into all public policy sectors in order to avoid silos. Integrated, sustainable territorial development and disaster risk reduction, that considers urban-rural linkages need to be embedded into NDC implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging/Pages/All.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> For further information see chapter on SDG 13 in the Third report of the Global Taskforce to the 2019 HLPF “Towards the localization of the SDGs.”

Integrating policies for climate change and sustainable development could enhance coherence by ensuring complementarity between actions, avoid trade-offs, and call attention to possible synergies between the two agendas. Local and regional governments stand ready to partner with their national counterparts to ensure this integration of policies leading to a zero-emission, climate-resilient future.

However, we call on national governments to strengthen capacities for climate action at all levels of government, through strengthening institutional capacity, policy instruments, technological innovation, as well as transfer and mobilisation of finance. Supporting local and regional governments in the development of their own climate action plans through technical and financial assistance, resources, data, tools and connections to international networks will lead to more ambitious climate action.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.