



Subnational governments: at the forefront of climate action

Proposals to add references to the subnational level of governance in the latest AWG-LCA negotiation text (FCCC/AWGLCA/2010/6)

The role of subnational governments in tackling climate change

Subnational governments from all over the world have indicated that they wish to work with the Parties to help achieve the ultimate objectives of the UNFCCC and are encouraging a successful outcome of the current negotiations. Their contribution is essential since, according to the UNDP, 50% to 80% of adaptation and mitigation actions necessary to tackle climate change are or will be implemented at the subnational or local level of governance.

Subnational governments, either through power-sharing arrangements or constitutional devolution of powers, are often responsible for the development and implementation of laws, policies, standards, programs and fiscal mechanisms in such areas as energy, the environment, transport and land use planning that directly influence GHG emissions levels and deal with the impacts of climate change. In the last few years, subnational governments have concretely shown that they take these responsibilities seriously in tackling climate change. Their accomplishments in this area have grown tremendously in sophistication, effectiveness and importance.

Mitigation Policies at the subnational level

- Energy policies (e.g., smart grids, RES, feed-in tariffs, energy efficiency codes and standards);
- Clean transportation policies (e.g., vehicle efficiency, emissions and fuel standards);
- R&D policies for low-carbon and CCS technologies;
- Smart growth policies, green building codes, home and business weatherization programs;
- Sustainable forest and agriculture practices;
- Climate-friendly purchasing/procurement policies;
- Waste reduction and recycling strategies;
- Fiscal and budgetary measures to support these initiatives.

To this end, subnational governments are committed to working with central governments, local governments, businesses, NGOs and financial institutions and to tailoring their policies to the particular circumstances of populations and regions.

Furthermore, subnational governments have initiated and participated in regional and international partnerships to support broader implementation of climate change policies and legislation, the exchange of best practices, growth in new green technologies, low carbon technology transfers and cap and trade programmes. In the spirit of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, subnational governments from developed countries have also reached out in solidarity to other subnational or local governments in developing countries to help build their capacities to adapt to climate change and monitor/mitigate the emissions of greenhouse gases, notably through sectoral cooperation agreements.



Subnational governments seek international recognition for their work on climate change

It follows that subnational governments have the power to play an important role in the global effort to tackle climate change and in the world's transition to a low carbon future. In this respect, the term "stakeholder", which appears from time to time

in the negotiating texts, is not appropriate to describe the nature of the involvement and contribution of subnational governments to the work of the UNFCCC, and should be avoided to designate them.

Subnational governments appreciate the fact that they are occasionally explicitly mentioned in the negotiating text submitted by the AWG-LCA chair on May 17, 2010, through references to subnational action plans and strategies as well as to subnational capacities and skills. They, therefore, ask the Parties to keep these references intact, but they are looking for more.

Subnational governments take the view that this latest negotiating text should provide them with official recognition, and make additional references of their role, where warranted.

They are convinced that such recognition would provide them with incentives and encouragement to expand their commitments in the fight against climate change. Parties are thus invited to take the proposals below under serious consideration

Subnational governments and international financing

Subnational governments in developed country Parties often have broad direct and indirect taxation powers to finance the mitigation, including REDD+, adaptation, capacity-building and

technology development and transfer projects they wish to initiate, develop and implement within their own borders and beyond. However, while certain subnational governments in developing countries may have those powers and have the same level of ambition to tackle climate change, the funds they can raise are often insufficient to finance these types of projects or they lack matching financial support to complete them. It is therefore important that subnational governments have access, through their national governments or directly when the Parties involved give their approval, to the proposed Copenhagen Green Climate Fund and other funds of the financial mechanism of the Convention in order to enhance North-South and South-South actions on climate change.



Proposals to add references to the subnational level of governance in Annex I - A shared vision on long-term cooperative action

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Further recognizing the important complementary role that subnational and local governments play in initiating, developing and implementing policies and actions necessary to help achieve the objectives set out in the Convention.

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4. In accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties shall periodically assess overall progress in implementing the Convention, as well as **commitments and actions** on mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building. The Conference of the Parties shall also periodically evaluate the long term global goal for emission reductions. These assessments should take into account, as appropriate:
- (d) An assessment of the overall aggregated effect of the steps taken by the Parties, **including those taken by subnational and local governments**, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention and the shared vision.]

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Enhanced action on adaptation and its associated means of implementation

Agrees that

5. Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and the potential impacts of response measures is a challenge faced by all countries. Enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation is urgently required to ensure the implementation of the Convention by enabling and supporting the implementation of adaptation actions **at all levels of government** aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing countries, especially in those that are particularly vulnerable, especially least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa.

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Enhanced action on mitigation and its associated means of implementation*Agrees that*

8. Developed country Parties shall prepare [low-emission] [zero emission] plans[, **taking into consideration subnational and local plans, and** including norms for sustainable production and consumption in all relevant sectors for long-term emission reductions so as to contribute to the achievement of a long-term aspirational and ambitious global goal for emission reductions.

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Enhanced action on the provision of financial resources and investments

35. The Finance Board of the financial mechanism shall:

- (b) Assess the needs for, and sources and flows of, international finance to support activities **at the national, subnational and local levels** to address climate change;

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37. That a Copenhagen Green Climate Fund shall be established as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention to support projects, programmes, policies and other activities **at all levels of government** related to mitigation, including REDD-plus, adaptation, capacity-building, and technology development and transfer.

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Enhanced action on development and transfer of technology*Decides that*

43. In order to enhance action on development and transfer of technology to establish a Technology Mechanism pursuant to the provisions on enhanced action on technology development and transfer presented in chapter III to accelerate technology development and transfer in support of action on adaptation and mitigation **at all levels of government** that will be guided by a country-driven approach and be based on national circumstances and priorities, consisting of ...

The role of subnational governments on adaptation

Subnational governments have exclusive responsibilities or share responsibilities with their central governments on a whole range of areas relating to adaptation such as;

- Risks and vulnerabilities identification and assessment, including for forests and ecosystems
- Development and implementation of risk prevention and risk reduction strategies and action plans
- Disaster relief (such as compensation and rehabilitation policies), cleanup and reconstruction
- Information gathering about climate conditions, variability and trends to help reduce unpredictability
- Air and water quality monitoring and management
- Health care
- Public security
- Education and public awareness campaigns, etc.

Subnational governments have often the necessary skills, leadership, and expertise to help communities adapt to climate change, build resilience and, in extreme situations, rebuild those

communities after disaster has struck. They have the capacity to respond quickly to a climate change crisis, notably because they are close to the affected populations and have the most intimate knowledge of their needs. While, some subnational governments, particularly in developed countries, do or are willing to share their experiences, technologies and best practices on adaptation among themselves and in a North-South context, they would welcome the establishment of a more conducive international environment in that regard.



Proposals to add references to the subnational level of governance in Annex II on enhanced action on adaptation

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1. [Agrees that adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change [and/or to the impact of the implementation of response measures] is a challenge faced by all Parties and that enhanced action and international cooperation on adaptation **at all levels of government** is urgently required to enable and support the implementation of adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in developing country Parties, especially in those that are particularly vulnerable;]

Pages 16-17

4. *Invites* all Parties to enhance adaptation action under the Copenhagen Adaptation Framework [for Implementation] taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, [and whereby developing country Parties shall be supported by developed country Parties and in accordance with paragraph 6 below], to undertake, **in collaboration with subnational and local governments**, inter alia:
 - (e) Enhancing climate change related disaster risk reduction strategies, considering the Hyogo Framework for Action where appropriate; early warning systems; risk assessment, and management and sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance [, compensation and rehabilitation]; at local, **subnational**, national, subregional and regional levels, as appropriate, to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in those developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change [and/or to the impact of the implementation of response measures];

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6. Option 1:

Decides that developed country Parties shall provide developing country Parties, especially those that are vulnerable, with long-term, scaled up, adequate, new and additional to official development assistance commitments and predictable and grant-based finance from public sources in the order of at least [x billion] [x per cent of the gross domestic product of developed country Parties] as part of the repayment of their climate debt and their historic responsibility based on greenhouse gas emissions, as well as with support for technology, insurance and capacity-building to implement urgent, short-, medium- and long-term adaptation actions, plans, programmes and projects at local, **subnational**, national, subregional and regional levels, in and across different economic and social sectors and ecosystems, including the activities referred to in paragraph 4 above;

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7. Option 1:

Establishes an Adaptation Committee under the Convention with equitable representation of Parties to guide, supervise, support, administer and monitor the operation of the Copenhagen Adaptation Framework [for Implementation] and, inter alia:

- (a) To provide advice and technical support to Parties, respecting the country driven approach, including developing broad guidance for undertaking vulnerability and adaptation assessments, and developing national **and, where appropriate, subnational** adaptation plans and strategies;
- (b) To strengthen, consolidate and enhance the sharing of information, knowledge, experience and good practices, at local, **subnational**, national, regional and international levels, consistent with relevant international agreements, through creating forums where different public and private stakeholders can discuss concrete challenges;

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(d) [To enable and support] [To encourage] the creation of partnerships between a range of stakeholders, **and between subnational and local governments**, in developing and developed country Parties, with a view to enhancing the development and transfer of technologies for adaptation and the implementation of adaptation action;

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7. Option 2:

Decides to strengthen, enhance and better utilize existing institutional arrangements and expertise under the Convention in order to support the implementation of the Copenhagen Adaptation Framework [for Implementation], by:

- (c) Enhancing the sharing of information, knowledge, including traditional knowledge, experience and good practices, at local, **subnational**, national, regional and international levels;
- (d) Providing advice on the integration of adaptation actions into sectoral, national **and subnational** planning and other ways to enable climate-resilient development;

Pages 20-21

- 13.** [*Invites* relevant multilateral, international, regional, and national organizations, **subnational and local governments**, the public and private sectors, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to undertake and support enhanced action on adaptation at all levels, as appropriate, in a coherent and integrated manner, building on synergies among activities and processes, and to assist in the implementation of the Copenhagen Adaptation Framework [for implementation];]



The role of subnational governments on technology development and transfer

Subnational governments are well positioned to tap into the reservoirs of engineering and manufacturing firms and facilities as well as academic and research institutions that are operating within their territories to encourage the sharing of scientific and technological skills, knowledge and best practices, services, processes and applications, products and materials with developing countries. Moreover, subnational governments, especially those that have wide jurisdiction over natural resources and energy, may even hold green or low-carbon technology patents and proprietary rights that can be offered for carrying out adaptation and mitigation projects in developing countries.

Finally, subnational governments often do provide incentives to the private sector and forge partnerships with it to accelerate the innovation, development and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies. International cooperative action on the development and transfer of these technologies for mitigation and adaptation purposes should therefore open the door as much as possible to subnational involvement.

Proposals to add references to the subnational level of governance in Annex III on technology development and transfer

Page 22	<p><i>The Conference of the Parties</i></p> <p><i>Confirming</i> the importance of promoting and enhancing subnational, national and international cooperative action on the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing country Parties to support action on mitigation and adaptation now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,</p>
Page 22	<p>Objective</p> <p>1. <i>Decides</i> that the objective of enhanced action on technology development and transfer is to support action on mitigation and adaptation at all levels of government in order to achieve the full implementation of the Convention;</p>
Pages 22-23	<p>4. <i>Decides</i> that, pursuant to paragraph 10 (c) below, activities and/or outcomes of activities eligible for technological, financial and capacity-building support, including relevant actions referred to in paragraphs 12 and 13 below, shall be determined by country-driven processes based on national circumstances and priorities, with a view to ensuring overall efficiency and effectiveness in meeting such outcomes, and may include, but not be limited to, those that achieve:</p> <p>(h) Development and implementation of national and subnational technology plans for mitigation and adaptation;</p>
Pages 23-24	<p>7. <i>Decides</i> that the Technology Executive Committee is hereby defined and shall have the following functions:</p> <p>(d) Promote collaboration on the development and transfer of technology for climate mitigation and adaptation between governments, including subnational and local governments, industry, non-profit organizations, and academic and research communities;</p> <p>(i) Catalyze the development and use of technology road maps or action plans at international, regional, and national and subnational levels through cooperation by relevant stakeholders, particularly governments and relevant organizations or bodies, including the development of best practice and guidelines, as facilitative tools for action on mitigation and adaptation;</p>
Pages 24-25	<p>10. <i>Decides</i> that the Climate Technology Centre, supported by its regional units and by the Climate technology network, will:</p> <p>(d) Establish a Climate Technology Network with a view to:</p> <p>(i) Enhancing cooperation with subnational, national, regional and international technology centres and relevant national and subnational institutions;</p> <p>(ii) Facilitating international partnerships with all levels of governments and among public and private stakeholders to accelerate the innovation and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing country Parties;</p>
Page 27	<p>13. <i>Also encourages</i> Parties, in the context of Article 4, paragraphs 1(c) and 5, of the Convention and consistent with their respective capabilities and national circumstances and priorities, to engage in bilateral and multilateral cooperative activities on technology development and transfer in order to, inter alia:</p> <p>(d) Support subnational, national and regional capacity-building;</p>

The role of subnational governments in capacity-building

Five United Nations institutions (UNDP, UNEP, UNITAR, UN-Habitat, UNCDF) have responded to an increasing number of requests from subnational governments in the developing world who need assistance in assessing and managing the physical and socio-economic impact of climate change by creating the Territorial Approach to Climate Change (TACC) program. This initiative seeks to enhance the capacity of subnational governments from developing countries to enact regulatory measures, as well as to take advantage of new sources of environmental finance, in order to implement their climate change responses. In that respect,

it draws upon the experience, skills and institutional strengths of subnational governments in developed countries, and on their capacity to mobilize the private sector and their expertise in green technologies. Nrg4SD and the Climate Group both count among their members subnational governments that have joined TACC and that have capacity-building projects in the works for the coming years. The TACC program is a perfect example of subnational governments' willingness to collaborate with one another in the fight against climate change.



Proposal to add a reference to the subnational level of governance in Annex IV on capacity-building

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4. Option 2:

[Also decides that action on capacity-building should be enhanced in order to strengthen, as appropriate, subnational, national or regional capacities, skills, capabilities and institutions as appropriate, in order to address emerging capacity-building needs in the areas of adaptation, mitigation and technology development and transfer, as outlined [under the agreed outcome of the building blocks of the Bali Action Plan] [under the agreed outcome for the enhanced implementation of the Convention] through, inter alia:]

- (c) Developing and/or strengthening **subnational**, national and/or regional networks for the generation, sharing and management of information and knowledge, including local and indigenous knowledge, experiences and best practices of developing countries, through, inter alia, South–South and triangular cooperation;



The role of subnational governments on issues relating to REDD+

Subnational governments often have the responsibilities, tools and expertise for developing and implementing plans and strategies to promote conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. In fact, in some countries, subnational governments have considerable if not exclusive jurisdiction over natural resources and there can simply be no robust forest monitoring system, effective action strategies or far-reaching REDD+ mitigation programmes without their full participation.

The forest covered areas in some countries are also so vast that that without subnational officials' intimate knowledge of them and of land use changes, central governments would be hard pressed to adequately monitor current deforestation and forest degradation and efficiently plan to reduce their impact on carbon emissions.

Proposal to add a reference to the subnational level of governance in Annex VI on issues relating to REDD+

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13. Requests Parties, [relevant international organizations, **subnational and local governments** and stakeholders] to ensure coordination of the activities referred to in paragraph 12 above, including of the related support, particularly at the country level;



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Nrg4SD

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, nrg4SD is an international organisation representing federated states and regional governments at the global level. The network promotes understanding, collaboration and partnerships in sustainable development and seeks greater international recognition of the importance of the contribution which federated states and regions make to sustainable development.

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The °Climate Group

The °Climate Group is an international, non-profit organization which regroups a coalition of governments and the world's most influential businesses all committed to tackling climate. The goal of the Climate Group is to set the world economy on the path to a low-carbon, prosperous future. Through this coalition, the Climate Group is helping to set the targets, create the policies, build the confidence, and generate the political willpower needed to make the changes the world requires by 2050. The Climate Group acts independently, with no political agenda or vested interests. Its staff comes from different backgrounds, and from all over the world.

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