

Submission by the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD)

Views on the agenda for the 5th in-session Dialogue on Article 6 of the Convention “Action for Climate Empowerment” (ACE)

The **Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development – nrg4SD** – as an admitted observer organisation to the UNFCCC, welcomes the invitation of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its Forty-fourth session (SBI44) for Parties, admitted observer organisations and other stakeholders to share their views on the agenda for the 5th Dialogue on Action for Climate Empowerment, which will focus on climate change education, training and international cooperation on these matters (FCCC/ SBI/2016/L.15 §7).

The **nrg4SD** is a network of regional governments that shares common interests in climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. It was established in 2002, at the World Summit in Johannesburg, and today has over 57 members from 29 countries in 4 continents. The **nrg4SD** is the only international network on sustainable development matters representing solely regional governments.

Regional governments are particularly well placed for identifying the needs and the strengths of their societies in their climate action, and they are often responsible for the elaboration and implementation of policy, legislation, fiscal mechanisms and public investments plans in several areas including education and training, as well as the capacity of response and the resilience of territories to the consequences of climate change.

The **nrg4SD** acts as the voice and representative of these governments at UN negotiations, European Union initiatives and global discussions on environmental and sustainable development affairs. It also facilitates collaboration between its members, promoting sustainable policies and actions in subnational territories.

The **nrg4SD** contributes to scaling up climate change training as an international network through its support and co-funding of expertise exchange, partnerships and cooperation projects among its members, as well as between them and other major international stakeholders.

In 2014, the **nrg4SD** established a practical and long-term learning program among its members: The visiting experts programme. The programme enables **nrg4SD** members to send a visiting expert to other **nrg4SD** members’ territories with the aim to learn experiences on the ground, good practices, know-how, progress and actions in the fields of sustainable development, climate change and biodiversity. The program is conceived on a South-North and South-South basis and aims at improving capacities of technical experts in their daily work. Thus, contributing to the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention, supporting training of scientific, technical and managerial personnel.

In the field of climate change, the **nrg4SD** runs **RegionsAdapt**, an initiative originally proposed by the Governments of Catalonia and Rio de Janeiro. It is the first global initiative to inspire and support regional governments to take concrete action, collaborate and report efforts on climate change adaptation. This global initiative is open to all governments situated between the local and the national level from across the world, regardless of their size or stage of implementation of their climate policy.

Currently, the **RegionsAdapt** initiative counts 69 members from all continents, including 5 national associations of regional governments. By joining the initiative regions do not only commit to take action, collaborate and report efforts on climate change adaptation, but they are also able to share and learn from best-practices in the world. Therefore, **RegionsAdapt** represents another

contribution of **nrg4SD** to the successful implementation of Article 6 at the level of regional governments.

In addition, and aiming at complementing RegionsAdapt efforts, the **nrg4SD** launched in 2015 the program for joint projects between **nrg4SD** members, an initiative that aims at fostering joint climate adaptation projects between **nrg4SD** members with the Network's co-funding. Such projects entail North-South or South-South partnerships for the development of pilot projects, demonstration projects or raise of awareness projects. Two projects are currently being developed: on the one hand, the project titled "Green Schools" by Gossas, Fatick and Catalonia; and on the other hand, the project for the preservation of the spectacled bear and tapir species under climate changes implemented by Azuay and Morona Santiago.

The **nrg4SD** supports the view of the EU and its Member States to use the selected name "Action for Climate Empowerment" (ACE) instead of referring to Article 6 to enhance visibility of the Dialogue and simplify communication, especially through social media.

Topics to be included in the 5th Dialogue

Based on **nrg4SD**'s aforementioned expertise and contribution, we propose the following topics, inter alia, to be included in the 5th Dialogue:

Related to education, training and international cooperation on these matters

- a. Examples of successful activities by regional governments to shape educational curricula with regards to climate change
- b. Experiences with the use of media for education and training, including traditional media, use of social media and interactive tools
- c. Examples of initiatives to achieve social support for climate change actions
- d. Experiences with the integration of traditional knowledge in education and training
- e. Examples of women empowering in climate change adaptation and mitigation, especially in South territories and rural areas where women lead environmental actions
- f. Experiences in strengthening leadership, social participation and social interest in climate change decision-making
- g. Experiences with schemes of environmental/ climate change education (→ training of teaching staff, ecologic/sustainable schools, promotion of curriculum innovation)
- h. Examples of museums offering educational programmes
- i. Examples of multi-level governance initiatives on education and training
- j. Examples of activities stimulating knowledge exchange on different governmental levels (international, national, subnational, local)

Considering the special responsibilities regional governments have, not only on areas of climate action, but also on areas related to Action for Climate Empowerment, e.g. education and training, it is crucial to advance the implementation of an effective multi-level governance framework. Regional governments mean a crucial nexus between national and local governments and are therefore very helpful when translating national strategies and policies to the local level. Moreover, sometimes

assuming vanguard and brave approaches, regional governments may also encourage national governments to raise the ambition of their climate actions.

Additionally, they help to strengthen citizenship, laying the foundation for greater inclusion and benefit-sharing through their proximity to their citizens, as well as to national governments. Thus, there is a need for Parties to connect more with regional governments and the **nrg4SD** calls for further enhancing the engagement of these governments in the Action for Climate Empowerment.