

nrg4SD submission to the Talanoa Dialogue

Where are we?

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development nrg4SD – welcomes the inclusive approach of the Talanoa Dialogue and appreciates the opportunity for non-Party stakeholders to share their views. The nrg4SD addresses all three questions of the Talanoa Dialogue in separate submissions, with this one serving as stocktaking of current strategies, actions and solutions, as well as challenges.

The nrg4SD represents and supports regional governments from around the world, which constitute key actors in the fight against and the adaptation to climate change. Their proximity to reality, to the impacts resulting from climate change and to the needs of their citizens, creates an urgent need for them to act and gives them a unique position in addressing the issue. While the Talanoa Dialogue is mainly targeting mitigation, the topic of adaptation should not be left out, taking into account the IPCC SR15 report and the current emission reduction gap. In this regard, the *RegionsAdapt* initiative, coordinated by nrg4SD, supports regional governments in their climate change adaptation efforts. Member regions report annually through CDP's states and regions platform on the impacts of climate change and resulting risks, as well as on measures to adapt to a changing climate. The annual *RegionsAdapt reports* confirm that climate change impacts are already being felt around the world. Regional governments are confronted with more extreme weather events, more intense rainfall events, droughts, floods, extreme heat and other impacts of climate change, that represent significant risks to their territories.

However, regional governments are determined to act. They often have specific responsibilities in the fields of climate action that directly influence mitigation and adaptation efforts, such as the environment, the energy sector, economic development, transport, waste and sanitation, industry, agriculture, land use or civil security. In this regard, many regional governments are already taking the necessary actions to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to climate change through innovative policies, specific laws, strategies, programs and fiscal mechanisms, e.g. the roadmap for climate change recently developed by the Government of Navarra in Spain. They measure their impact through GHG emission inventories and take ambitious actions in different sectors, such as the solid waste sector, the land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector, the energy sector, as well as in the fields of environmental licensing, water security and ecosystem services, amongst others. There are numerous success stories coming from the regional government level. For example, the Department of Gossas, Senegal, has succeeded to protect a forest area of 750ha to store carbon. The State of Rio de Janeiro saw a 42% reduction in emissions from the solid waste sector and a reduction of 59.3% in the LULUCF sector compared to the base year 2005. In Cross River State, Nigeria, the government developed the clean fuel-efficient cook stove initiative to help reduce the quantity of wood used for energy, thereby reducing GHG emissions. These are only a few examples of emission reductions taken by regional governments.

However, even though regional governments take ambitious action in reducing GHG emissions, their actions and commitments are not always reflected in the National Determined Contributions (NDCs) of their respective countries. While some countries have established certain mechanisms to enhance engagement of regional governments in the development and

implementation of NDCs, like working groups or special committees, others lack ways of vertical integration. The same can be observed in the field of climate change adaptation. Not all regional governments get the opportunity to align national adaptation strategies with their regional ones. Nevertheless, regional governments are determined to act in climate change adaptation. As shown by the "[RegionsAdapt 2017 Report: Regions accelerating climate change adaptation](#)", more and more regional governments develop their own adaptation plans or strategies, take concrete actions in lots of different fields and are mainstreaming adaptation in all of their policy sectors. In total, we identified more than 200 adaptation actions taken by 35 regional governments in the report. Examples for adaptation actions are the rural electrification by solar and wind power plants in the Department of Saint Louis, Senegal, climate smart agriculture reported by the Ahafo Development Association in Ghana or the reforestation of mangroves in Foundiougne, Senegal.

Despite their commitment and ambitious action, we identified specific limitations, that regional governments face, varying according to the profile of each government. A pressing issue for a number of regional governments is the lack of financial resources and access to (international) climate funds. It is essential to provide financial autonomy to regional governments so that they can achieve compliance with the goals established in their policies, plans and projects. Human resources, as well as training and education are also a constraint faced by regional governments and capacity-building opportunities are key in this regard. The access to technical information such as regional climate projections for the construction of adequate climate models at regional and local scales is an additional challenge for regional governments. For adequate responses to climate change, especially in adaptation, these climate models and projections are key to assess vulnerabilities in the territories. Taking into account the value of decentralised cooperation in this regard, the *RegionsAdapt* initiative responds to these challenges through knowledge exchange, technical training and the promotion of cooperation projects. An additional constraint identified by some regional governments is the lack of policy coherence between the national and regional level. Regional governments are often not involved in national decision-making processes and a lack of mechanisms to integrate regional governments and other stakeholders into the development and implementation of NDCs has been identified. Additionally, regional governments do not see themselves adequately recognised at the international level, being unable to provide valuable input from their level into the international negotiations and decision-making processes.

Having given an overview of the reality of climate change for regional governments, solutions they provide and the challenges they face, the nrg4SD will outline its vision for the future and recommendations on how to accomplish it in the submissions to the other two questions of the Talanoa Dialogue.

About nrg4SD

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, [nrg4SD](#), is a global association of regional governments working on environmental issues in the fields of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. The nrg4SD was established in 2002 at the Rio+10 World Summit in Johannesburg, by a group of 27 regional political leaders and today counts more than 50 members from 26 countries on 4 continents. The work of the nrg4SD focuses on giving voice and international visibility to its members, especially in the framework of UN meetings and conferences; and encourage collaboration, cooperation, exchange of experiences, identification of good practices and creation of partnerships among its members.

In the field of climate change the nrg4SD coordinates the [RegionsAdapt](#) initiative, a global framework to inspire and support regional governments to take concrete action, collaborate and report efforts on climate change adaptation. It is a platform for tracking regional adaptation plans and strategies across the world; promoting the acceleration of the adoption or revision of regional climate adaptation plans and strategies; promoting concrete actions on adaptation; regions to cooperate and share best practices within their different capacities and experiences on climate adaptation; reporting and monitoring adaptation processes, actions and their outcomes; and fostering visibility opportunities through dedicated materials, publications and events. As a result of the work with regional governments within the initiative, numerous good practices of climate change adaptation have been identified. They have been shared in order to improve capacities in the framework of webinars, virtual meetings and the annual reports. In this regard, the *RegionsAdapt* 2018 Report to be launched at COP 24 will be an opportunity to learn more about the efforts regional governments are undertaking in adapting to climate change.