

nrg4SD submission to the Talanoa Dialogue

Where do we want to go?

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development nrg4SD – welcomes the inclusive approach of the Talanoa Dialogue and the opportunity for non-Party stakeholders to share their views. The nrg4SD represents and supports regional governments from around the world, constituting key actors in the fight against and the adaptation to climate change. The nrg4SD addresses all three questions of the Talanoa Dialogue in separate submissions, with this one serving as the outline of a vision for the future.

The recently published IPCC Special Report “Global warming of 1.5°C” sent a clear message: We need to significantly raise ambition of climate action. Global warming has almost reached 1°C compared to the average temperature in the pre-industrial era and is currently increasing by 0.2°C per decade due to past and ongoing emissions. The impacts of this have already been felt around the world, posing extensive risks to natural and human systems. In addition, current NDCs would lead to a warming of 2.7°C to 3.7°C, leaving a significant gap between expected emissions and the goals of the Paris Agreement. Adding to this, the actions undertaken by national governments so far do not comply with what they have promised to do. Therefore, a multi-level governance approach involving all levels of governments is necessary to ensure being on track to limit global warming and adapt to climate change.

In particular, regional governments play a crucial role in the fight against and adaptation to climate change. They often have specific competencies that allows them to develop and implement ambitious and innovative laws, policies, strategies, programmes and fiscal mechanisms in areas that directly affect climate change mitigation and adaptation, such as environment, energy, transport, buildings and construction, industry, agriculture, land use or civil security and health. On many occasions, these even exceed the level of aspiration of their national governments or the pace of the international society. In this regard, regional governments have powerful demonstration effects. They can inspire national policy makers to adopt more ambitious strategies by showing that even very ambitious strategies and actions are plausible, which helps scaling up ambition also on the international level. Moreover, these competencies will be key to the conversion of NDCs into concrete measures, and therefore regional governments will play a crucial role as catalysts in the process of implementing those NDCs. Regional governments’ key position between the national and local level enables a direct connection with civil expectations and needs and allows them involving their citizens and other important stakeholders in mitigation and adaptation efforts. Due to their greater flexibility in procedures and decisions, regional governments create alliances with the private sector, NGOs and financial institutions, which result in the implementation of technologies, financing systems and processes training. In addition, due to their unique position, regional governments promote the coordination and vertical integration of policies, which is key to a coherent and efficient action oriented to lasting results. Furthermore, regional governments support the conception of the territory as a whole, ensuring the necessary links between urban and rural areas to guarantee adequate resources flow and the functioning of ecosystem services.

Moreover, regional governments are well aware of the fact that actions on climate change are intrinsically connected to sustainable development and therefore work towards effective

integration of both agendas. As the latest IPCC Special Report confirms, there are various synergies between sustainable development and adaptation, including food and water security, disaster risk reduction, improved health conditions, maintaining ecosystem services and reducing poverty and inequality. Additional synergies exist between sustainable development and mitigation, in particular with regards to health, human settlements, clean energy and responsible consumption and production. The nrg4SD is working in both fields, sustainable development and climate change, so that it can offer additional support for regional governments in the development of integrated climate actions in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

Concrete policies and actions developed and implemented by regional governments in order to achieve those goals are numerous. A few examples include the Low Carbon Agriculture Plan and the review of the environmental licensing legislation undertaken by the Government of North Sumatra in Indonesia; the fight against mangrove deforestation through massive reforestation in Foundiougne, Senegal; the Law of Climate Change and the Climate Action Plans developed by the Basque Country in Spain; the first adaptation plan at a subnational level in Uruguay, developed by the Government of Rivera; the replacement of fossil fuels through renewable energies in Reunion Island, France; and the creation of the Amazonian Andean region in the Amazon basin in Pastaza, Ecuador. Moreover, the *RegionsAdapt* initiative coordinated by the nrg4SD reveals successful and innovative solutions developed by regional governments. In the *RegionsAdapt* [reports](#), that are published annually on the results of the initiative, those kind of solutions are gathered precisely for their diffusion and use by other regions of the world that face similar problems. Further, members of the *RegionsAdapt* initiative commit to develop and review their regional plan or strategy on climate change adaptation, take concrete action on adaptation and report annually on the progress of their adaptation actions. Through different [phases](#) of commitments, regional governance can advance their efforts and increase ambition in climate change adaptation.

The aforementioned reasons confirm the vision of multi-level governance – with the involvement of national, regional and local authorities – that nrg4SD and its members share, is key to build successful policies and actions. Subsidiarity and mutual involvement in decision-making is essential in this regard. In order to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement and achieve a local impact through territorial policies, greater coordination and cooperation with regional and local governments is crucial. In this regard, to address climate change mitigation and adaptation adequately, the potential and the needs of regional governments need to be recognised by national governments and international processes. The vision of multi-level governance includes strengthened resources and capacities of regional governments according to their importance in implementing the policies and actions agreed upon internationally and nationally. Last, development and international cooperation agencies should focus their efforts also on the subnational level when developing actions, managing resources and monitoring results.

***Having stated the vision for the future in the nrg4SD perspective in this submission, we also gave an overview of the reality of climate change for regional governments, the solutions they provide and the challenges they face in the submission to the first question of the Talanoa Dialogue. In addition, the nrg4SD will make recommendations on how to realise this vision for the future in the submission to the last question. ***

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.