

2ND MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE

with Local and Regional Governments on the Multilevel Implementation of the Paris Agreement

30 SEPTEMBER 2021



REGISTRATION LINK

https://undp.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqdOqoqDoqH9ORMmyoPUwbwwo792_ruqQ

WHY THIS DIALOGUE?

The Paris Agreement preamble recognises *“the importance of the engagements of all levels of government and various actors, in accordance with respective national legislations of Parties, in addressing climate change”*.

Cities, regions and territories are fully committed to the Paris Agreement. Climate action at local level is key to achieve the overall Paris objective of *“holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C”*. Further, local and regional governments have demonstrated their commitment to reduce their negative impact on the environment, promote low-carbon sustainable energy transition, carbon neutrality and engaging their citizens in behavioural change.

Increasingly, national governments are working on the climate commitments together and in synergy with their local and regional governments. The NDC process is a clear example where governments at all levels are joining hands to increase their commitments, present and future.

We know that coordination of action between different levels of government is not always easy. Different administrations often have different priorities, but sometimes the primary challenge is simply a lack of time, resources or instruments to make the collaboration between local, regional and central governments more efficient and

fruitful. This Ministerial Dialogue was born with the intention to bring new ideas about how climate coordination could bring more impact in protecting our planet.

This second Dialogue follows the precedent created in year 2020 during the First Ministerial Dialogue with Local and Regional Governments: Strengthening Coordination to Implement the Paris Agreement, that took place on 28th May 2020 virtually online, during the Executive Bureau of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in Rome. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the event moved online and counted the participation of more than 50 panellists as well as the participation of Ministers from Chile, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Italy, Ivory Coast and South Africa.

The success of the experience considered three main thematic trails: (i) on how central and local government coordinate their climate action, (ii) on Regional and Local Contributions (RLCs) and their integration within NDCs, (iii) the COVID crises and the opportunity to strengthen climate action by pursuing a green and just recovery. As a result, the first gathering produced a list of 8 recommendations on different related topics, and encouraged the organizing institutions to conduct additional opportunities, including an event focused on multi-level collaboration during the Race to Zero Dialogues in November 2020, which finally led to this Second Dialogue, taking place during the Pre-COP organized by the Government of Italy in September 2021.¹

The recommendations suggested, inter alia, to increase collaboration and to seek opportunities to strengthen the multi-level governance, particularly throughout the NDC development, implementation and enhancements processes, aiming to increase ambition and generate a cooperative framework for multi-level climate action. Recalling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was stressed how multi-level collaboration would be fundamental towards recovery, and especially to ensure the enabling financial frameworks and to secure climate action and resilience stayed on top of the agenda in the aftermath.

With that in mind, and in recognition of key contribution of local and regional governments, processes of co-creation and further consideration of Regional and Local Contributions (RLCs) were instigated as processes to support commitment for decarbonization and adaptation as outlines in their respective NDCs. Additionally, it was emphasized the importance of elevating the climate-land-biodiversity nexus, considering the interconnected system of urban and rural areas.

The key result to be highlighted is the will of all the partners co-organizers to generate a mid-long term strategy to ensure a Dialogue between the different levels of Governance, as a critical milestone to tackle Climate Emergency. This second Dialogue is a new step in the frame of a large global policy making that is aiming to transform the way governance is dealing with this emergency, and definitely accelerating the

¹ In the words of Sridharan, former Mayor of Bonn and President of ICLEI¹, *“The second Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to be presented in Glasgow have to reflect the urgency of ambitious action to respond [to the] climate emergency and seize the opportunities of the transformative power of the urban world. The success of COP26 in Glasgow in 2020 depends on the full engagement of local and regional governments in the preparation of the second NDCs at home throughout the year”*.

processes of implementation and raising ambition that the partners are working on.

Since the first dialogue in 2020, important progress has been achieved in both raising ambition as well as multilevel collaboration. Hundreds of cities and regions have committed to Race-To-Zero Campaign, countries like South Korea and Japan raised their national ambitions by committing to climate neutrality by 2050, building on the net-zero commitments of their cities and regions. Under the NDCP CAEP programme, several countries like Peru and Dominican Republic announced new NDCs with relevant engagement of local and regional governments. At the Zero Carbon City Forum on 17-18 March 2021, convened by Japanese Ministry of Environment in collaboration with UNFCCC, IGES and ICLEI, the Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat called for a Climate and Urbanization Ministerial at COP26, in line with the LGMA Cop26 Roadmap “Towards Multilevel Action COP”. Meanwhile, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity released the draft action plan for subnational governments, cities and other local governments as an input to the COP15 negotiations and building on the Edinburgh Process Outcomes.

This year, the organizers envision an event focusing on the contribution of cities, regions and territories to the Paris Agreement and to continue exploring options to better integrate such contributions into the national process of reporting for Paris.

It is still soon in the calendar to know if the event will be able to move forward in person, but the organizers are exploring a mixed modality that is both in-person and online as recommended by the Italian counterparts.

The outcome of the event will inform the activities of the LGMA during the COP 26 in Glasgow and endeavours to be a permanent feature of the COP process, to create fora for dialogue, trust, exchange and better integration of climate action across the different levels of government.

Toward this end, the **2nd Ministerial Dialogue with Local and Regional Governments** seeks to continue promoting the exchange between the different countries about improving synergies between governments at all levels. The Dialogue will also elevate the level of discussion on strategies to scale up climate action through integrated levels of governance as it will occur in the framework of the Pre-COP and feed into interventions during Urban October and ultimately at COP26.

The COP26 represents a unique landmark that will decide on the future of climate ambition, particularly in response to the pandemic crisis. Moving forward, the organizing group will continue to foster ministerial dialogues with Local and Regional Governments to enhance multi-level collaboration towards the implementation and follow-up of NDCs.

THIS YEAR'S PRIORITIES

The 2nd Ministerial Dialogue with Local and Regional Governments will focus on the following themes:

1. Making climate action a core responsibility for all levels of government

Time is running out and we need to raise ambition of the climate action of governments at all levels, from municipalities to regions to states to counties to central governments.

The climate crisis is not the sole cause of our problems, but COVID-19 has shown us more than ever that society's most disadvantaged are being disproportionately affected by both crises. There is now an opportunity for a resilient, inclusive, and more sustainable recovery that will benefit the generations to come.

The Dialogue will explore how countries are working to make climate action a systemic priority for their administration, including highlighting strategies at the Ministerial level that have successfully facilitated local administrations to find solutions to this climate emergency, and sub-national successes in advocating for greater autonomy in driving climate action.

This section will try to address the following questions:

- How are central governments promoting climate action within all levels of government?
- How are they translating this recognition of the need to act in climate into policies and actions?
- What are the main challenges to bring other levels of administrations around?
- How are cities and regions influencing the action of central governments to enhance climate action?
- What innovations are being included in the local fight against climate change? How is technology being used, but also what kind of institutional innovation is happening? (streamlining operations, re-configuring decision-making structures, access to national budgets)
- How are countries integrating their climate strategy into other sectors of public action?

2. Removing barriers for climate neutrality

This section will identify specific tools that countries can employ to remove the administrative and legal barriers that exist to advance towards climate neutrality.

This section will try to address the following questions:

- As a city/region, what are the main difficulties in implementing carbon-neutral initiatives?
- What are the main obstacles and opportunities for a Covid-19 green recovery

and what green stimulus strategies have been employed?

- How could green infrastructure be expanded in your country? What should change to advance in this?
- Is the legislative framework of your country ready for Paris? What are the main institutional changes that your national government is actioning to reach 1.5°C?

3. Financing climate action at all levels

Climate action is becoming a priority for many governments at all levels, but there is often a disconnect between the national and territorial budgets, and many times there is no financial overview about who is funding what at national level, international funding is also increasing for climate action at all levels, but it also needs to be approached in a more strategic way, as a complement and integration of the different budget lines to fund climate action.

This section will try to address the following questions:

- What financial instruments have been most useful in your country to face this climate crisis?
- What is the business model that countries and cities are using to fund their climate action?
- Does your country's stimulus package allocate direct funding to regional and local governments for green recovery projects?
- What innovative practices and solutions are happening out there?
- What is missing? How is the central government helping cities and territories to finance climate action?
- What are your funding priorities for a green and just recovery? How will you fund both adaptation and mitigation measures including green infrastructure and access to clean and affordable energy?
- How is your country / city creating green jobs and are measures taken to transition workers in high-emitting technologies?
- Thematic focus: How is your country funding nature-based solutions, renewables and circularity?

OBJECTIVES

The 2nd Ministerial Dialogue with Local and Regional Governments will bring together high-level representatives of national governments (Ministers and Deputy Ministers) and high-level representatives of local and regional governments (including national and local government associations, Governors, Mayors and local government decision makers) as well as selected partners, to identify specific instruments to strengthen the collaboration among all levels of government to advance in achieving the Paris Agreement.

Specific objectives of the event will include:

- Deepening the dialogue between local, regional and national governments

related to climate.

- Showcase integrated action between local, regional and central governments contribution to Paris + 5.
- Identifying options to remove barriers to multi-level governance and cooperation to jointly implement Paris between different levels of government.
- Identification of successful stories and tools about central / local collaboration.
- Highlight local-central collaboration regarding climate action and inform the COP process and others.
- Set the stage for the full integration of regional and local contributions to the NDCs by 2025

The event is addressed to the following participants:

1. Representatives of the national governments (at Ministerial level, with responsibility over environment, climate, ecological transition and focal points for the COP 26)
2. Mayors, Governors or representatives of their national and local government associations; and
3. Other experts able to contribute to the debate.

Interpretation will be available in English, French and Spanish (with an option for additional UN languages in case of need).

For more information, please contact

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