



PRESS RELEASE

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UN Climate Talks: World's states and regions sign Bonn Statement on road to COP16

Subnational governments at "frontline" of clean technology revolution, says de Boer

Brittany and Basque regions join The Climate Group

BONN, 2 June 2010: The Climate Group and the German state of North Rhine Westphalia today hosted a high-level international summit on the sidelines of the UN's mid-term climate talks in Bonn, Germany. The coalition sent a powerful message to world leaders that state and regional governments would not wait for a global deal but would work with businesses to act on global warming, safeguarding future jobs and growth.

Ministers and representatives from 15 states and regions from Europe and around the world attended the event, representing The Climate Group's growing international alliance of subnational governments which accounts for 360 million people and a combined GDP of over USD\$10.5 trillion. **France's Brittany region** and **Spain's Basque region** also joined the Climate Group as full members to work more intensively on different joint programs.

The sub-national coalition held high-level talks with business leaders from major companies and UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer at the event.

In the joint Bonn Statement presented to the United Nations, regional governments called on world leaders to recognise the vital role being played by business and the world's states, regions and cities as low carbon technology laboratories. The statement underlined the fact that 50-80 per cent of the action needed to tackle global warming will be made at the subnational government level. Representatives pledged to meet as a group at COP16 in Cancun to report back on the commitments made in Copenhagen and to further advance the deployment of critical low carbon technologies in their regions. These include electric vehicles, LED lighting, solar and other renewable technologies, carbon capture and storage (CCS), building efficiency, waste management and smart grids.

Yvo de Boer, UNFCCC Executive Secretary says: "Business and government at regional and city level have a critical role in developing, scaling up and applying low-emission technologies at the frontline. Their leadership, based on past experience gives national governments clear case studies of what works in practice and their new ideas are essential to stimulate investment and innovation."

Steve Howard, CEO of The Climate Group, says: “Since Copenhagen, it is again the world’s subnational governments who continue to lead their national counterparts in united climate action. They know there is no such thing as a high-carbon, low cost economic future and are rapidly becoming diverse laboratories for low carbon innovation for millions of citizens. This is good news as the world’s states, regions and cities will do most of the heavy lifting required to overhaul the world’s outdated high-carbon, high-cost infrastructure. What is critical is that the remaining months to Cancun must start a “race to the top” at every level of government to guarantee a prosperous low carbon economy.”

Christa Thoben, Minister of Economic Affairs and Energy (North Rhine Westphalia) says: “A worldwide binding climate protection agreement is the only way to ensure that not only the signatories to the “Copenhagen Accord” but also all participants of the world climate summit will effectively implement the targets agreed upon. And in this respect the regions play a vital role in the realization of ambitious climate protection targets.”

In announcing the Basque Region’s membership of The Climate Group, **Mrs. Pilar Unzalu, Minister for Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries**, says: “The challenge of tackling Climate Change requires joint and coordinated action by all, in particular, at the subnational level, where both public and private sectors can work in partnership to greater efficiency. Climate Change is a major political priority for the Basque Government. We are delighted to be joining The Climate Group today.”

Dominique Ramard, Vice President of Brittany said: “For us as a region, tackling climate change is not just a matter of developing green business – the job is to green the whole regional economy. That is the objective that Brittany has set itself in joining The Climate Group.”

Further meetings of The Climate Group’s [States and Regions alliance](#) will take place at **Climate Week** in NYC and at **COP16** in Cancun, Mexico.

The Bonn meeting was attended by representatives from Scotland and Wales, the French regions of Brittany, Île de France, Rhône-Alpes; German Bavaria; North Rhine Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg; Upper Austria; Spanish Aragon, Basque Country and Catalonia regions; and South Australia. Representatives from the Canadian state of Quebec also participated in the event to bolster important trans-Atlantic dialogue. To encourage new North-South partnerships between developed and developing regions, representatives from the State of São Paulo attended.

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To read the full Bonn Statement, please go to www.theclimategroup.org

The Climate Group (www.theclimategroup.org)

The Climate Group is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working internationally with government and business leaders to advance smart policies and technologies to cut global emissions and accelerate a low carbon economy. Its global coalition of 78 leading companies, states, regions and cities around the world recognise the economic and environmental imperatives of taking decisive action now. The Climate Group was founded in 2004 and has operations in Australia, China, Europe, India and North America.

For more information on the Climate Group's alliance of states and regions see: <http://www.theclimategroup.org/programs/states-and-regions/>

Action by European States and Regions:

On 4 March 2010, the Climate Group and some of Europe's most powerful regional governments sent a joint statement to EU leaders to warn that more ambitious EU climate and energy policies will be essential to powering Europe's future competitiveness, growth and jobs. The **Paris Statement of European Regions** (<http://www.theclimategroup.org/our-news/news/2010/3/4/paris-statement-of-european-regions/>) welcomes the EU Commission's proposal on the new 10 year economic strategy for Europe and calls on Europe's national leaders to:

- Put climate and energy truly at the heart of the 'EU 2020 Strategy' at the next European Council meeting.
- Support an increased EU greenhouse gas reduction target
- Set binding EU energy saving targets to create new jobs and increase energy security
- Incentivize private sector investment in European low carbon products, services and infrastructure
- Recognize and support regional policies to deliver ambitious EU emissions reduction targets
- Agree elements of a binding international climate treaty by the end of 2010

The States and Regions Climate Leader's Summit at Copenhagen in 2009:

At the UN climate talks in Copenhagen in 2009, The Climate Group brought together over 60 leaders from states and regions across the globe – from São Paulo State in South America, to Nigeria's Delta State, by way of Quebec, Scotland, North Rhine Westphalia, Brittany and Bavaria. These sub-national leaders highlighted work being undertaken in their regions to make deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions and called for a fair and ambitious global deal to cut emissions and unlock low carbon jobs and growth.

Among other commitments made, São Paulo state announced it had passed a climate change law to reduce emissions by 20% in 2020. **North Rhine Westphalia** aims to have 250,000 electric vehicles that are commercially viable circulating by 2020. The state of **South Australia** pledged to match California's ambitious target of generating 33% of its power from renewable sources by 2020. **Scotland** legislated to reduce emissions by 42% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050. Our States and Regions Alliance convened committed to plant **one billion trees** by 2015, and issued a call to national governments to join them.

Carbon neutral event

The event will be made carbon neutral by the EnergieAgency.NRW. The CO2 emissions resulting from the travelling of conference participants and the local event will be offset by the purchase of certificates from the carbon mitigation project JIM.NRW. This project bundles boilers for heat and steam in NRW which are to be modernized or switched to a low-emission fuel.