



PRESS RELEASE

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EU regions say climate and energy policy is vital for competitiveness, growth and jobs

PARIS, 4 March 2010: The Climate Group and some of Europe's most powerful regional governments have sent a joint statement to EU leaders today to warn that more ambitious EU climate and energy policies will be essential to powering Europe's future competitiveness, growth and jobs.

A joint statement sent to EU Council, EU Parliament and EU Presidency by members of five leading inter-regional organizations [*The Climate Group, Assembly of European Regions (AER), Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe (ENCORE) and Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD)*] calls on the EU to give more support and funding to regional efforts, arguing that these will not only deliver Europe's emissions reduction targets and boost jobs in the EU but – in the absence of a binding global climate deal – develop meaningful and effective international climate action at a sub-national level.

The **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
- Reach a binding international climate agreement by the end of 2010

Mark Kenber, International Policy Director of The Climate Group, says: "Europe's regional economies want to lead the low carbon economy and future-proof EU competitiveness, growth and jobs. Their ability to compete internationally in the clean industrial revolution depends on how fast Europe's national leaders can increase their ambition for a truly integrated European climate and energy policy. We are working with over 60 developed and developing regions around the world who are already leading their national counterparts in creating important laboratories for low carbon development ahead of an international climate deal."

Jean-Paul Huchon, President of the Region Ile-de-France says: "Today, in this room, we represent around twenty regions of the world and, through them alone, more than 150 million citizens – many more if we consider the networks also represented. I firmly believe we are on the verge of a world of regions and federated states. 2010 will be a crucial year, and today is the first step on the journey we will make together,

to Bonn, to Belem and to Los Angeles, California. One of our key objectives will be to obtain from COP16 agreement to cut global GHG emissions by 30% by 2030.”

Michèle Sabban, President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER), says: “Following today’s meeting, it is now up to us, European regions, to carry this statement to European Commissioners, in a cooperative spirit, and to show European citizens that their regional representatives are tackling a vital topic for them: the protection of environment and the preservation of our planet. My counterparts in our 270 member regions will also relay the decisions to towards every stakeholder they’ll meet. It is the regional level which will push forward the fight against climate change.”

Claudio Martini, President of Tuscany, FOGAR and chair of CPMR says: “Tackling climate change is one of most important challenges the world faces. Every government official must support more sustainable development to guarantee opportunities for our future generations. From local leaders to world leaders we must champion the same message: success in tackling climate change is to succeed in safeguarding our ecological and economic future. Tuscany believes in setting ambitious targets on climate change and will also support every initiative at international level to reach this result.”

Jane Davidson, Environment Minister for Wales and chair of Nrg4SD, said: “I believe we can achieve a huge amount in our battle against climate change through joint regional working. Today’s meeting will enable us to build on our achievements in Copenhagen where we were successful in securing world recognition of the importance of regional governments in tackling climate change. We can now move forward both collectively and individually to influence and drive the climate change agenda. Although the final Copenhagen declaration did not produce the fair, ambitious and legally binding deal that the world needs, we must regard it as a starting point and focus positively on next steps. Regions and States are ready to act and act collectively.”

The Statement was signed at a working meeting in Paris hosted by international NGO The Climate Group, and France’s Ile de France region to prepare regional contributions to UN climate negotiations in Bonn (June 2010) and Cancun (November 2010), and the World Summit of Governors on Climate Change in Los Angeles (September 2010). It is the first significant meeting of the world’s regions on climate change since Copenhagen in December.

The Paris meeting was attended by representatives from Scotland and Wales, the French regions Bretagne, Ile de France, Rhone-Alpes; German Länder Bavaria, North Rhine Westphalia; Spanish Aragon, Basque Country and Catalonia regions; and Italy’s Tuscany region.

Representatives from North American states of Quebec and California participated in the event to bolster important trans-Atlantic dialogue. To encourage new North-South partnerships between developed and developing regions, the Brazilian state of Para, the Oriental region from Morocco and Nigeria’s Delta State were also invited to attend.

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Notes to Editors:

Click on <http://www.theclimategroup.org/our-news/news/2010/3/4/paris-statement-of-european-regions/> to read the full **Paris Statement**. For further information and interviews please contact:

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

The Assembly of European Regions (www.aer.eu)

The Assembly of European Regions is the largest group of independent regions in Europe. Representing more than 270 regions from 33 countries and 16 interregional organizations, AER is the political voice of its members and a forum for inter-regional co-operation.

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (www.crpm.org)

The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions brings together around 160 Regions. Being located along Europe's shoreline brings both advantages and specific difficulties, so some 160 Regions have come together to form the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR). They are from 28 countries and represent almost 200 million people. They work together to ensure that EU institutions and national governments take account of their common interests, and cooperate on practical projects in order to enhance their assets.

The Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe (www.encoreweb.org)

The Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe is dedicated to political co-operation between the regional Environment Ministers of the European Union. ENCORE aims through this co-operation to contribute to the effective implementation of EU environmental policy, to improve environmental governance and to sustainable development in the regions of Europe.

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (www.nrg4sd.org)

The Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, nrg4SD is an international organisation representing regional governments at the global level. The network promotes understanding, collaboration and partnerships in sustainable development and seeks greater international recognition of the importance of the contribution which regions make to sustainable development. nrg4SD was formed by the regional governments that attended the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), and was legally registered in 2004 as an "International non-profit-making association".