



Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe Council of European Municipalities and Regions

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International negotiations on climate: State of play and information for local and regional government attending COP15

The present document refers first to the state of play of the negotiations and the position of the EU, and then provides information about the activities of local and regional governments' associations towards and in COP15.

❖ State of play of the international negotiations

The United Nations conference on climate change ([COP15](#)) will take place from 7 to 18 December in Copenhagen. Despite the numerous negotiations' meetings, the political declarations and the broad media coverage, there is no guarantee of success in Copenhagen. The two main issues at stake in the negotiations –emissions' reduction commitments and the financing – are still unresolved and the position of key countries like the US is not clearly defined. Therefore, the outcome of COP15 is likely to be a political agreement on climate change, setting the framework and a timetable for further negotiations. A legally-binding treaty would then be negotiated in the following months and adopted either at an extra UN summit on climate change in the year 2010 or at COP16 in Mexico in December 2010.

❖ Latest position of the EU institutions on COP15

On 9 November, the European Commission published a memo on "EU position and state of play of the Copenhagen Climate Change negotiations". This document provides a useful overview of the EU position and is available [here](#).

Council of ministers in charge of environment

The latest position of the EU on the international negotiations on climate is expressed in the [conclusions of the European Council](#) held on 29-30 October. These conclusions endorse the [conclusions of the Environment Council of 21 October](#), which "highlights the role which local authorities will play in implementing mitigation and adaptation actions and calls for recognition of that role in a Copenhagen agreement".

The EU ministers for environment confirmed this position on 23 November (See [press release](#) p.6) and underlined the need for the EU to take the lead in the negotiations. In particular, the EU is more and more considering increasing its CO₂ emissions' reduction target to 30% by 2020 (the conditions for this increase are not clear so far). The ministers expressed the wish that "the main decisions will be taken in Copenhagen, including emissions reduction commitments and a timetable for drafting ratifiable text". The EU financial support to developing countries has not been further clarified.

The EU commitments may be finalized at the meeting of the EU Heads of States and Government in Brussels on 10-11 December.

European Parliament

The European Parliament adopted a [resolution on COP 15](#) on 25 November, urging parties to the negotiations to reach in Copenhagen "a legally binding agreement on industrialised country mitigation targets and financing and to establish a formal process to achieve a legally binding comprehensive climate agreement in the first few months of 2010, coming into force on 1 January 2013" and calling on "the Heads of State or Government of all COP 15 members to give this matter the highest priority and to demonstrate political leadership [...]" (Press release of the European Parliament available [here](#)).

As a consequence of the lobbying of European associations of local and regional governments, including CEMR, points 66 and 67 of the Parliament's resolution explicitly mention the local and regional authorities. In particular, the European Parliament "encourages urban centres, regions and conurbations to launch their

own information campaigns, with government support, which might be linked to specific reduction targets”, recognises “that cities, local and regional authorities have a crucial role in implementing practical climate actions” and “calls for the EU to promote the engagement of cities, local and regional authorities in the development and implementation of national climate change strategies, including Mitigation Action Plans and Adaptation Programmes of Action”.

❖ **Local Government Climate Roadmap**

The UN climate talks organised earlier this month in Barcelona ended up with drastically reduced negotiating texts and the deletion of a great number of references to the role of local government. The remaining mentions can be consulted in [this document](#) prepared by UCLG.

Within the two weeks that separate us from the start of COP15, UCLG launched a call for action to all its members. Please consult below the circular sent by UCLG a few days ago, in particular [the briefing note](#).

CEMR, as European section of UCLG, strongly invites its members to support the UCLG call and in particular:

- To [contact their national government](#) in order to convince them to [keep references](#) to local and regional authorities in the political agreement to be adopted in Copenhagen.
- To encourage their members to sign the [World Mayors Climate Protection Agreement](#) in order to demonstrate concretely and through a political declaration the willingness of municipalities and regions to act against climate change.
- To express their support to an ambitious agreement to be achieved already in Copenhagen through an [active participation in a communication campaign](#) during the first week of December. Local and regional authorities are invited to hang a banner from public buildings: “ we want you to seal the deal in Copenhagen” ([more information here](#)).

❖ **Events organised by associations of local and regional government at COP 15**

Several events are organised by representatives of local and regional government at national, European and international level. In particular, the partners of the Local Government Climate Roadmap have a meeting space at their disposal, the [Local Governments’ Lounge](#). Several events are organised there during the two weeks. A [whole programme](#) of the events on the Lounge will be made available soon.

Daily negotiations briefings. Each morning from 8.30 to 9.15, daily negotiations briefings are organised on the Local Governments’ Lounge for the attention of local and regional governments’ representatives. A series of Briefing sheets is also available in order to better understand the issues negotiated and provide tools for argumentation. More information: <http://www.iclei.org/index.php?id=10617>.

8 December: meeting organised by KS (association of Norwegian local and regional authorities) on “Funding for local climate change” at the Local Governments’ Lounge in the Bella Centre. More information: ole.grann@ks.no.

9 December: Day for French local and regional authorities in the Local Governments’ Lounge, coordinated by AFCCRE. Around 60 representatives of French local and regional authorities will attend this event. More information: sabine.martorell@afccre.org

12 December: meeting organised by the “Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development” on “Subnational governments from developed and developing countries collaborate for a low carbon economy”. More information: rachel.stephens2@wales.gsi.gov.uk

14-15 December: several workshops are organised by the Association of Dutch Provinces at the [Holland climate house](#) and/or at the [Local Governments’ Lounge](#), both located at Bella Center. CEMR members are invited to participate in these events. More information is available on the [CEMR Extranet](#) (Environment/climate).

16 December: event organised by the Committee of the Regions on the theme “Mobilising citizens: regions and cities working together for climate protection”. More information is available on the [website of the Committee of the Regions](#).

16 December: Side-event of the partners of the Local Government Climate Roadmap on the issue "From Bali to Poznan to Copenhagen. Organised from 14:45 to 16:15 in the lounge. More information: yunus.arikan@iclei.org

17 December: UCLG session in the Local Governments’ Lounge from 10.30 to 12.30. More information: n.poisson@cities-localgovernments.org

The list of **all side-events and exhibits organised at COP15** can be consulted at http://regserver.unfccc.int/seors?session_id=COP15 . These events can also be very interesting for local and regional governments to attend.

The two last days of COP15 are the most important with the “**high-level segment**”. A representative of local and regional government should be able to intervene on behalf of the Local Governments Climate Roadmap’s partners.

❖ **Participation of CEMR members**

CEMR Secretariat is collecting the names of its members’ representatives that will attend COP15. Please do not hesitate to send the information you have (if not done so far) to marie.bullet@ccre-cemr.org. The table will be made available next week.