Assises de la Coopération Décentralisée
Regions and Cities for Development
Brussels, 10-11 July 2017

ROUND TABLE 3 on Climate change and Energy

The role of the regional covenants of mayors in facilitating decentralised cooperation to promote sustainable energy access and climate action. Insights from EU neighbourhood south and Sub-Saharan Africa

Abstract

The Round Table will highlight the key contribution of the cooperation between Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs) to achieve the 7th SDG with a special focus on the Covenant of Mayors.

Co-leaders

Regione Autonoma della Sardegna
Covenant of Mayors Sub-Saharan Africa / CEMR
European Committee of the Regions, Commission ENVE
Conseil de Collectivités Territoriales de l'UEMOA – Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine

Background information

2015 marked a defining year for sustainable development worldwide. World leaders adopted a new global sustainable development framework: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development having at its core the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the same year, the Paris Climate Agreement (COP21) was also adopted. These international agreements offer an exceptional opportunity for the international, regional and local authorities and communities to work together with refreshed and also new approaches based on multilevel governance and territorial development.

Various international commitments such as the Lima-Paris Action Agenda or the 2030 Agenda have recognized local and regional authorities as instrumental actors of decentralized cooperation in achieving the objectives of the Paris agreement or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Having identified decentralised cooperation as a key tool for institutional building actions, capacity building and peer-to-peer learning with a multilevel and territorial approach, the example of the Covenant of Mayors offers a first-of-its-kind bottom-up approach to energy and climate action. In

Co-leaders:

2008, European local governments voluntarily committed to achieving and exceeding the EU climate and energy targets. The Covenant success quickly went beyond expectations, including beyond the EU. Extensions to the EU's neighbouring regions quickly followed the initial EU movement and the network acquired a global dimension (Eastern Partnership, Southern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Africa countries). In January 2017, "Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy" was established, gathering in a unique network the existing Covenant initiatives and the United Nations' former Compact of Mayors.

Content

The Round table will highlight the key contribution of the cooperation between LRAs to achieving the 7th SDG: ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services with a special focus on the Covenant of Mayors. Attention will be paid to the success factor of selected Covenant initiatives and the capacity of LRAs in other parts of the world to use and adapt Covenant methodologies (e.g. to ensure access to sustainable energy for their inhabitants).

The round table will also look at how the "Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy" may function as the enabling framework for decentralized cooperation, not least in the area of sustainable energy. In addition, different instruments, initiatives and processes will be presented for potential replication. (i.e. UEMOA´s future funding mechanism for local authorities, creative ways of funding SECAPs, public-private partnerships, involvement of private sector and integrated cross-border development plans, among others).

From a policy perspective, the focus will be placed on the process of designing and implementing territorial climate plans. The objective is to identify the benefits that decentralized cooperation, potentially facilitated through the Covenant of Mayors (with special reference to the Regional Covenants in Sub-Saharan Africa and in EU Neighbourhood South), can bring through EU-Africa city-to-city cooperation as well as inside Africa and with other regions of the world. This can bring policy conclusions for both EU and local levels (e.g. integration of the decentralized cooperation element in the territorial climate plans / urban planning system).

The session will conclude by presenting best practices and examples of successful city-to-city partnerships, such as Lille (France) – Oujda (Morocco) or Bohicon (Benin) – Zoersel (Belgium). The discussions will outline policy recommendations drawn from concrete best practices in the sustainable energy arena enriched with an element of decentralized cooperation through the Covenant method.

Questions

1) *Which tools are available for local and regional authorities to achieve the 7th SDG?*

2) *How can decentralised cooperation within the Covenant increase/engage more peer-to-peer learning and capacity building?*

3) *How does decentralized cooperation contribute to the replicability of the Covenant of Mayors in terms of local implementation, methodologies, practices, objectives and values?*

4) *What lessons and success factors can we replicate following the partnership examples?*