

RESOLUTION

ADOPTED AT THE CLIMATE ALLIANCE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD IN ESSEN,
GERMANY ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2017



Climate Alliance

IMPLEMENTING ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

CLIMATE ALLIANCE RESOLUTION COMMITTING MEMBERS TO SCALING UP
THEIR RESILIENCE TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND CALLING
FOR THE SUPPORT OF ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

Submitted by the Climate Alliance European Secretariat

BACKGROUND

Despite best mitigation efforts, our climate will keep on changing and affecting local communities. The effects of climate change are already being seen in local authorities¹ across Europe and beyond. As major centres for public and private services, they are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events such as storms, floods, heat waves and droughts. Such events can have dramatic consequences for economic development and social cohesion. Climate change mitigation alone will therefore not be enough. Local authorities need to anticipate the adverse effects of climate change and make their territories more resilient to its unavoidable impacts. However, most of them do not have an adaptation strategy in place yet.

Over the last 15 years, Climate Alliance and its members have gained a broad experience in adaptation through several EU-funded projects (e.g. **AMICA**, **KlimaScout**, **TURAS**, **SEAP-Alps**), EU initiatives (**Covenant of Mayors/Mayors Adapt**), its dedicated **working group**, its **policy work** (e.g. Committee of the Regions **opinion on the review of the EU adaptation strategy**) as well as various events. Through reinforcing partnerships and working more closely together, Climate Alliance members want to lead by example.

¹ In the following, the term “local authorities” includes sub-national administrative units of a country such as, villages, towns, cities, metropolitan areas, districts, provinces and regions.

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RESOLUTION TEXT

Climate Alliance members acknowledge that:

- Although emission reduction efforts are already underway, adaptation remains a necessary and indispensable complement to mitigation in responding to climate change. Both climate mitigation and adaptation actions at local level should therefore be considered in an integrated way.
- Local authorities stand at the frontline of improving the resilience of their territories to the various impacts of climate change – in particular in their fields of action (e.g. the environment, spatial planning, public health, civil protection, risk management, energy, waste and water management, flood control). Adaptation therefore requires a long-term holistic approach.
- By implementing adaptation solutions, they make their territories more resilient but also more liveable, healthier and safer for their citizens.
- Adaptation brings new opportunities to engage the public and other stakeholders in order to work closely together and jointly take on responsibility. It also fosters interactions between research, science and policy.
- Climate change aggravates the living conditions of many people in the Global South to such an extent that they cannot adapt anymore and are subject to an ever-increasing pressure to leave their homes.

In line with its **climate action principles** as well as the **Covenant of Mayors** pillars which Climate Alliance has endorsed and promoted for a number of years, **Climate Alliance members seek to show political leadership by:**

- Scaling up their efforts and action to not only mitigate but also adapt to climate change.
- Raising awareness on the need to take action on adaptation among municipal administrative staff, local politicians, citizens and other stakeholders.
- Developing a sound understanding of the climate risks and vulnerabilities on their territory to further guide their climate policy shaping and action planning processes.
- Designing the necessary policy instruments, incorporating climate change adaptation solutions into relevant plans and implementing concrete adaptation measures.
- Initiating or reinforcing partnerships with local communities most affected by climate change (e.g. their indigenous counterparts and other peers in the Global South).
- Increasing readiness to receive on their territories persons who immigrate to Europe – and therefore to European local authorities – due to climate change as an additional factor.

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While Climate Alliance members – with the support of their networks and regions – will seek to manage climate resilience, much more could be achieved if the European (EU) and national frameworks were stronger, as well as if they conferred cities the necessary mandate and allocated them sufficient resources for adapting properly. EU institutions and national governments should work to secure strong support for local authorities, including addressing gaps in capacity and funding for climate adaptation measures, as well as responding to climate-induced migration. This is why **Climate Alliance members call upon European and national authorities to:**

- Continue their recent efforts in mainstreaming adaptation considerations into legislation and funds that support the design and implementation of local and sub-national adaptation plans.
- Encourage stronger collaboration between the different levels of government (European Union, national governments, regional and local authorities) to maximise synergies between the strategies and plans developed – and thus ensure greater policy coherence but also coordinated and complementary action.
- Further support the set up of exchange platforms between stakeholders from different policy fields and with complementary skill sets (e.g. scientists and researchers, citizens and businesses, but also insurance companies, civil protection authorities, non-governmental organisations and other relevant actors - such as Local Agenda 21 networks).
- Consolidate efforts to create an enabling framework for capacity building in cities and regions, providing them with services adapted to their local circumstances.
- Designate climate action as a compulsory responsibility of local authorities.
- Facilitate experience sharing between peers who face similar climate impacts through adequate mentoring or twinning activities.
- Provide local authorities with further guidance and support on how to access and apply to the existing (mainstreamed or more adaptation-specific) financing instruments as well as to prepare viable investments.
- Further explore possibilities of pre-conditions to fast-track access to funds for committed local and regional authorities having developed risk and vulnerability assessments or climate adaptation action plans.
- Equip local and regional authorities with the appropriate monitoring, reporting and evaluation tools and indicators to inform and support local adaptation planning.
- Support the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy as the umbrella initiative that fosters the emergence of relevant governance and cooperation schemes and offers tailor-made support to signatory municipalities.

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THE CLIMATE ALLIANCE

For more than 25 years, Climate Alliance member municipalities have been acting in partnership with indigenous rainforest peoples for the benefit of the global climate. With some 1,700 members spread across 26 European countries, Climate Alliance is the world's largest city network dedicated to climate action and the only one to set tangible targets: each member city, town and district has committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent every 5 years. Recognising the impact our lifestyles can have on the world's most vulnerable people and places, Climate Alliance pairs local action with global responsibility. climatealliance.org