



REGIONS:
a solution to climate change



Territorial Approach to Climate Change
a global partnership between
the United Nations and sub-national governments



THE CLIMATE GROUP



The next 10 years will be critical for the future of our planet. Radical measures must be taken before we are locked into potentially irreversible, catastrophic climate transformations, whose impacts are expected to substantially change the environment that sustains our lives on this planet.

Major challenges of current climate policies

Avoiding catastrophic climate change will not be easy. The world is already struggling to meet the Kyoto target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 5.2% compared to 1990 levels and with 2007 emissions at 11% above 1990 levels, the risk is high that it will not be met. Moreover, the Global Environment Outlook 4 asserts that even if atmospheric concentrations of GHGs were to be stabilized today, land and ocean temperatures would increase for decades and sea levels would rise for centuries. Therefore, adaptation to climate change is necessary and urgent, even if mitigation measures are rapidly implemented.

New types of policies, partnerships and instruments, which dramatically scale up present climate change efforts, will be needed. These must be cross-sectoral and programmatic to ensure sufficient gains across all sectors of the economy.

The project-by-project approach under the current Kyoto regime is unlikely to generate the kind of transformation that can be achieved through large scale programs.

Clean Development Mechanism Projects (CDMs) have had limited impact in terms of countries and sectors. For example, 60-80% of CDM projects have concentrated in 4 countries and almost entirely bypassed the least developed countries.

Furthermore, when aimed to be more programmatic such as the National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs), current approaches to climate change have not been satisfactorily implemented.

The 2007/2008 UNDP Human Development Report estimates that stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, at a level that prevents catastrophic climate change, will require a 50% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 from 1990 levels. The target reduction can be realized through emissions reductions of ~1.5% per year, provided such reductions begin today. However, if actions are delayed by approximately 8 to 10 years, the future declines required to realize the target reduction will have to be greater than 3%, a reduction rate widely regarded as beyond current technological means.



The emergence of sub-national governments as key players

Sub-national governments are actors of growth and have an impact on how their national economy performs. They have also been active in mobilizing expertise, funds and private sector investment for development in the form of region-to-region cooperation that is gradually growing in importance within development aid.

Sub-national authorities can complement national-level efforts to pave the way to a low carbon economy that will not only avert the climate crisis but will open a new chapter in development ensuring sustainable energy and food security, the robustness of infrastructure services and the creation of new jobs and economic opportunities. They represent a link sufficiently close to the people where projects will be implemented and sufficiently elevated to integrate projects into public policies and planning processes to ensure wider development impacts on their territories.

Sub-national governments are territorial units directly under the national governments. Depending upon the country, sub-national governments may be referred to states, provinces, regions, prefectures, territories etc.

Adaptation to climate change is very site-dependent, and local planning decisions will be critical to tailoring adaptation action to conditions in which it will take place. Similarly, from 50% to 80% of GHG emissions are influenced by local behavior and investment choices.



An Innovative Solution

Within national policies and frameworks, the territorial approach targets sub-national authorities who are critical to implement climate policies. To operationalize the approach, the Down to Earth: Territorial Approach to Climate Change (TACC) programme was set up. It facilitates the exchange between sub-national governments in developing and developed countries that will result in emission reductions and greater resilience to climate change. It will also enable sub-national governments to adopt a more sustainable development model.

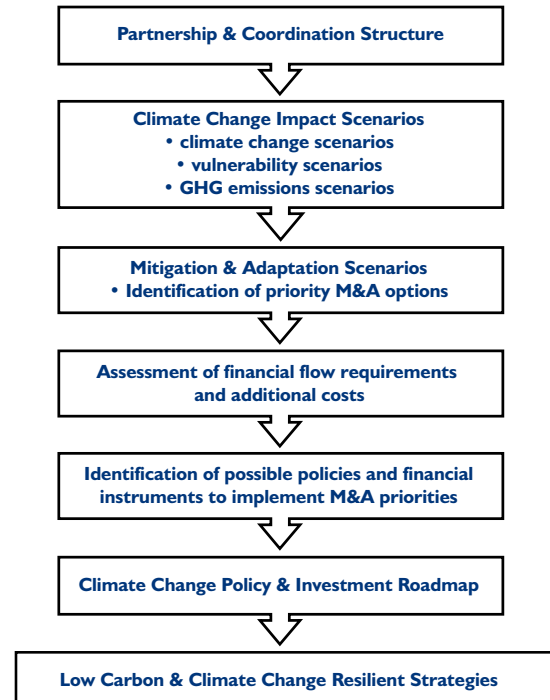
TACC helps sub-national governments:

- access and use up-to-date climate change science, information, tools and good practices.
- put in place a partnership and local governance framework to address the cross-sectoral nature of climate change.
- develop a local climate profile (assessment of present and future climate risks, adaptive capacity needs and energy service provision referred to in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scenarios and recommendations),
- draft a climate change strategy and action plan (Integrated Territorial Climate Plan or ITCP) in line with national climate policies to ensure a programmatic approach to climate change
- identify, assess and prioritize projects within the ITCP to be funded combining and sequencing different financing opportunities including the carbon market.



Outcomes

- Capacity to identify risk and opportunities related to climate change at the sub-national level
- Capacity of sub-national governments to contribute to the implementation efforts of national governments
- Capacity to integrate climate change into development planning at the sub-national level
- Capacity to identify, sequence and combine financial mechanisms to fund climate change and development projects
- Capacity to generate a pipeline of investment-ready and creditworthy projects



Developing low carbon and climate resilient strategies at the sub-national level



As a first step, through a multi-stakeholder participatory process, the TACC programme seeks to map capacities, priorities, training and information needs in order to promote demand driven cooperation projects.

Guidebooks and methodologies

There is growing interest in integrating climate change into development but little consensus on the way forward and few concrete models available. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has developed a number of methodologies and tools to guide sub-national governments in this process:

- **Charting a New Low-Carbon Route to Development: A Primer on Integrated Climate Change Planning for Regional Governments:** to explore this innovative and promising approach UNDP has collected, analyzed and consolidated practice and theory on sub-national level climate action, which is now available to the public;
- **Developing an Integrated Territorial Climate Change Plan** describes the key options for establishing a partnership policy platform;
- **Climate Change Impact Scenarios Vulnerability Mapping the Technology Needs Assessment Handbook** and a series of technical documents (Energy and GHG Assessment) explain the steps in setting medium- to long term mitigation and adaptation targets that balance development and environmental goals and identify and implement strategies for realizing these targets.
- **UNDP Climate Change Policy and Investment Handbook** assists regional authorities to identify the most appropriate combination of policy instruments as well as to assess and access different sources of climate change funding to finance the activities.



Technical Support

UNDP/ClimSAT supports the development of possible climate change impact scenarios at the sub-national level, including historical and future climate data, vulnerability mapping and emission scenarios. ClimSAT partners with other UN agencies, space agencies, academic and research institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, meteorological institutions and centres of excellence worldwide.



Climate portal for sub-national governments

Based on its experience with the Climate Neutral Network, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will host a web-based interactive portal dedicated to sub-national governments that will provide access to:

- a) Tools and methodologies relevant to the sub-national level;
- b) Best practices in climate change adaptation and mitigation of sub-national territories;
- c) Opportunities for North-South and South-South interaction and networking among sub-national authorities.

The Climate Neutral Network, a web-based project managed by UNEP, is seeking to federate nations, regions, local authorities, communities, associations and businesses who are pledging to significantly reduce emissions en route to zero emission economies. With over 100 members, this initiative assists in catalyzing a global response to global warming achieving a transition to a low carbon and eventually climate neutral society through information exchange and networking.
<http://www.unep.org/climateneutral>



The agreement

The TACC partnership was launched at the first World Summit of Regional Governments on Climate Change in Saint-Malo (France) in October 2008. Eight associations of sub-national governments representing more than 1000 sub-national governments signed a partnership agreement with UNDP and UNEP: Global Forum for Associations of Regions (FOGAR); Assembly of European Regions (ARE), International Association of Francophone Regions (AIRF), Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR); Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD), the Northern Forum, The Climate Group and Organization of Latin American Intermediary Governments (OLAGI).

Sub-national governments

Sometimes considered as laboratories for country-wide action, sub-national authorities play a key role in fighting climate change and have developed considerable experience in this field. In the TACC Programme, sub-national authorities and their associations receive and share expertise, funds and networking opportunities with their counterparts.

Sub-national governments are often forerunners of advanced climate policies: for example, North American states and provinces as well as European regions have established mandatory, long-term GHG emission reduction goals and similar progress can be witnessed elsewhere for example in the State of Sao Paulo in Brazil or in the Province of Western Cape in South Africa.

The UN system

UNDP

In charge of the overall programme management UNDP provides:

- Technical assistance to develop climate change investment and policy roadmaps, based on its 15 years of worldwide experience in the implementation of adaptation and mitigation projects as well as in delivering environmental finance services
- Operational management in the field through its network of 166 country offices
- Mobilization of funds and partnership management
- Financial and administrative management

UNEP

As the UN designated entity for addressing environmental issues, UNEP has more than 30 years of experience providing leadership and encouraging partnership in caring for the environment. Within the TACC programme UNEP has the lead responsibility for:

- Organizing awareness raising workshops on five continents covering 500 sub-national territories to help them access and utilize up-to-date climate change science, information tools, methodologies and good practices. The workshops will facilitate the identification and selection of sub-national territories that will engage in the development and implementation of Integrated Territorial Climate Plans within national plans. The workshops will bring together practitioners from sub-national and central governments, NGOs, private sector and other relevant stakeholders.
- Assisting sub-national governments and their associations to set up and access the web-based portal.

Other UN entities have joined the partnership including:

the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).



Private sector

The know-how, expertise and capital of the business sector is sought through its associations such as International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the International Energy Agency (IEA), E8 and the World Energy Congress (WEC) as well as through the commitment of individual companies.





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How to get involved?

Sub-national authorities interested in learning about the territorial approach to climate change are encouraged to participate in the relevant regional workshops organized by UNEP. For countries interested in formulating and implementing a TACC project in specific sub-national territories, a letter of endorsement is required from the respective sub-national government as well as a letter of endorsement from the national government in consultation with their respective UNFCCC focal point. Once a national project concept is endorsed by the national government, UNDP will organize a project formulation mission, provide technical advice and assist in the preparation of a tailored TACC project document.

