

Milano, December 10, 2003

Statement of the Climate Alliance of European Cities with Indigenous Rainforest Peoples

The important role of local governments for the implementation of climate policy is increasingly recognized on the national level and within this process. We are appreciating this very much.

At this COP, the Climate Alliance was able to present outstanding activities of municipalities, that have e. g. led to 25% to 30% greenhouse gas emissions reductions within the own facilities of local authorities, compared to 1990 levels, substantial reductions in the energy sector through energy efficient buildings, heating and cooling systems, and even stopping the trend to ever-increasing emissions from the transport sector. Moreover, local authorities mainstream climate issues into public procurement, waste management, forestry and agriculture, they influence consumption patterns of citizens, raise awareness among young people and work with small and medium sized local business.

In some areas, the contribution of local authorities is crucial. Without urban planning for low-carbon mobility, and without local authorities initiating appropriate constellations of actors for very efficient small and medium scale solutions, a substantial part of the existing potential for GHG reduction cannot be tapped. Moreover, climate change being only one of several driving forces of local policy, local authorities seek for, and have already found in many cases, solutions that combine greenhouse gas reductions, sustainable urban development, better livability of cities, and job creation.

Currently, there are several thousand local governments world-wide that have entered commitments to climate protection and are implementing local mitigation programs. However, the majority of local governments did not do so, as yet.

Therefore, we call upon national governments to

- Recognize the role of the local level and remove legal and financial barriers towards local action
- Support training and capacity building for local authorities
- Encourage local authorities to draw up and implement local mitigation programs, and
- Involve them in the national programs, as important actors for dissemination and implementation.

The Climate Alliance and other city networks have developed appropriate methodologies for local action and would be pleased to offer help.

Local governments have been attending and presenting their efforts and achievements at the UN climate conferences since COP1 in Berlin, highlighting their commitments, policies and measures on the ground.

At this COP, we would like to get a step further in order to be involved more directly. We call upon this conference, in addition to the important work on modalities and rules, to address the scope and role of local level climate policy, and to start a continuing debate on the complementarity and coherence of local, regional, national, and international policies to cut greenhouse gas emissions.



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