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# **Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development nrg4SD**

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## **Mid-term Review of 2008-2014 Strategy**

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for the nrg4SD Secretariat

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## Executive Summary

This paper reviews nrg4SD's current 2008-2014 Strategy. It provides an evaluation of the goals, strategies and tools suggested in the Strategy; it highlights a number of relevant international trends and it appraises recent achievements of the network. It finally makes a series of recommendations designed to serve as the founding blocks of an updated, 2012-2018 Strategy.

The 2008-2014 Strategy sets a sequential order of priorities for the network, made of the following elements:

- **A Content Strategy**, designed (1) to increase technical know-how through cooperation and capacity-building projects between members and (2) to elaborate policy papers and to contribute to international consultations.
- **A New Governance Strategy**, which aims to rethink the network's governance, finance and structure.
- [After achieving the Content and Governance Strategies], **A Voice Strategy** designed to achieve greater international recognition and to fulfil the network's role of representing regions at the international level.
- Finally, a **Communication and Partnerships Strategy and a Membership Strategy**.

The analysis finds that some of the main objectives set out in the Strategy are quickly being reached. The network is achieving results, developing content and adding value both for its members and to the global agenda. As foreseen, the Content Strategy has also led to increased international recognition for both nrg4SD and subnational governments, as a constituency growing in relevance and influence.

It also finds that, given current level of resources, the network is risking overextension and over commitment. The current pace of development clearly appears unsustainable. The network – and most particularly its Secretariat - is now fully engaged on at least three major processes within the global sustainable agenda (Biodiversity, Climate Change and Rio+20). It is also facing growing expectations from key partners, including many UN bodies.

This analysis therefore makes 5 recommendations to the network:

### Recommendation 1 – That the 2008-2014 Strategy be updated

The current Strategy has proven successful, by and large, within a very short period of time. This success remains fragile as the network faces a growing discrepancy between existing commitments and available resources. The focus of an updated Strategy should thus be slightly modified, from development on all fronts to (1) consolidation of existing commitments, (2) increase in available resources and (3) deepening of involvement within key UN processes, namely Climate Change, Biodiversity and Rio+20.

**Recommendation 2 – That the level of resources available to the network be greatly expanded**

The network's current commitments and activities far exceed the level of resources available to carry them out successfully. Under current levels, additional development would rapidly prove even more unsustainable. A benchmarking exercise conducted in the Summer of 2011 concludes that nrg4SD operates - in both finances and staff - with the smallest level of resources among similar organisations representing regions at continental and international levels, even the smaller ones. This also holds true for other constituencies (businesses, NGOs) involved in sustainable development issues within key UN processes. An updated Strategy would have to include an analysis of the level and nature of resources needed to fulfil the objectives of the network, as well as an action plan designed to obtain them.

**Recommendation 3 – That a regular evaluation process by members be established**

An updated Strategy should integrate a regular evaluation process by members. The network should always strive to support members achieving some of their objectives, in the context of the organisation's founding principles and objectives. The Strategy should thus aim at creating increasing value for the members.

**Recommendation 4 – That new key members should be invited to join, especially federated states and regions from North America and the Global South**

Given their extended jurisdictions and their increasing willingness to implement effective policies over sustainable development issues, key federated states and regions from both North America and the Global South would make ideal additions to the network's existing base of members. These two subsets of its constituency could become the network's « new frontiers ».

**Recommendation 5 – That a communication plan for the network be developed**

A simple communication plan would identify the network's core messages, help identify target audiences and select the proper channels of communication to reach them. It would prioritise among numerous communication tools, thus helping to concentrate resources more effectively. Such a communication plan could be annexed to an updated version of the Strategy.

## **A few words about the author - Hugo Séguin**

Over the last twenty years, Hugo Séguin has worked in the government and finance sectors in Ottawa, Quebec and Montreal. He studied International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (Ottawa) and Political Science at the University of Montreal.

Deputy Head of Cabinet to the Ministry of Environment of Quebec from 2002 to 2003, Hugo later joined the environmental organisation Équiterre where he currently holds the position of Senior Advisor. He has devoted many years to political and governmental dialogue in the areas of transport, energy and climate change as well as being closely involved in the United Nations (UN) international climate change negotiations

He has served as a member of the Board of Greenpeace Canada (2006-2009) and Climate Action Network International (CAN-I) from 2007 to 2008, an organisation of over 700 NGOs working in the field of climate action. Since 2009, he served as President to the Board of Climate Action Network Canada.

As a research associate at the Centre of International Studies of Montreal (CEMI), Hugo also teaches international eco-politics at the School of Applied Politics, University of Sherbrooke.

## Introduction

This paper reviews the current 2008-2014 Strategy governing the work of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD). It provides an evaluation of the goals, strategies and tools suggested in the Strategy; it highlights a number of relevant international trends and it appraises recent achievements of the network. It finally makes a series of recommendations designed to serve as the founding blocks of an updated, 2012-2018 Strategy.

## Mission Statement / The Gauteng Declaration

The organisation's founding document – the *Gauteng Declaration* (2002), and especially its paragraphs 8 and 9, describes the purpose of the network:

*« (...) to establish a global network [of regional governments] for sharing information and expertise about sustainable development (...) and promoting collaboration. [This network] should form a basis for cooperative projects or programmes that contribute to [a] shared learning process. » (par.8)*

Signatories to the Declaration invite other regional governments around the world to join in the development of this network and call upon the international and global communities *« to recognise and support the necessary and essential role of (...) regional governments »*. (par.9)

The 2008-2014 Strategy spells out what could be labelled a mission statement, based on the network's four main « missions »: (1) Exchanging information and experience on policy making in the field of sustainable development; (2) Promoting understanding, collaboration and partnerships between regions; (3) Promoting specific actions and events ; (4) Seeking greater international recognition of the role played by regions. This mission statement reads:

*« [F]or regions to have a voice in international fora, to be heard and to contribute to the global sustainable development agenda, according to its own continental and local priorities »*

ˆ Strategy, 2008-2014, p.12

## Past and Current Strategies

Informed by the Gauteng Declaration and its original missions, the network's first Strategy (2005-2011) spelled out three main priorities: (1) gaining international visibility and voice; (2) sharing expertise and know-how, developing cooperation agreements and partnerships and providing technical assistance to regions; and (3) helping regions find concrete solutions to sustainable development policy. The first one – gaining international visibility and recognition, was considered the network's top priority, with the third – support for member regions, receiving less attention.

In the Spring of 2007, the network's Steering Committee asked for an evaluation of the 2005-2011 Strategy Document and developed a new Strategy based on its results. The evaluation, entitled *« A New Strategy for the Years 2008-2014 »*, conducted by a team of the University of the Basque Country led by Dr. J. Bengoetxea, became the foundation of nrg4SD current Strategy. The team conducted interviews with members, sent questionnaires and participated in various meetings.

Among its findings, the team noted that members valued their participation in the network, seen as a platform for sharing knowledge and as a voice in international *fora*. They noted, however, that the network generated few concrete cooperation projects among members and produced few products in the form of policy papers or capacity-building workshops. While the network seemed to have gained a certain level of international recognition, the team wrote that its main challenge was to prove how it could add value to the global agenda and how it could mobilise concrete, on the ground cooperation projects, especially between developed and developing regions<sup>1</sup>.

The evaluation team identified main areas of improvement, encouraging the network to:

- Develop products and concrete cooperation programmes, with an emphasis on innovation, capacity-building, adding value for members and for the global sustainable development agenda, and the importance of disseminating the knowledge thus gained.
- Clarify the network's governance structure, functions and operations, especially lines of communications, as members not identified as continental focal points seem relegated to second-class status, and while too little horizontal communication between members was taking place. Statutory meetings of the network also seemed too routine and not strategic enough, a disincentive for political leaders from member regions to attend and participate in a meaningful way.
- Pursue its work to become a recognised voice of regional governments at the international level. To achieve this goal, the network's main challenge was to demonstrate its relevance and how it could add value, especially from a North-South perspective.

While the 2005-2011 Strategy called for the international recognition of subnational governments as the first priority of the network, the evaluation team asked the fundamental question:

*« It is important to give regional governments a voice in international sustainable development fora, but a voice to say what? »*<sup>2</sup>. The answers to this question became, in effect, the foundation of the current 2008-2014 Strategy.

### Current 2008-2014 Strategy

The current Strategy calls for the development of a variety of value-added « products » by the network and its members, demonstrating their know-how and expertise on a large number of issues at the core of sustainable development. It also calls for concrete and efficient partnerships between members, especially from a North-South perspective. Only then, the Strategy suggests, can the network offer its added value to the global agenda and seek recognition.

Thus the 2008-2014 Strategy sets a new order of priorities for the network<sup>3</sup>, made of the following elements, also labelled « strategies »:

- **A Content Strategy**, designed (1) to increase technical know-how through cooperation and capacity-building projects between members - ideally financed by the UN or other

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<sup>1</sup> A New Strategy for the Years 2008-2014, p.6-9

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp.11-12

<sup>3</sup> The 2008-2014 Strategy, although using mostly the same vocabulary (i.e. Voice Strategy, Governance Strategy, Communication Strategy) is not explicitly organized along these lines. We have tried to reorganize the text more systematically.

international bodies such as the EU; and (2) to elaborate policy papers and to contribute to international consultations<sup>4</sup>.

- **A New Governance Strategy**, which aims to rethink the network's governance, finance and structure in order to clarify members' expected commitments in terms of resources and level of political representation.
- [After achieving the Content and Governance Strategies], **A Voice Strategy**, supported by demonstrated and relevant expertise. « *The voice strategy requires giving this voice a content* », states the Strategy<sup>5</sup>. The aim of the Voice Strategy is to achieve greater international recognition and to fulfil the network's role of representing regions at the international level.
- Fourthly, a **Communication and Partnerships Strategy**, internal and external, aimed at demonstrating how nrg4SD can contribute to sustainable development and deliver value. The network brings a new perspective, new know-how, new projects, as well as the enhanced capacity of mobilising whole sectors of society.
- Finally, a **Membership Strategy**, designed to increase the number of regions taking part in the network.

### Current Work Programme (2008-2011)

The network's 2008-2011 Work Programme constitutes the first implementation plan of the 2008-2014 Strategy. In support to the Content Strategy, the Work Programme focuses on three core areas: climate change, biodiversity and water and sanitation issues. It then identifies a number of objectives and tools: (1) Developing bilateral and multilateral partnerships among members and their associations, ideally supported by, and involving UN or other international bodies (i.e. EU); (2) Developing capacity-building initiatives (projects and workshops); (3) Organising and participating at events; (4) Developing and updating a list of members' best practices and (5) Adopting and implementing policy papers on relevant issues.

In support to the Governance Strategy, the Work Programme seeks to set up internal Commissions (thematic or geographical) and to prepare a Secretariat proposal to address the expected level of political representation by members as well as the periodicity of meetings. In support to the Voice Strategy, the Work Programme identifies two main objectives

1. The recognition and accreditation of the Network as an Inter-Governmental Organisation (IGO) before the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
2. The creation of a special constituency by the United Nations and, particularly, in the context of the UNFCCC, for regional networks like nrg4SD.

More generally, it also seeks (3) to contribute to all international or global sustainable development strategies that are being developed and discussed at the international level, through the production of policy papers and reports, and participation to, or organisation of, side-events. It

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<sup>4</sup> Content being « *concrete sustainable development projects, in the form of cooperation agreements, technical assistance, aid, etc.* ». The Strategy in effect advocates a strategy of fireworks of high-quality products, showing value to the global agenda and international actors.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p.12

calls for (4) the network's participation to relevant consultation processes at the international or continental levels, as well as to (5) international *fora* and events.

In support to the Communication and Partnerships Strategy, the Work Programme calls on members to share information and better communicate their objectives among themselves and with the Secretariat, as well as helping raise awareness about the network (Internal Communication). It also empowers the Secretariat to develop working relationships with other relevant organisations, including UN bodies, through direct representation or otherwise. The Secretariat is also requested to make better use of its website and newsletter (external communication).

## Achievements under the Current Strategy and Work Programme<sup>6</sup> (2010-2011)

This preliminary review shows that nrg4SD seems to have systematically followed some of the main elements of its 2008-2014 Strategy, albeit with a few exceptions outlined below. The following section identifies key achievements under each heading of the 2008-2014 Strategy and provides a summary appraisal for each of them.

### Content Strategy

Firstly, following the **Content Strategy**, the network (including some of its more involved members and its newly established permanent Secretariat) has generated an increasing *corpus* of expertise, mostly in the form of position and advocacy papers on relevant issues such as climate change, sustainable development, as well as water and sanitation. Work has also begun on other emerging issues such as sustainable consumption and production, and the influence of regional governments on the development of the Green Economy. It has started generating new content, notably through the initial work of some on the newly created working groups on climate change advocacy, climate finance, biodiversity, water and sanitation. It has also timely released and promoted newly generated expertise at key international *fora*, often in the context of side-events with major partners (UN-Habitat, ICLEI, EU). Among others, it is worth mentioning:

- The IV meeting of the Network for Latin America and the Caribbean with a focus on water issues, co-organised with Buenos Aires and its OPDS (November 2010)
- Cancun -30. European event in preparation to UNFCCC COP 16 (September 2010)
- UNFCCC COP16 – Ministerial breakfasts co-organised with ANAAE, CONAGO and Quintana Roo and side event co-organised with The Climate Group (December 2010).
- Two meetings of the Technical Working Group on Climate Financing, with 1 held jointly with the climate advocacy working group (2011)
- First meeting of WG on Plan of Action on biodiversity (January 2011)
- « *The city-region approach to the green economy* » side event co-organised with UNHabitat, ICLEI, NRG4SD (March 2011)

The organisation has participated in various EU initiatives on some cross-cutting sustainable development issues. The network has also delivered on capacity-building through a course on water issues (provided by the Water Agency of the Basque Country) and has signed a new MOU on Water and Sanitation issues for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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<sup>6</sup> The scope of this evaluation only covers events and developments occurring over the period 2010-2011.

The organisation is also investing time, resources and expertise on the process leading up to the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, which will also mark its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The organisation has indeed been created in 2002 to foster sustainable development at the subnational level and to become a voice of federated states and subnational jurisdictions within the global process. The network has thus become an active participant at key international consultations, most notably one conducted by the Global Sustainability Panel set-up by the UN Secretary General in the context of the upcoming Rio+20 Summit.

**Appraisal:** the network is trying, and for the most part, seems to be succeeding at becoming a focused, refined, timely and evidence-based contributor to the global sustainable development agenda on three core themes: climate, biodiversity and water and sanitation, as well as on some preparation work leading to Rio+20. The 2008-2014 Strategy's main objective of « giving this voice a content » is quickly starting to take shape. As foreseen, the implementation of the Content Strategy has attracted attention, and the network's input is now being sought. Finally, new dynamics seem to have been created among more active members involved in the various working groups, this adding value to their membership. These dynamics seem to be contributing to the consolidation of the organisation around its original game plan and work programme, lead by a core group of more active members showing increasing ownership of the network.

### Governance Strategy

Secondly, on **Governance**, the network has established its first, permanent Secretariat and hired a very capable Secretary General as its sole, full-time employee. This Secretariat has been up and running since September 2010. However, the network still needs to review its formal governance model – including its statutes – in order to reflect the goals and vision set by the Strategy.

**Appraisal:** Despite governance problems having been identified for quite some time, the network has so far dedicated little time reviewing its statutes and the level and nature of commitments expected from members. Nonetheless, the establishment of a permanent Secretariat has clearly helped consolidate the network. Yet, the network does not seem to have come to grip with some important governance issues – such as the relatively undefined role of the co-chairs and vice-chairs, as well as the level of political commitment expected from members. Finally, many issues related to internal communication – both in terms of its nature and frequency – will eventually have to be resolved, especially on the question of reporting from members entrusted with more responsibilities.

### Voice Strategy

Thirdly, directly following the **Voice Strategy**, the network has achieved meaningful recognition by various bodies inside the UN system, first for itself - as key representative of subnational governments, and also for its constituency as a whole. Subnational governments have been recognised as key actors under both the UN Convention on biodiversity (Nagoya, 2010) and the UN Framework Convention of Climate Change (Cancun, 2010), following intense advocacy work by members of nrg4SD, its Secretariat, and a number of key allies. The network has been

increasingly identified as the voice of subnational governments under these two UN processes, as well as a key stakeholder in the lead-up to the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, notably on the issue of finding ways to improve global environmental governance. Among others, it is worth mentioning:

- Work on the process leading up to Rio+20, nrg4SD having been accredited to UNEP Governing Council within the Local Authorities Major Groups.
- Work on the implementation of the newly adopted *Plan of Action on Subnational government, Cities and Local Authorities* under the UN CBD, as well as participation to the *Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments for Biodiversity*. The network is recognised in the official text of the Plan of Action as a platform for assisting the UN CBD on the implementation of the Plan of Action and the establishment of the Advisory Committee. nrg4SD has been invited by the UN CBD to join the Global Partnership for Biodiversity.
- Work under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on enhancing observers' participation. nrg4SD has also gained observer status under the *Local Government and Municipal Authorities* (LGMA) constituency. More recently, the Cancun Agreements adopted at COP16 have recognised subnational governments and local authorities as 'governmental stakeholders'.

**Appraisal:** The network – and the constituency it represents - have clearly gained increased international recognition within three key UN processes: UNFCCC, UNCBD and Rio+20. Many major actors now count on the network to become an active, relevant and constructive player in many relevant fora. The level of expectations has thus been increased, especially in the context of the upcoming Rio+20 Summit. Despite extremely limited resources, the network is positioning itself as the main voice of an emerging and key constituency on sustainable development, seeking to benefit from this strategic window of opportunity. The level of commitment and contribution asked from the network has grown accordingly.

### Communication and Partnerships Strategy

Also, on the **Communication and Partnerships Strategy**, the network has outreached to other international or regional actors, renewing old alliances and increasing the number of working partners. Members of the UN Family - such as UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNEP UNCSO, UN Habitat, UNDP/NGO, UNNGLS, UNGSP, now prominently feature as key partners of the network. Relations with EU institutions have been renewed, others strengthened or developed – FOGAR, The Northern Forum, ICLEI, UCLG, The Climate Group, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations de France (CDC-Climat), among others. Also, a first issue of a newsletter has been produced, as well as an improved website going online in 2011.

**Appraisal:** Outreach to other actors seems to have been highly successful, with the network now ideally positioned to fulfil many of its objectives. Outreach to current

members has also picked up steam, although more slowly, with the publication of a first edition of a newsletter.

## Membership Strategy

Finally, and despite existing commitment from existing members to recruit new ones, the **Membership Strategy** seems to be in a dormant stage for now, this review reporting no activity in this regard.

**Appraisal:** The 2008-2014 Strategy's main trust was for the network to prove itself by adding value to the global sustainable agenda through the Content Strategy, the Governance Strategy and the Voice Strategy. Only then could the network be in a position to expand its membership. The network has now gained increased international recognition and is developing timely and relevant content, thus paving the way for a potential membership drive.

## Analysis

The following section provides a general appraisal of where the network stands in light of its 2008-2014 Strategy. It also explores some major changes in the international environment that are proving relevant to the network and its members.

Firstly, the network seems to be closely following both its current Strategy and Work Programme. Some of the main objectives set out in the Strategy are quickly being reached. The network is getting results, developing content and adding value both for its members and to the global agenda. As foreseen, the Content Strategy has also led to increased international recognition for both nrg4SD and subnational governments, as a constituency growing in relevance and influence.

Secondly, given current level of resources, the network is risking overextension and over commitment. The current pace of development clearly appears unsustainable. The network – and most particularly its Secretariat - is now fully engaged on at least three major processes within the global sustainable agenda. Thanks to the success of its effective lobbying, the network is now a valued participant in a number of strategic discussions under, notably:

- The *Plan of Action on Subnational government, Cities and Local Authorities* and The *Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments for Biodiversity* of the UNCBD.
- The enhancement of observers' participation within the UNFCCC and active participation at the international climate negotiations on behalf of members.
- The various processes leading up to Rio+20.

On top of these commitments, the Secretariat – with very limited resources, has to provide support to the network's newly established working groups, to the co-chairs and to the regular meetings of the network. Current resources level does not allow development to continue and seems barely sufficient to cover existing commitments.

## Notable changes in the international environment

The last two years have led to the growing understanding that national governments, alone, cannot deliver the policies and political leadership needed to address the many current challenges to sustainable development. This leaves the door open to determined contributions by other actors, among which subnational governments are particularly well positioned to attain a relatively prominent status.

While national governments seem hardly capable of delivering the needed international regime necessary to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees C., a new global environmental governance model should – and is, slowly taking form, involving other actors. In 2010, both the Cancun Conference under the UNFCCC and the Nagoya Conference under the UNCBD opened the door to a more active involvement by other constituencies, including explicitly subnational governments. The Rio+20 process will also determine the global agenda and the work plan on sustainable development for at least the next decade and efforts are being made to harness the active involvement of these constituencies.

In this context, at least two particular subsets of regional actors seem to be emerging which could potentially greatly benefit the network. First, while developed countries of North America seem, on the surface, completely paralyzed on the issue of climate change, many US states and Canadian provinces are showing how effective and relevant regional governments and federated states can be. Many North American federated states, autonomously, have implemented the continent's first mandatory carbon market, have forced the adoption of tougher environmental regulations, introduced stringent carbon taxes and adopted tough emissions reduction plans and targets. These states and the dynamics they have put in motion, could add significant value to the network, which, until now, only counts one North American member, Québec. Second, the Global South, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and emerging economies, is rapidly gaining in political and economic strength and is seeking a much greater contribution to the global sustainable development agenda. Many regional jurisdictions from the Global South are demonstrating willingness and commitment to engage directly on issues such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, water and sanitation issues, and biodiversity. Recent international initiatives – such as UNDP's Territorial Approach – are starting to recognise the great potential of engaging regions from the North and the South and are starting to find innovative ways to support their participation.

The network's relevance and effectiveness could thus well gain from recruiting new members from both key federated North American states and provinces and regional jurisdictions from the Global South.

## Recommendations

This Mid-term Review of the network's 2008-2014 Strategy makes a number of preliminary recommendations.

### Recommendation 1 – That the 2008-2014 Strategy be updated

The rationale behind the current Strategy was to « *Give the voice a content* » in order to gain international recognition for both the network and its constituency. This Strategy – based on the development of content and « products », and then on the establishment of new international partnerships – has proven successful, by and large, within a very short period of time. These gains remain, on the other hand, fragile, as the network faces a growing discrepancy between existing commitments and available resources. Also, changes in the international environment are providing a very large window of opportunity for the network to fulfil its mission and objectives.

The focus of an updated Strategy should thus be slightly modified, from development on all fronts to (1) consolidation of existing commitments, (2) increase in available resources and (3) deepening of involvement within key UN processes, among which Climate Change, Biodiversity and Rio+20.

**Recommendation 2 – That the level of resources available to the network be greatly expanded**

The 2008-2014 Strategy, while advocating the development of initiatives on all fronts, omitted to indicate the level of resources needed to insure its implementation. Current commitments and activities of the network today – including providing value and services to members - far exceed the level of resources available to carry them successfully. Under current levels, additional development would rapidly prove even more unsustainable.

A benchmarking exercise conducted in the Summer of 2011 concludes that nrg4SD operates - in both finances and staff - with the smallest level of resources among similar organisations representing regions at continental and international levels, even the smaller ones. This also holds true for other constituencies (businesses, NGOs) involved in sustainable development issues within key UN processes such as Rio+20, biodiversity and climate change

An updated Strategy would have to include an analysis of the level and nature of resources needed to fulfil the objectives of the network, as well as an action plan designed to obtain them. An understanding of the structure and role of the Secretariat should also be part of this assessment.

**Recommendation 3 – That a regular evaluation process by members be established**

An updated Strategy should integrate a regular evaluation process by members. The network should always strive to support members achieving some of their objectives, in the context of the organisation's founding principles and objectives. The Strategy should thus aim at creating increasing value for the members.

**Recommendation 4 – That new key members should be invited to join, especially federated states and regions from North America and the Global South**

Given their extended jurisdictions and their increasing willingness to implement effective policies over key sustainable development issues, key federated North American states would make an ideal addition to the network's existing base of members. With only one North America member, Québec, the network is still missing an important piece of the constituency it represents. The same holds true for many subnational governments from the Global South, where the network has nowhere near achieved its full potential. These two subsets of its constituency could become the network's « new frontiers ».

**Recommendation 5 – That a communication plan for the network be developed**

A simple communication plan would identify the network's core messages, help identify main audiences and select the proper channels of communication to reach them. It would prioritise among numerous communication tools, thus helping to concentrate resources more effectively. Such a communication plan could be annexed to an updated version of the Strategy.