

**Message to UNEP's 26th GC/GMEF UNEP Roundtable 2 (chaired by France and Mali)
Nairobi, Kenya, 23 February 2011**

Delivered by Ms Maruxa Cardama, Secretary General of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development nrg4SD on behalf of Major Group "Local Authorities"

Madame Chairperson,

The Local Authorities Major Group calls on the 26th UNEP Governing Council to acknowledge the crucial role of subnational and local authorities towards the achievement of a Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. In order to transition to a Green Economy, an enhanced Global Environmental Governance is an essential tool. Global Environmental Governance constitutes an essential pillar of an efficient institutional framework for sustainable development.

Local and subnational authorities are often responsible for the development and implementation of laws, policies and strategies which contribute to sustainable development at all levels. Moreover local governments are the closest level of government to the citizens and therefore can ensure the inclusion and encourage the active participation of citizens in environmental governance. Besides, subnational governments and local authorities are well placed to capitalize on the demand for action by citizens and translate it into concrete action quickly.

All over the World and over the years, local authorities and subnational governments have been demonstrating in a number of ways that their contribution and leadership is essential to help achieve the ultimate objectives of sustainable development. The concrete initiatives of local authorities and subnational governments have significantly evolved over the past years and show that reconciling the goal of sustainable development with the green economy is feasible and it is actually happening.

The roles, skills and experiences of subnational governments and local authorities in fostering and consolidating a sustainable development should be strongly recognized at international level and better supported by national policies and resources.

Madame Chairperson,

Governance, defined as the design and execution of policies, needs to run through all levels: from the local and the subnational, via the national, to the global. Multilevel governance, as a condition for efficient policy making and implementation, implies interaction, synergy and complementarity between all levels.

Modern governance should recognize that that the efforts and initiatives of nation states become stronger when transposed and complemented by local authorities and subnational governments, as well as by key stakeholders. The important lessons being learned at the subnational and local levels can often feed into and enhance national policy.

Multilevel and multistakeholder Global Environmental Governance helps to turn the current and emerging environmental issues into opportunities. Such a positive interpretation generates hope and trust, and requires strong leadership. The economic, social and environmental challenges we are facing are crying out for a multilevel and multistakeholder Global Environmental Governance as one pillar of an institutional framework for sustainable development adapted to the current times.

Thank you very much!