



Network of Regional Governments
for Sustainable Development

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Brussels Extraordinary Steering Committee Meeting - Minutes

15 February 2010 – Delegation of Catalonia, Brussels, Belgium

Participants

Co-chairs

Catalonia	Mrs. Marta Subirá i Roca - Director General for Environmental Policies Mrs. Susanna Rivero Baughman – Responsible for External Action and Cooperation Ministry for Territory and and Sustainability
São Paulo	Mr. Fernando Cardozo Fernandes Rei Director-President of the Environmental Company of São Paulo CETESB
Aragón	Mrs. Natalia Vera - International Affairs Coordinator, Regional Ministry for the Environment Mr. Jesus Insausti López - Director of the Aragón International Centre for the Environment and Water
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	
Brittany VP Europe	Mr. Dominique Ramard - Delegate for Energy and Climate Change Mr Renaud Layadi - Advisor for International Networks Regional Council of Brittany
North Sumatra VP Point Asia	Dr. Ir. Hj. Hidayati, M.Si – Head of Environmental Board Dr. Rosdiana Simarmata, M.Si - Head of Environmental Management and EIA Division
<i>Treasury</i> CPMR	Mrs. Eleni Marianou - Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions CPMR
<i>Secretary General</i>	Mrs. Maruxa Cardama - Secretary General of nrg4SD
Basque Country	Mrs. Nieves Terán - Vice Minister for the Environment Mrs. Marta Marín - Delegate of the Basque Country Government to the EU Mr. Enrique Urrutia Director for Communications and Institutional Relations - Water Agency of the Basque Country Mrs. Eloísa Susaeta - Direction for the EU and Coordination of External Action of the Basque Country Government
Flanders	Mrs. Ine Baetens - Sustainable Development Adviser, Department of Services for Main Policies of the Flemish Government
Northern Burkina	Mr. Aboubacar Savadogo - President of the Regional Council of North Burkina and Secretary General of the Association of Regions of Burkina Faso



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Quebec	Mr. Charles Larochelle – Deputy Vice Minister for Climate Change, Air and Water, Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Parks Mr Vincent Royer - Coordinator for Climate Change, Ministry for International Relations Mrs. Michèle Fournier - Senior Adviser for Climate Change, Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Parks Mrs. Claude Audet Robitaille - Adviser on International Affairs, Ministry for International Relations Mr. Claude Côté – Adviser, Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Parks
Wales	Mr. Peredur John - Environmental Policy Officer, Welsh Assembly Government Brussels Office – upon delegation from Minister Mrs. Jane Davidson
Wallonia	Mr. Jean-Marie Wauthier – Director of the Environment Service, Wallonie-Bruxelles-International WBI

Delegated votes (proxy)

ANAAE – Secretary of State for sustainable development policies of Tabasco and Executive Secretary of ANAAE Ocean. Mrs. Silvia Whizar delegated her vote to São Paulo
Mbale – Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Andrew Mawejje delegated his vote to Wales

Apologies received

The Northern Forum
Western Cape



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Meeting Agenda	Comments and action points
Open Session	
<p><i>Discussion on the state of play of the Territorial Approach to Climate Change Programme (TACC) Programme with Ms. Berta Pesti, Technical Specialist on Climate Change and Partnerships - Hub for Innovative Partnerships Directorat, UNDP Geneva Office</i></p> <p>Ms. Pesti thanked the invitation, which she saw as an opportunity to relaunch the working relationship between UNDP's 'Hub for Innovation' in Geneva and nrg4SD members involved in TACC. Ms. Pesti gave a detailed presentation of the state of play of each ongoing TACC project and an outlook of potential future projects. Ms. Pesti also explained the new internal organisation in UNDP Geneva as regards the TACC Programme. Members thanked Ms. Pesti for the clarity and refreshed impulse with which she is dealing with the complex dossier of TACC. Members also expressed their frustration around what they consider lack of transparency, coherence and efficiency in the management of TACC. Ms. Pesti explained that UNDP acknowledges the disfonctionnalités of TACC so far, and detailed the tools that have been recently put in place to improve the general management of the programme. It was agreed to keep regular contact, identify possibilities for collaboration and increase the information flow.</p> <p>Northern Burkina expressed a keen interest on the development of climate action projects that would allow for a quick deployment of resources and action on the ground around specific themes such as renewables energies at household level. Wallonia highlighted its recent experience with the 'Fast Start Wallonia-Africa' as an example of this approach and proposed to provide Northern Burkina with more information.</p>	<p>Detailed presentation of the state of play of TACC projects and outlook of potential future projects. Explanation of new internal organisation. Acknowledgement of disfonctionnalités of TACC so far and explanation of tools for improvement. Agreement to keep regular contact, identify collaborations and increase info flow</p> <p>Interest in climate action projects from Northern Burkina. Wallonia's Fast Start as a good practice</p>
Closed session	
<p>Chaired by Catalonia</p> <p>1. Welcome and apologies – Apologies from Western Cape and OLAGI. Vote delegated by proxy by ANAAE (delegation to São Paulo) and Mbale (delegation to Wales).</p> <p>2. The agenda is approved with no changes.</p> <p>3. Minutes of the Steering Committee meeting of Cancun on 8 December 2010 are adopted.</p> <p>4. Matters arising:</p> <p>4a. Welcome and apologies – Given the lack of quorum in December 2010, the Secretariat suggested dates for holding an extraordinary meeting urgently. A first email was sent to members to pencil in dates on 21.12.2010. The date was confirmed per email on 13.01.2011. The extraordinary meeting was held on 15.02.2011 to accommodate for recent political changes in member regions chairing the Network.</p> <p>4b. Opportunities for collaboration with the EU Committee of the Regions CoR – Since the participation of Mrs. Nicola Beer, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Hessen, Germany and Head of the EU Committee of the Regions (EU CoR) Delegation to COP 16 in the Cancun Steering Committee, the Secretariat has explored with the EU CoR (i) the idea of nrg4SD providing a</p>	<p>2 apologies 2 delegated votes</p> <p>Agenda and 08.12.2010 minutes are adopted</p> <p>Date of the extraordinary meeting announced since 21.12.2010 and fixed to accommodate for recent political changes in co-chairs</p> <p>Further collaboration opportunities with the EU CoR</p>



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full compendia of its regions' decentralised cooperation initiatives in order to feed into the EU Portal; (ii) the involvement in future resources management and Rio +20 opinions. The Secretariat also met with the CoR Monitoring Platform for EU 2020 where nrg4SD was offered involvement in the opinion and survey on local and regional authorities and water management, as well as input into the 2012 annual report on EU 2020.

4c. Opportunities for collaboration with the United Nations University via Quebec – the project idea has been dropped

4d. Opportunities for collaboration with the United Nations Convention for Biological Diversity UN CBD - UN CBD is keen on deepening work with nrg4SD on the implementation of the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Local Authorities. The Secretary General participated in the first meeting for the implementation of the Plan of Action in January 2011 in Montpellier, France, where several areas of activity were agreed. The elaboration of a brochure, jointly with IUCN, disseminating what does the Plan of Action mean to subnational authorities is now underway. UN CBD is participating in the AGM in Quebec and providing technical support to the relevant nrg4SD working group

4e. Next Steering Committee and General Assembly meetings in Québec – First formal announcement to members on 26 May 2011, following several informal announcements.

Ongoing work with UN CBD – Participation in Quebec AGM and support to relevant working group

First formal announcement of Quebec AGM on 26.05.2011

5. Proposal for the implementation of nrg4SD Work Programme in 2011

The Secretary General reminded the milestones over the past 5 months under the key thematic areas of nrg4SD's work programme. She also presented some key initiatives for 2011 under the thematic areas:

- Reinforce work with UNFCCC (directly with the Secretariat and the parties) towards the enhanced recognition at COP 17 Durban
- Collaborate closely with UN CBD on the implementation of the Plan of Action for Subnational Governments and Local Authorities
- Replicate the successful work on water throughout the whole Network, at European level in collaboration with the network ENCORE
- Step up work and positioning towards the Rio +20 Conference
- Work with EU on resource efficiency policy, review of EU's development policy, internationalisation of Covenant of Mayors and the Portal for Decentralised Cooperation

Proposals for 2011 work programme in all areas of work of the Network as per Sec Gen's presentation

Alongside the work around these key thematic areas, other key initiatives for 2011 are:

- Working groups as per memo prepared by the Secretariat
- Policy papers and good practices compendia
- Enhanced work with UN Conventions secretariats and parties
- Regular presence in negotiation sessions at political level, coupled with communications strategy
- Further work with local authorities
- Improved website, regular newsletter and annual report of activities
- Progressive establishment of a Board of Advisors

Proposals to relaunch the Network at international level, to improve services and communications

The Secretary General highlighted that 2011 should also be dedicated to the works towards the post 2011 work programme of the Network and the celebration of the 10 years of nrg4SD in 2012.

Work programme post 2011 and 10th Anniversary in 2012

The Secretary General highlighted that the exciting and varied 2011 work programme and opportunities speak of a mature Network with plenty of potential building upon the good work of past years. However she also said that a good part of these opportunities could be missed if no support is given to the Secretariat. She encouraged future budget decisions to address the need for a better resourced

Exciting opportunities in all thematic areas that speak of a mature Network – Risk of missed opportunities – Need



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<p>Secretariat and called on members to look into the possibilities for secondments.</p> <p>Aragon and Catalonia called for a prioritised 2011 work programme in line with the limited resources of the Network. Wallonia said that the activities of the Network shall be in line with its small and discreet nature. The CPMR considered the activities put forward are realistic and in line with the 2008-2014 Strategy and the thematic areas of work of the Network. Flanders called for particular attention to sustainable development matters in the horizon of the Rio +20 conference in 2012, and reminded that this constitutes the core mission of nrg4SD. Northern Burkina stressed the need to tailor-make services in order to ensure added value for members. Northern Burkina and North Sumatra showed a keen interest in developing specific project work within the Network. São Paulo highlighted the need to pay particular attention to the momentum that the recognition of subnational governments is progressively enjoying at United Nations level. The Basque Country, Brittany, Quebec and Wales considered the opportunities ahead of the Network in 2011 as a turning point to consolidate its existence and its services to members or to fade away.</p> <p>6. Update of membership applications and expressions of interest</p> <p>The Secretary General presented the specific document that was prepared already for the Steering Committee of Cancun and stressed that this increased interest in nrg4SD accentuates the need to provide content and clear opportunities to its members. An increased membership could ironically turn against nrg4SD's and its individual member regions' credibility if it is not coupled with quality services.</p> <p>The Secretary General reminded that expressions of interest do not always end up in new accessions and that application procedures tend to be lengthy as they are subject to the internal process of each candidate. In this context, the Secretary General warned about the risk of taking any potential future fees for granted income for the Network until the actual fee is paid and highlighted the need for all members to concentrate on widening the membership.</p> <p>7. Update on the organisation of the next annual General Assembly meetings in Quebec</p> <p>Members thanked Quebec for the proposal that was adopted by unanimity and considered as a key opportunity for disseminating the Network in North-America. Quebec gave a brief update on the choice of the date and on ongoing arrangements. The Secretary General suggested the possibility of unblocking €10,000 from the reserve fund to complement the considerable financial effort deployed by Quebec for the organisation of the AGM. The sum would be mostly dedicated to the provision of interpretation services into the 3 languages of the Network and to communications matters. Wallonia said that tradition marked that all organisation expenses are to be covered by the host of the event. The Secretariat and the Government of Quebec are requested to continue working together on the organisation of the event and to keep members informed.</p> <p>8. Report and discussion on financial matters on the basis of proposals by the Treasury</p> <p>The Treasurer presented in detail the execution of the 2010 budget and the project budget for 2011. The Treasurer explained the new structure of budgetary lines for the 2011 budget as a consequence of the establishment of a permanent Secretariat and outlined key proposed budgetary lines for 2011.</p> <p>The Treasurer stressed that the project budget constituted already a constriction budget oriented only to core activity and with no margin for further constriction.</p> <p>The Treasurer highlighted dues of past and current years and called on the Steering</p>	<p>for a better resourced Secretariat – Possibilities of secondments</p> <p>Need for a prioritised programme, tailor-made services, particular attention to SD matters, specific interest for project work and for making use of the momentum around subnational govts. recognition</p> <p>nrg4SD at a turning point to consolidate its existence and its services to members or to fade away</p> <p>Increased interest in nrg4SD accentuates need for content and clear opportunities to members</p> <p>Potential future fees should not be taken for granted income - Need to concentrate efforts on widening membership</p> <p>Warm welcome and thanks for the proposal of hosting next AGM in Quebec. Secretariat and Quebec requested to continue working together on the organisation of the event and to keep members informed</p> <p>New structure of budgetary lines for 2011 due to establishment of a permanent Secretariat</p> <p>Constriction core activity budget - no margin for further</p>
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<p>Committee to decide on the status of members who have not honoured their fees for some years.</p> <p>The Treasurer stressed the dangerous risk of high deficit that nrg4SD is facing and put forward 3 measures to achieve a balanced budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an amount of €58,0000 in extraordinary contributions - an increase in all annual membership fees of 50% compared to 2010 fees - the withdrawal of the possibility o exoneration of fees <p>The Treasurer underlined that the proposal for an increase in fees for all members appeared as the only option for securing a viable future of the Network and reminded that current fees are not in line with the average fees for similar networks nowadays.</p> <p>Acknowledging the difficult economic context currently suffered by public budgets, the Treasurer called on members to make proof of a long-term vision for the Network and approve the increase of fees for all members.</p> <p>Discussions on these proposals followed.</p> <p>The Basque Country, Brittany, Quebec and Wales highlighted that the proposed 2011 budget constituted already a reduced budget unable to sustain the objectives of the Network and the services to members. In this context, they supported the proposal for an increase in all membership fees of 50%; encouraged extraordinary contributions from members in a financial position to provide them, and stressed the need to take the widening of membership seriously.</p> <p>Wallonia opposed to the increase of fees and reminded that any decision of this nature should be taken by the General Assembly.</p> <p>Aragon and Catalonia said that the difficult economic situation affecting public budgets took them to question the opportunity of proposing an increase of fees at this very moment. They warned about the risk of excluding members – and therefore of losing membership base – and proposed that the increase should be presented as optional for those members with the financial capacity to afford it.</p> <p>The Basque Country and Brittany openly opposed to an optional increase of fees arguing that this could create a fracture in the current membership and pose issues around fairness. Quebec and Wales joined them in these arguments.</p> <p>São Paulo, Aragon and Catalonia stressed the need to show flexibility, particularly with Southern members.</p> <p>São Paulo evoked its past suggestions for allowing members experiencing financial difficulties to honour their fees to pay their membership with contributions in kind. The Treasurer warned about the complexity to find fair and objective parametres for the monetary assessment of contributions in kind. She also reminded that, as a general rule, regulations applicable to associations tend to dictate that membership to the association is demonstrated precisely by the payment of the fixed fee. Alerting about the risk of virtually emptying the budget of nrg4SD and of jeopardising its capacity to serve members, the Basque Country, Brittany, Wales and Quebec considered tha contributions in kind should be encouraged as a way to complement the existing budget but should never be used to replace annual fees.</p> <p>The discussions were closed and the Steering Committee adopted the project budget for 2011 put forward by the Treasury.</p>	<p>constriction</p> <p>Steering Committee to decide the status of members with due fees</p> <p>Dangerous risk of high deficit – 3 measures towards a balanced budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extraordinary contributions up to €58,000 - 50% increase in all annual fees - withdrawal of exonerations <p>Current fees not in average with similar networks</p> <p>Call for a long-term vision for the Netwok</p> <p>Basque Country, Brittany, Quebec and Wales - Current budget does not sustain objectives and services. Support for increase in fees</p> <p>Wallonia opposes to increase in fees</p> <p>Aragon and Catalonia question the opportunity of the moment to request a fees increase – proposal for voluntary increase</p> <p>Basque Country, Brittany, Quebec and Wales argue risk of membership fracture and fairness issues</p> <p>São Paulo, Aragon and Catalonia call for flexibility particularly with the South</p> <p>São Paulo evokes once more possibility of contributions in kind</p> <p>Treasury warns of complexity and issues around membership status</p> <p>Basque Country, Brittany, Quebec and Wales consider that contributions</p>
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Joining some of the conclusions of the Cancun Steering Committee of 08.12.2010 (of deliberative nature due to the lack of quorum), the Steering Committee agreed to recommend to the General Assembly:

- to keep annual fees as the ordinary contribution for membership;
- to increasing annual fees for all members in 50% as proposed by the Treasury
- to encourage extraordinary one-off contributions from those regions able and willing to do it in order to meet the €58,000 amount outlined by the Treasury
- to withdraw exoneration of membership fees;
- to step up efforts towards the recruitment of new members.

The Steering Committee requested the Treasury to carry out a call for fees for 2011 on the basis of 2010 fees as soon as possible. The Treasury was requested to introduce members to the proposal for an increase in all membership fees in 50% on the occasion of the 2011 call. Treasury and Secretariat were requested to explain to members the efforts they have already deployed to reduce expenses.

9. AOB – this item was finally not addressed.

in kind should not to replace annual fees

Recommendations:

- annual membership fees
- 50% increase for all fees
- Encourage one-off extra. contributions to meet €58,000
- withdraw exonerations
- step up recruitment of new members

Call for 2011 fees asap with current fees – Secretary and Treasury to introduce the increased fees proposal and explain saving efforts