

**Federated States and Regional Governments Committed to a New Paradigm
for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication
*The Declaration of Rio de Janeiro 2012***

Federated States and Regional Government represented in Rio de Janeiro on 19 June 2012 on the occasion of the World Summit of Federated States and Regions convened by the Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro, The Climate Group, the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development nrg4SD and Regions United-FOGAR on the eve of the UN Conference Rio +20:

On the progress of multilateralism to date, the challenges and opportunities ahead

1. Recognize the importance of the Brundtland Commission of 1987, the UN Conference on Environment and Development of 1992 in Rio de Janeiro and the UN World Summit for Sustainable Development of 2002 in Johannesburg as a milestones in the transition towards sustainable development, as well as the significance of documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Our Common Future Report, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Agenda 21, the Earth Charter, the Rio Conventions on Climate Change, Biological Diversity and Drought and Desertification, the Millennium Development Goals, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the broader development commitments and goals adopted by United Nations conferences and summits.
2. Acknowledge that since 1992, the international community has achieved some important successes. Yet, the objectives we have commonly set 20 years ago still have to be fully achieved. The current economic development model is not sustainable in the long-run neither in terms of poverty eradication objectives nor of respect for the carrying capacity of our Planet. Even though sustainable development is a widely-used and defended idea, we still lack effective mainstreaming of this notion in all public policies
3. Highlight that since the Rio Summit in 1992, subnational governments - such as Federated States, Regions, Provinces, or Counties - all over the world have been involved in sustainable development processes and have demonstrated that their contribution and leadership is essential to help achieve the ultimate objectives of sustainable development on the ground. Local Agenda 21 initiatives; subnational sustainable development policies and legislation; public-private-partnerships, and decentralised cooperation projects carried out by subnational governments have significantly been strengthened over the past years. This is further evidence that the achievement of internationally agreed goals requires complementary action by governmental stakeholders such as Federated States, Regions, Cities and other Local Authorities.
4. Recognize the key importance of international networks of subnational governments, which have significant experience in creating partnerships for action and can therefore contribute to the

implementation of global multilateral agreements. They also fulfill a role in supporting subnational governments in taking leadership and promoting concrete sustainable development initiatives as well as knowledge exchange.

5. Agree that the cost of inaction regarding the shift to a new development paradigm and its related risks are high and may lead to irreversible damage:
 - With more than 3 billion people living below the poverty line, poverty eradication must remain the top priority;
 - In the perspective of a population growth of 2 billion by 2050, the current trends of inefficient and unsustainable use of natural resources in the hands of a few, as well as the globally spread patterns of unsustainable consumption and production need to be addressed;
 - The negative impact on biodiversity and ecosystems of our current development models need to be reversed, and
 - The unavoidable reality of the climate challenge requires holistic mitigation and adaptation actions anchored in sustainable low carbon development strategies for all territories.

On the urgency to harness this momentum for change

6. Draw urgent attention to the fact that, in the current context of interconnected challenges humankind is facing, *status quo* is no longer an option. The UN Conference of Rio +20 carries enough *momentum* and hope across world citizens for it to be the most important window of opportunity for a paradigm change. The time to provide our planet and its peoples with a comprehensive set of sustainable development policies and goals and governance institutions is as limited as ever.
7. Urge UN member states to use this *momentum* of convergence between world leaders, policy makers from all levels of government, civil society organisations, the private sector and academia that constitutes the UN Rio +20 Conference in order to permanently integrate the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development, as well as to agree on an institutional framework adapted to the needs of the 21st Century. This should be done with a strong complementary focus on education and cultural aspects, gender issues, protection of common goods and future generations, and respect for global biodiversity and traditional livelihoods and knowledge.
8. Call on UN member states to agree on the establishment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are complementary to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and coherent with the MDGs review process and that, amongst other emerging challenges, address sustainable territories with a city-region approach.
9. Are convinced that green economy enables transition towards prosperity, poverty eradication and sustainable development. To this end, a set of common ambitious goals, principles and standard

metrics should be adopted with the clear understanding that there is no “one size fits all” development model.

10. Believe that the concept of green economy does not substitute the definition of sustainable development, but is a tool for achieving sustainable development; with poverty eradication, social inclusion, equity, well-being, gender equality, the efficient use and preservation of natural resources, the protection of common goods and biodiversity and the development of sustainable low carbon strategies as central pieces.
11. Consider that the green economy is not a static development model but a process of continuous improvement and adaptation to the economic, social and environmental needs and assets of a community. This process, oriented to unleashing the full sustainability potential of a given territory, will progressively be measured by relevant indicators that go beyond traditional measures such as GDP to encompass data on non-market assets, well-being and human development.

On multi-level governance and leadership for the sake of sustainable development

12. Consider that the scale and urgency of the challenge requires action by all levels of government and that time has come to improve the use of the principle of subsidiarity and acknowledge the importance of governance, funding, implementation and accountability in appropriate levels of government, including subnational and local levels.
13. Reiterate that Federated States and Regional Governments play a crucial role in the elaboration and fast deployment of sustainable development legislation, policy and financial mechanisms to meet the needs of their communities in accordance with the principles of sustainable development; and that they are used to doing it in complementarity with the national and local levels of governments and in close collaboration with the private sector, academia and civil society.
14. Call on UN members states to acknowledge the essential role of subnational and local governments, as well as the need to fully integrate them into all levels of decision-making on sustainable development in their capacity of governmental stakeholders.
15. Call on international funding bodies to work in consultation with subnational and local governments to ensure that international funding guidelines are targeted to sustainable development needs of local communities.
16. Call on UN member states to make international funding sources directly accessible to subnational and local governments, as well as to make fiscal transfers to subnational and local governments commensurate with their statutory responsibilities in order to enable relevant sustainable development initiatives on the ground.

17. Commit to reinforcing the mainstream of sustainable development concerns into all policy and legislation elaborated or transposed at subnational level.
18. Commit to working in close collaboration and complementarity with different agencies and public administrations at the national and local levels of government; as well as to sustaining constructive participation in international processes in order to put grass-roots experiences and long-term realistic vision at the service of UN multilateralism and other constructive international initiatives.
19. Commit to continue enhancing knowledge, innovative solutions and a territorial approach on sustainable development matters, including the green economy, by means of fostering public-private-partnerships, collaborations with the scientific and academic community and decentralised cooperation initiatives for inter-regional solidarity.
20. Commit, if appropriate, to the creation or the strengthening of existing independent sustainable development councils in their respective jurisdictions, within existing financial resources and distribution of powers with the national level; and call on national governments to fully integrate Federated States and Regional Governments in the works of national sustainable development councils.
21. Commit to promote the establishment of independent ombudspersons or high commissioners for sustainable development and future generations in their respective jurisdictions; within existing financial resources and distribution of powers with the national level.
22. Call on UN member states to agree on how to enhance institutional framework for sustainable development, including upgrade and enhance the current UN Environmental Programme and Commission for Sustainable Development in a way that reinforces function, ensures adequate funding, guarantees effectiveness, ensures compliance of multilateral environmental agreements, leads to universal membership and fully engages with Federated States, Regional Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities.

On making a more inclusive, greener and smarter economic model happen on the ground

23. Commit to a common roadmap towards a green economy and smarter economic model in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, with the following minimum steps to guarantee a fair transition:
 - By 2013, to explore the creation of an inter-regional platform for the elaboration and, if possible, adoption of comparable metrics for measuring relevant indicators for a more inclusive, greener and smarter economy with GDP and beyond. This platform could work in close collaboration

with any other international knowledge-sharing platforms to be established as an outcome of the UN Conference Rio+20. Conceived as an International Interdisciplinary Institute for a More Inclusive, Greener and Smarter Development, it could work as a “think tank” on the relevant themes of this new model paradigm.

- By 2014, to identify and promote the accounting and evaluation, as appropriate, of the relevant assets and challenges in developing a green economy for the Federated State or Region.
 - By 2015, to create legislation or policy mechanisms, as appropriate, to prioritize low carbon development, create green jobs and provide training for greening the traditional brown-sectors of the subnational economy
 - By 2016, to develop a Plan or Strategy, as appropriate, outlining the transition to a new green economy including objectives to make such a transition within existing sustainable development plans or strategies, with areas, targets and indicators in line with the concepts outlined below.
24. The Plan or Strategy should address, as relevant, the diagnosis of the current scenario, as well as the future perspective and strategies for improvement, *inter alia*, targets and indicators suggested in Annex 1. Final targets in the horizon of 2020 and intermediate targets shall be decided by each subnational government for inclusion in its respective Plan or Strategy. Monitoring, verification and reporting mechanisms shall be identified in the Plans.
25. The Plan or Strategy should be elaborated with a complementary approach to national and international legislation and frameworks for action and seek to maximize synergy and coordination with local authorities.
26. The Plan or Strategy should be embedded in the culture of public consultation and thus seek the timely and relevant involvement of the concerned sectors and the wider public, as appropriate.
27. All information on measures related to areas, targets and indicators part of the Plan or Strategy, including allocation of funds and reporting information, should be made publicly available.

ANNEX 1 – Suggested indicators

Area of social affairs and education

- To increase life expectancy, in particular in less developed countries
- To guarantee suitable access for all the population to basic public services
- To guarantee food security
- To guarantee a universal health coverage in urban and rural areas
- To reduce early school drop out
- To increase gender equality and empowerment of women by removing the barriers that prevent women from fully participating in the economy
- To increase universal access to education, with a particular focus on women and the most vulnerable groups
- To increase access to quality housing
- To increase public safety and enhance risk protection
- To introduce sustainable development education in the curriculum at all educational levels
- To improve impact awareness campaigns on sustainable development

Area of water resources and management

- To guarantee access to clean drinking water for all population and efficient use of water in all sectors, in particular in agriculture
- To guarantee supply and affordability of water and sanitation in urban areas, in particular in less developed countries
- To map flood risks accurately
- To improve water quality of surface and underground water bodies to protect human health and the environment
- To ensure a adequate integrated water cycle management

Area of Sustainable Consumption and Production

- To incorporate eco-efficiency criteria in the performance of all sectors of economic activity (industry, trade, mobility, services, construction...)
- To support the integration of a more inclusive, greener and smarter economy into production sectors.
- To implement sustainable tourism strategies both at local and subnational level so as to achieve a more sustainable tourism model

Area of economic and fiscal policy and cooperation

- To create green jobs and increase investment in skills for greening brown jobs in all economic sectors
- To progressively remove environmentally harmful subsidies

- To increase and make better use of public procurement mechanisms as to promote the market penetration of green innovative products
- To implement progressively environmental fiscal policies to incentive activities that pursue environmental protection and conservation
- To better assess the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of international cooperation at the regional and local level
- To increase investment in R&D related to all dimensions of sustainable development
- To promote new job opportunities in both rural and urban areas, including support to small and medium enterprises
- To strengthen scientific, technological and innovation capacities to promote sustainable development

Area of territorial planning and land use

- To increased territorial cohesion, integrating the city-region approach and addressing urban-rural linkages
- To implement tools for stopping and reverting habitat and landscape fragmentation
- To increase governance and risk management by means of territorial and sectoral planning
- To increase effectively protected area in the total territory

Area of agriculture, forestry and fisheries

- To guarantee sustainable management of natural resources
- To promote efficiency and sustainable management in agriculture, cattle raising, forestry and fisheries, as well as family run and/or organic agriculture
- To elaborate and implement Sustainable Forest Management Plans to achieve a more sustainable forestry sector and eradicate illegal deforestation and logging
- To reduce fertilizer and pesticide use
- To preserve and promote the recovery of remaining native areas and species

Area of biodiversity and ecosystem services

- To implement the Aichi Targets of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity at subnational level
- To minimize the human impact on global biodiversity
- To mainstream environmental and biodiversity conservation through sectoral policies, especially through out territorial planning, to achieve sustainable territorial models
- To increase the territory covered by natural and semi-natural ecosystems
- To implement Payment for Environmental Services (PES) Schemes
- To adopt subnational strategies and action plans for biodiversity

- To reduce ecological footprint at local and subnational levels

Area of climate change

- To elaborate inventories of Green House Gases emissions GHG at subnational level
- To reduce, with a good level of ambition, GHG emissions from industrialized Federated states and Regions
- To reduce GHG emissions from Federated States and Regions within emerging economies or, according to their level of development, reducing their carbon intensity level
- To develop subnational low carbon strategies in key sectors of the respective Federated State or Region
- To elaborate adaptation strategies at subnational level

Area of energy and transport

- To ensure access and affordability to energy, in particular for most vulnerable groups.
- To improve energy efficiency, particularly in public and private buildings
- To increase the share of renewable energies, including at local scale and micro-generation
- To reduce final energy intensity
- To increase sustainable mobility by means of a secure, efficient, public and sustainable transport systems
- To maximize the reduction of accidents with regards to passengers and goods transportation
- To increase public and private sustainable vehicle fleets
- To reduce air pollution levels particularly in urban areas

Area of waste

- To decrease waste generation
- To increase selective waste collection in urban areas
- To eliminate inadequate waste disposal systems and technologies (e.g. dump sites)
- To promotion sustainable waste management, prioritizing material reuse and recycling and waste-to-energy initiatives.

Area of governance

- To develop and implement the principles of good governance for sustainable development
- To guarantee and facilitate the active participation of social and economic stakeholders in environmental decision-making and management.

- To coordinate subnational policies on sustainable development with local and national policies.
- To guarantee transparency and knowledge and information sharing with regards to sustainable development issues.