



**REGIONSADAPT**

**Guide for Participants**

## 2016

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## 1. Overview

**RegionsAdapt** is an initiative initially proposed by the governments of Catalonia and Rio de Janeiro, with the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development - nrg4SD - serving as its secretariat. The initiative was created to establish a framework for regional governments to take action, cooperate and report efforts in climate adaptation.

**RegionsAdapt** was launched on the 3rd of December 2015, alongside the UNFCCC COP21, in Paris. At the event, 26 founding participants signed the Commitment text of the initiative (see below more information about the Commitment; a list of founding participants and an updated list of participants can be found online). When the initiative was launched, an Outline Document provided further information about what kind of support the initiative aimed at providing to its participants, a list of priority themes in climate adaptation, and an indication of the next steps of the initiative.

This guide provides further information about the initiative. It describes the aims of the initiative, which are connected to each one of the commitments, and how these aims are to be implemented. It also describes the services that the initiative offers to its participants, the roles of the **RegionsAdapt** secretariat, of **RegionsAdapt** endorsing partners and of **RegionsAdapt** core participants. It suggests the establishment of an advisory board and partnerships with other initiatives. Finally, it presents a timeline until the end of 2017.

## 2. Joining The Initiative and RegionsAdapt Commitments

The first step to participate in the initiative is to sign the **RegionsAdapt** Commitment document. This is a two-page document, which must be signed by a state, regional or provincial authority. Signatures can be collected in a specific signing ceremony (see calendar) or simply by sending a signed copy of the **RegionsAdapt** Commitment document to the **RegionsAdapt** office ([regionsadapt@nrg4sd.org](mailto:regionsadapt@nrg4sd.org)).

The **RegionsAdapt** Commitment document consists of an introduction, which justifies the importance of a strong adaptation response at the subnational level, and three commitments through which states, regions and provinces accept to:

- 1 Adopt a strategic approach to adaptation and prioritize adaptation actions**, e.g., through adopting or reviewing a regional plan or strategy on climate change adaptation within two years of joining the initiative;
- 2 Take concrete action on adaptation in at least one of the key priority areas identified by the regions.** These could include: water resources and management; resilience and disaster risk reduction; agriculture and zootechnics; forestry, protected areas and biodiversity; infrastructure (including transport and the energy sectors) and territorial planning; economic impacts and opportunities; social adaptation and impacts;
- 3 Report data on the progress of the adaptation actions on an annual basis through the risk and adaptation section of CDP's states and regions platform.**

### 3. Aims of the Initiative

The main aim of the initiative is to inspire and support state, regional and provincial governments to take action, collaborate and report efforts on climate change adaptation.

More specifically, **RegionsAdapt** is a platform for:

- 1 Tracking state, regional and provincial adaptation plans and strategies across the world;
- 2 Promoting the acceleration of the adoption or revision of regional climate adaptation plans and strategies;
- 3 Promoting concrete actions on adaptation;
- 4 States, regions and provinces to cooperate and share best practices within their different capacities and experiences on climate adaptation;
- 5 Reporting and monitoring adaptation processes, actions and their outcomes.

## 4. Implementing the Aims

Each one of these five aims can be implemented in a number of ways. What follows are a few suggestions.

### **1** Track state, regional and provincial adaptation plans and strategies across the world

Increasing numbers of subnational governments are anticipating the need to adapt to climate change. Some states, regions and provinces have already produced adaptation plans, while others are working to develop such plans.

One of the first aims of **RegionsAdapt** is to track state, regional and provincial adaptation plans and strategies across the world. Information about the development of participants' efforts in climate adaptation is obtained directly from participant governments, as well as through the information submitted by participant governments to the risk and adaptation section of CDP's states and regions platform. **RegionsAdapt** then disseminates these efforts through webinars, working groups, events, as well as on the website, reports and posted updates (more details below).

## **2 Accelerate the adoption or revision of regional climate adaptation strategies**

**RegionsAdapt** intends to promote exchanges between signatories and offer ideas to bolster the capacities of those developing or revising their climate adaptation strategies. Even for regional governments who are advanced in this task, this initiative is prone to stimulate them upgrading their strategy within a two-years timeframe. **RegionsAdapt**, therefore, creates a benchmarking platform that can potentially benefit all participants.

It also facilitates the exchange between participants on preparing and revising regional adaptation plans and strategies (more details below).

## **3 Promote concrete actions on adaptation**

The outline document of **RegionsAdapt** includes a list of seven key priority areas on which regional governments can take concrete actions. These include: water resources and management; resilience and disaster risk reduction; agriculture and zootechnics; forestry, protected areas and biodiversity; infrastructure (including transport and the energy sectors) and territorial planning; economic impacts and opportunities; social adaptation and impacts. This list was established in the outline document of December 2015, and it will be revised on a biannual basis (next revision in November 2017 – see calendar).

#### **4 Cooperate and share best practices**

**RegionsAdapt** aims to promote cooperation and sharing of best practices within participants' different capacities and experiences on climate adaptation. One of the ways this aim is being implemented is through the creation of working groups (see more information about 'working groups' below). Whenever possible, the exchange of best practices should match participants' expertise and their demand for cooperation, and should produce recommendations based on cutting edge-expertise.

#### **5 Showcase actions adopted and evaluate progress towards adaptation targets**

Signatories of **RegionsAdapt** report the concrete actions they adopt through the risk and adaptation section of CDP's states and regions platform. Best practices are also showcased in events, within the working groups, the website, and specific publications. **RegionsAdapt** is also exploring the possibility of including reported adaptation measures to the Non-state Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) platform.

## 5. Services to Participants

### RegionsAdapt Office

The **RegionsAdapt** Office operates within the nrg4SD Secretariat and offers support to interested and participating governments. A trained staff assists interested and participating governments in English, French and Spanish in the process of joining as well as accompanying them in their commitments. Interested parties should contact the RegionsAdapt office writing to the email [regionsadapt@nrg4sd.org](mailto:regionsadapt@nrg4sd.org). **RegionsAdapt** is initially hosted in the nrg4SD website.

### Working groups

Working groups established around the seven key priority areas of the initiative gather **RegionsAdapt** signatories upon their interests. Working groups are established according to founding participants' choice of themes and availability of coordinators. In addition to the participant governments, each working group should comprise sponsors and experts, who are expected to provide financial and technical support, respectively. The nrg4SD Secretariat follows the discussions and provides the necessary organizational support to the group. The nrg4SD also provides a virtual platform for participants to hold the calls and exchange materials. The progress accomplished by the working groups is periodically assessed through an integrated approach, and is compiled in a global report. By the end of the year, the working groups are invited to present the outcome of their discussions at a side event organized by nrg4SD at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP).

## **Webinars**

**RegionsAdapt** participants are offered the possibility of running/convening webinars, with support of the secretariat. External organizations can be invited to share their expertise. Webinars address topics of common interest, such as the adoption and revision of regional climate adaptation strategies (as per the first commitment).

## **Networking**

Networking opportunities foster exchange and help participants to be part of a community of practice. The highlight event in 2015 was the Signature Ceremony on the 3rd of December in Paris, where 26 signatory governments commitment to the initiative together with more than 100 attendees. There are already other **RegionsAdapt** networking events scheduled for 2016 (see calendar).

## **Workshops and side-events**

Workshops and side-events offer participants an opportunity to discuss their adaptation initiatives and share information, helping to further raise awareness about the initiative, its opportunities and the benefits of action. The first **RegionsAdapt** side-event was held at COP21, in Paris, and allowed participant regions to promote good practice and share and peer-to-peer learning. Workshops and events can take place in different member regions and alongside other major events.

### **Call for Projects**

The nrg4SD call for projects offers nrg4SD members to foster bilateral and multilateral cooperation, capacity building and know-how transference in the area of climate adaptation. The calls co-fund projects which address at least one of the seven key priority areas of **RegionsAdapt** (as per the second commitment).

### **Materials and publications**

Sharing information on initiatives adopted by participants can help states, regions and provinces taking action. Participants are also invited to submit case studies. These can be findings/summaries of the different webinars and workshops. The case studies are published on nrg4SD's website, as well as on a special issue of case studies (to be launched in June 2017 – see below). The production of a guidebook for regional governments to approach adaptation is also planned. This material fosters the visibility of participants' adaptation activities. Furthermore, by sharing their expertise, governments support other governments facing similar problems.

## 6. Roles of the Secretariat

The key roles of the nrg4SD secretariat implementing **RegionsAdapt** are to promote the initiative and to support its participants in successfully undertaking their political commitments. More specifically, the secretariat guarantees:

- Visibility and communication on commitments to adaptation (website, signature ceremony, information events, materials for outreach, etc.);
- A helpdesk for operational questions, information and engagement with the initiative;
- Knowledge support (online platform with guidance materials, best practice examples, etc.);
- Synergies with the Under2MOU, Mayors Adapt, and other relevant initiatives.

## 7. Roles of the Endorsing Partners

The Climate Group and CDP lead on the Compact of States and Regions and make the adaptation data available to **RegionsAdapt**.

## 8. Roles of the Group of Core Participants

A group of nominated core participants with 2-years mandates support the secretariat in the implementation of the initiative. The group of core participants consists of the two regions that initiated the initiative (Catalonia and Rio de Janeiro), and three other participants nominated by nrg4SD secretariat.

## 9. Advisory Board and Partnerships

The advisory board consists of experts from academia and NGOs. The advisory board is expected to advise on strategic direction of the initiative and act as ambassadors for the initiative at the national and international level. Members will serve for a period of five years, renewable once. In addition, the secretariat can establish partnerships with relevant organisations, including universities and UN bodies (e.g. the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – UNFCCC - and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - UNISDR), which can help in the development of webinars, events and working groups.

## 10. Participant governments

In December 2015, in Paris, 26 regions from all continents signed the **RegionsAdapt** Commitment as founding participants: 8 from Latin America, 6 from Africa, 5 from North America, 4 from Europe, 2 from Australia/Oceania, 1 from Asia. A list of the founding participants and an updated list of all participants can be found in the nrg4SD website.

## 11. Timeline and Key events

### 2016

#### JANUARY

Background document, welcome guide and leaflet

#### FEBRUARY

Choice of working groups and info

#### MARCH

**1** Establishment of four working groups

**21** First webinar

#### APRIL

**First week** First working group calls

**4** Reporting period to the risk and adaptation section of CDP's states and regions platform

**14 to 15 Apr** \* World Summit of Regions ORU-FOGAR, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

#### MAY

First assessment of strategies and actions sent

#### JUNE

Second working group calls

**15** Second Webinar

**29 Jun to 1st Jul** \* nrg4SD's GA in Barcelona

## 2016

### JULY

**6 Jul  
to 8 Jul** \* Resilient Cities Congress in Bonn

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**15** End of the reporting period

### SEPTEMBER

Third working group calls

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**26 to  
28 Sep** \* Climate Change Summit, Nantes, France

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### OCTOBER

**17 to  
20 Oct** \* Habitat III, Quito, Ecuador

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**26** Third webinar / launch of report (CDP)

### NOVEMBER

Third working group calls/outcome document

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**7 to  
18 Nov** \* COP22, Marrakech, Morocco – side event to present initial results

## 2017

### JANUARY

Call for new working groups

### FEBRUARY

New working groups

### MARCH

Fourth Webinar

### JUNE

Launch compilation of case studies

### JULY

Fifth Webinar

### NOVEMBER

\* COP-23 - launch balance of the initiative

## 12. Testimonials

### **Santi Vila i Vicente, Minister of Territory and Sustainability of the Catalan Government**

“Regional governments are at the forefront of climate action and the citizens of our respective jurisdictions expect an effective response to climate change impacts”.

### **André Correa, Secretary for the Environment of the Rio Janeiro state**

“Rio de Janeiro State lives its worst drought in 85 years. Our generation is the first to feel the impacts of climate change. In this sense, we are convinced about the importance to share best practices and innovative solutions with other regions to overcome the climate challenges we are already facing and those of the upcoming years.”

### **Aka Aouele, President of the Regional Council of Sud Comoé**

“Specified adaptation strategies and plans are required at the regional level, considering the varied needs and scenarios that make each region unique. In terms of capacity building, funding, expertise sharing and policy framework, we could greatly benefit from the collaboration with other regions and networks in order to strengthen our capacity for action.”

### **Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary General**

“Regions Adapt [a new global initiative] in which its members commit to develop climate adaptation plans and report on their progress.”



# REGIONSADAPT

Promoters of the RegionsAdapt Initiative



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Secretariat



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Endorsing Partners



#Regions4Climate #RegionsAdapt  
<http://www.nrg4sd.org/climate-change/regionsadapt/>