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OPINION OF THE CPMR

(Approved by the CPMR General Assembly – 1/2 October 2009 – Gothenburg, Sweden)

CLIMATE CHANGE “THE ACTION OF THE REGIONS”

The CPMR understands the global dimension of efforts to tackle climate change and is keen to prepare its member regions for changes that will take place in the way economic, social and territorial development is conceived in Europe. It will thus pursue two types of complementary action:

1. ACTION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

This action aims to involve the regions in the negotiations launched by the UNFCCC with a view to ensuring a follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol. It is being pursued within the nrg4SD network, of which the CPMR is a member, and will be put into effect at the Copenhagen summit in December 2009. The aim is to ensure that the regional level is included in the negotiation paper that will serve as a basis for the medium-term action plan to be adopted in Copenhagen.

The CPMR's goal is to ensure that the regional level is included in both strands of the battle against climate change – mitigation and adaptation – while recognising that adaptation is a major and urgent issue for its member regions.

The guidelines proposed in this international framework focus on how to implement the letter of intent entitled Towards Carbon Neutral and Climate Change Resilient Territories, which was signed by several networks of regions, including the CPMR, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This aims to implement carbon assessments in regions from the South with which CPMR member regions have cooperation agreements.

They also focus on the exchange of experiences and good practices between European regions regarding mitigation and adaptation and on the methods, tools and data available for the two strands.

Implementation conditions

To undertake this action, the CPMR will provide its backing and operational support to nrg4SD's Focal Point for Europe, for which Brittany Region (France) is responsible.

It will continue cooperating with networks of regions from other continents as well as organisations representing local authorities and cities in order to present a common front in international negotiations. This cooperation will be based on the principle of having a common goal but different measures and resources.

In its international action, the CPMR will give priority to areas of the world where its members are present via the Outermost Regions – areas in the Caribbean, the central Atlantic area and the Indian Ocean area – or through cooperation schemes run by its member regions (South America, Africa, Asia).

2. ACTION AT EU LEVEL

This action aims to implement the provisions of the White Paper on adaptation to climate change published by the European Commission. It entails:

- The implementation of transnational and interregional cooperation projects in the field of climate change. These will have been identified by current expert work being done in the Interreg Programme, to which the CPMR is contributing. The aim will be to promote projects on the development of adaptation strategies for territories and economies, which could become compulsory in 2012.
- Participation in initiatives launched by the adaptation White Paper, particularly concerning the EU guidelines on adaptation in coastal and marine areas and the Impact and Adaptation Steering Group (IASG).
- The CPMR's participation in working groups set up by the European Commission concerning the development of: climate change vulnerability indicators; methods, models, data sets and prediction tools; and maritime data in the framework of the EMODNET initiative.
- The CPMR's objective here will be to ensure that the regions' needs and contributions are taken into account so that data and information is adapted to operational needs.
- Necessary initiatives to ensure that efforts to tackle climate change are a major part of future territorial cohesion policy. The CPMR will thus participate actively in work to forge a new development model, drawing on the lessons learnt from the globalisation crisis.
- The introduction of issues related to efforts to tackle climate change into EU policies, especially agriculture, biodiversity, energy, the Common Fisheries Policy and maritime policy.
- Implementation of the proposals set out in the Memorandum on Coastal and Maritime Indicators and Data adopted by the Aquamarina Working Group:
 - the production of a management chart for data and indicators concerning coastal and maritime policies;
 - the creation of an organised structure within the Commission to ensure the consistency and complementarity of EU initiatives concerning data and indicators;
 - the introduction of provisions on climate change data and indicators in the guidelines and regulations for future cohesion instruments.

Implementation conditions

Given that efforts to tackle climate change require solutions that are both global and tailored to the each area's characteristics, particularly those of each European sea basin, the CPMR proposes that its geographical commissions should set up working groups specialised on mitigation and adaptation issues.

The General Secretariat will run an inter-commission working group, which will act as the CPMR's representative in discussions with EU institutions and be responsible for drawing up its policy positions.

Bearing in mind the strong interrelationship between efforts to tackle the consequences of climate change and the majority of EU policies, it will be necessary to develop innovative working methods within the CPMR. These new working methods should move beyond the sectoral approach. The General Secretariat will draw up proposals to this effect.

Given the political dimension of the climate change issue, it is requested that the CPMR's Political Bureau should appoint two elected officials to be specifically responsible for climate change-related matters.