



Joint Action Plan 2025-2030

between

the European Committee of the Regions (CoR)

and

the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Joint Action Plan 2025-2030

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this action plan is to set out the cooperation framework for the period 2025-2030, based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the CoR and UNEP signed on 21 June 2012. The Action Plan will support strengthening the capacities and international cooperation of local and regional authorities under CoR with subnational governments worldwide to address the triple planetary crisis.

It aims to facilitate cooperation between the parties to promote their shared goals and objectives in the following sectors:

- climate mitigation and adaptation including but not limited to cooling, buildings and construction decarbonization, climate finance, food waste reduction, nature based solutions for cities and regions;
- addressing environmental pollution, including air, soil and water pollution and plastic pollution reduction in cities and regions;
- supporting nature restoration and addressing biodiversity loss at subnational level through municipal and regional levels;
- UNEP engagement with cities and regions in the EU and neighbouring countries;
- EU support and alignment with UNEP-led processes at subnational level.

In particular, the parties undertake to work together and jointly decide on specific methods of cooperation:

- 1) to provide reciprocal support and to ensure regular discussions on activities of common interest;
- 2) to regularly exchange relevant documents in order cross-feed the respective work;
- 3) to co-organise events and engage in joint initiatives when appropriate, including within relevant global and regional fora;
- 4) to cooperate in view of reinforcing the recognition of the role of subnational authorities in the work of the UNEP and of the EU, whenever possible;
- 5) to cooperate to disseminate and discuss relevant UNEP content/initiatives with local and regional politicians in the EU and belonging to the CoR external bodies;
- 6) jointly work to support subnational governments worldwide in implementation of global and regional commitments and promote multilevel governance approach in those commitments implementation.

This action plan applies to cooperation between the two institutions over the 2025-2030 period. It does not involve a commitment to share or transfer funds. Rather, it assumes that each signatory will implement the activities provided for in this document, covering its own costs and using its own resources in accordance with the signatories' respective regulations, rules and

standard practices. Implementation of any subsequent activities, projects and programmes pursuant to the MOU, including those involving the transfer of funds between the Parties, shall necessitate the execution of appropriate legal instruments between the Parties.

The section below provides an overview of indicative areas of cooperation and events of common interest. Provided lists include, but are not limited to, the specified envisaged activities.

AREAS OF COOPERATION

The main areas of cooperation for this action plan are following:

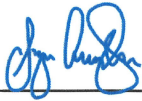
Within the scope of the Parties' respective regulatory framework, the Parties will collaboratively work towards:

1. the engagement of subnational authorities in advancing implementation of the Paris Agreement, Rio Conventions and other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including through collaborative events at the MEAs' high-level events, including the conferences of the parties;
2. advancing in the localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the field of environment at regional and local levels;
3. implementation of the future international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution;
4. strengthening a multi-level governance approach to empower cities and regions to actively participate in UNEP decision-making processes alongside national and international levels governance ensuring that policies, funding programmes and actions are tailored to local needs and realities.

The Parties will cooperate in:

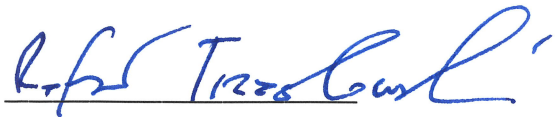
5. integrating climate action and resilience with regard to the Paris Agreement commitments;
6. fostering biodiversity and ecosystem restoration with a view to supporting the promotion and implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
7. driving convergent implementation of the UN Rio Conventions (CBD COP, UNCCD COP, UNFCCC COP) – and frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction or Agenda 2030 at local and regional levels;
8. advancing implementation of the Global Cooling Pledge and the Buildings Breakthrough;

9. engagement in the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction and the Cool Coalition, especially in these two alliances action groups on engagement of subnational actors;
10. engagement in the Food is Never Waster Coalition to support reducing food waste, especially at local level;
11. engaging cities and regions in the Generation Restoration initiative and UrbanShift 2.0;
12. promoting nature-based solutions (NBS) as a multifaceted response option for LRAs to the climate and biodiversity challenges;
13. promoting circular economy;
14. supporting the implementation of measures to address pollution, in particular plastic pollution and solid waste management;
15. promoting implementation of MEAs at the local level also contributing to addressing pollution in particular pollution from chemicals and waste;
16. participating in relevant events such as the UNEA associated meetings and the future Cities and Regions Summits.



Inger Andersen
Executive Director
United Nations Environment Programme

Date: 10 Jan. 2025



Rafal Trzaskowski
Chair, ENVE Commission
European Committee of the Regions

Date: 24.01.2025

ANNEX

Overview of specific actions of joint cooperation:

1. <u>Overarching actions</u>
1.1. Identify and maintain an informal but regular channel for communication between the CoR and UNEP, including monitoring of the action plan and the regular exchange on the state of EU policies in the field of green transition and sustainable development, also through dedicated working groups.
1.2. Cooperate on the involvement of cities and regions in the UNEA sessions and relevant related activities/documents, including the organization of the Cities and Regions Summit at UNEA.
1.3. Create an entry point for CoR to get in contact with UNEP, when no thematic working relations are already established and create an entry point for UNEP to get in contact with European cities and regions, to get their feedback and engage with them.
1.4. Cooperate in connecting UNEP's work with existing initiatives and networks at European and global level.
1.5. Cooperate in getting UNEP local ambassadors to promote UNEP activities and bring them closer to citizens and in getting a stronger recognition of subnational authorities within UNEP activities.
1.6. Cooperate in promoting localisation of SDGs and mainstreaming of SDGs into the sectoral framework conventions in the field of environment, including a reflection on the post-2030 framework on Sustainable Development.
1.7. Cooperate in the reflection on UN actions to protect water as a key global resource.
1.8. Cooperate in activities and initiatives in green financing, connecting with the work of the urban finance commission and of the Global Environment Facility.
1.9. Explore the possibility of 2-week staff exchange between UNEP and ENVE on collaboration on specific joint event in Brussels.

2. <u>Climate Change</u>
2.1. Organization of joint events at the World Urban Forum, UNFCCC COP, CBD COP, UNEA Cities and Regions Summit, engagement of CoR membership in UNEP Climate Change Division events which include subnational governments.
2.2. Possible engagement of CoR members as best practices providers for cities and regions in the Global South on climate adaptation and mitigation; fostering cooperation with subnational governments in Global South.
2.3. Possible joint projects to be developed engaging cities and regions globally on topics related to climate adaptation and mitigation.
2.4. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of synergies between climate change and environmental protection in the UNFCCC framework, also in view of the preparation of NDCs 3.0.
2.5. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of local communities in combatting climate change in the UNFCCC framework, also in view of the preparation of NDCs 3.0.
2.6. Cooperate in the engagement of subnational authorities in thematic flagship activities on buildings' renovation, cooling plans and NDCs.
3. <u>Biodiversity</u>
3.1. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of synergies between climate change and environmental protection in the UN CBD framework.
3.2. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of local communities in combatting climate change in the UN CBD framework and promoting the replication of UN CBD best practice in the field to other conventions.
3.3. Cooperate in the engagement of subnational authorities in thematic flagship activities on Nature Based Solutions.
4. <u>Desertification</u>
4.1. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of synergies between climate change and environmental protection in the UNCCD framework.

4.2. Cooperate in getting a stronger recognition of the role of local communities in combatting climate change in the UNCCD framework and promoting the replication of UN CBD best practice in the field to other conventions.

5. Pollution

5.1. Cooperate in setting up a framework that already provides a space for subnational authorities to be heard.

5.2. Strengthen the cooperation in the framework of the Zero Pollution Stakeholders Platform.