



Welcome – Bula Vinaka to the Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders on 12 November, Sunday, at COP23, Bonn

by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

Local and regional governments are strengthening their resolve to curb climate change and prepare for its effects. They are coming together at COP23 in Bonn to launch key initiatives and strategic coalitions that shape global climate action.

The Climate Summit of Local and Regional Leaders on 12 November 2017 is the premier gathering of local and regional governments at COP23. It is co-hosted by the City of Bonn and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and attended by more than 1,000 delegates, including over 330 political leaders from more than 60 countries.

It is the first time that such a joint Local and Regional Leaders' Summit is held on the UNFCCC premises, with such diverse representation, to discuss climate and sustainability in a holistic manner. The Summit is the jumping off point for strategic initiatives and partnerships in support of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, demonstrating that when cities, regions, businesses, communities and all levels of government join forces, it makes climate action stronger and more effective. This is the way forward for climate action across the world and in climate vulnerable areas of the Global South and in small island nations in particular.

The Summit takes place right in the middle of a full two-week program at the Cities & Regions Pavilion, the home base for local and regional governments at COP23, and is the flagship event of the Summit Dialogues, a stretch of heightened activity featuring meetings, events and interactions with negotiators that will help shape and deliver messages to nations and key climate stakeholders. It is a pleasure and an honor to welcome you to Bonn and to have you join us on this important occasion. Together we will bring forward at COP23 what you are doing across your communities worldwide and accelerate action towards 2020 and beyond.



Linking national and subnational climate action is key.

The Paris Climate Agreement sets a clear global goal: To keep the global temperature rise well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. This requires that nations set, track, report and progressively increase climate commitments over time.

At the same time, the Paris Agreement, for the first time in climate history, recognizes the importance of engagement with all levels of government worldwide and domestically – including municipalities, towns, districts, cities, metropolitan areas, counties, provinces, regions, prefectures and states.

Under the Paris Agreement, nations are expected to submit targets every five years, and increase their level of ambition with each submission. This is critical to closing the gap between current Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the emissions reductions needed to achieve global goals.

Nations will assess their progress in 2018 as part of the Facilitative Dialogue, using that assessment to inform the process of reviewing and resubmitting pledges designed to raise national and global ambitions. For this process to be effective, it is critical that national governments are equipped with robust data. National governments need an accurate and up-to-date picture of climate action and climate risks at the subnational level.

At present, national and subnational governments often use parallel, disconnected climate action and reporting systems. This means that in many cases, subnational climate commitments, actions and risk assessments are not factored into national planning. This disconnect makes it difficult for nations to plan and set targets that reflect a real countrywide picture.

To address this, national, local and other subnational governments need to work together to track performance and implement effective, coordinated climate action, with the aim to progressively raise ambitions at all levels.