



**European Committee
of the Regions**

CBD COP 14 CITY SUMMIT – SESSION 8

**A SUBNATIONAL ROADMAP AND ACTION AGENDA FOR NATURE IN SUPPORT OF A NEW
DEAL FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET**

VENUE: CAPITAL PLENARY HALL, BUILDING 2, SHARM EL SHEIKH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS CENTER

DATE: 24/11/2018; 2.30 P.M. -4 P.M. (5-8 MINS MAX. ~ 600-900 WORDS)

Speaker 5: Mr Roby Biwer, First Vice-Chair, Commission for Environment, Climate change and Energy,
European Committee of Regions and Member of the Bettembourg Municipal Council, LU

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Panelist

1. SPEECH

Dear Chair(s),

Dear Fellow members of the panel,

Dear Ladies and Gentleman,

Firstly, allow me to thank you for including the European Committee of the Regions in today's discussion on the current and future actions towards the implementation of the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity.

I believe it is important to bring on the panel and on the discussion an institutional perspective.

As I mention this morning, the CoR is the official institution that voices cities and regions point of view within the European policy-making process.

The CoR does so by adopting what we call "Opinions". An official piece of legislation through which an appointed "rapporteur" expresses the point of view on EU legislation that directly affect regions and cities.

In the EU, such institutional system is in place because three quarters of EU legislation is implemented at local or regional level. Local and regional representatives need, therefore, to have a say in the development of EU laws.

There have been a generous number of Opinions that the CoR adopted on biodiversity. All of these opinions have durably affected the legislation of the European Union.

Just to mention a few:

- 1997: the CoR adopted three opinions related to biodiversity: one specifically on Regional Parks' value, another one on forests, and a third one on biodiversity in towns.
- The following year, in 1998, CoR stated in its proposal for a European Ecologic Union that "Proper economic development of the European Union is possible only in conjunction with an ambitious environmental policy".
- In 1999, the Committee of Regions began working on coastal zones and the protection of maritime biodiversity.

However, the most important year for the CoR work on biodiversity has been – until now - 2010. The CoR participation to the CBD COP10 has been remarkable.

Firstly, the CoR adopted an opinion addressing the "serious consequences of increasing loss of biodiversity, both for ethical reasons, as well as with a view to ensuring economic and social stability".

Then, the opinion's rapporteur of the time participated to the CBD COP10 and the CoR was a key player to persuade Parties on the relevance of "Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2011-2020)". A crucial starting point for the recognition of the role for cities and regions in implementing biodiversity action.

After this quick overview on the main legislative work that the CoR did in the past on biodiversity, allow me to provide you with some elements that the CoR is advocating for at this COP.

These elements are included in the CoR opinion on *The contribution of EU cities and regions to the CBD COP 14 and the post- 2020 EU Biodiversity Strategy*. I have been the rapporteur of this opinion.

Due to time limit, I will not be able to go into details of the full text of the opinion; however, I would be more than happy to discuss the opinion bilaterally after this session, if you wish.

The Opinion reiterates that:

-> **Firstly:** Despite there are only 2 years left to meet the Aichi Target, much can still be achieved, especially by involving sub-national governments.

The CoR highlights the importance of an adequate multilevel governance framework for coordinated action by sub-national governments with national and in our specific case European Union policy-making mechanism.

It is also necessary to develop and to enhance the access to resources (legal, financial and/or human) for those sub-national governments who wish to adequately develop their direct competences in matters of protection, planning, sustainable use, management, restoration and monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystems, including sites of greater conservation interest.

Especially, if they are provided with tools and mechanisms to access high quality information on status and trends of species, habitats, ecosystems and their services.

-> **Secondly:** we need an ambitious, effective and operational post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. This implies a coherent post-2020 governance structure and mechanism that applies the principles of horizontal mainstreaming, vertical alignment, and cooperative and integrated management linked to measurable targets and reporting mechanisms by and for all levels, including subnational governments, aligned with other international agreements, such as the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

On behalf of the CoR, I genuinely hope that these points will be part of the roadmap towards a New Deal for the Planet and for the People. If they are not, my institution will keep working until they are.

Thank you very much for your attention.

End

[742] words

-> Speakers will remain seated in a panel in front of the room for a short panel discussion.

2. PANEL DISCUSSION

The panel discussion will be kicked off by the session moderator who will then allow for up to three questions and or observations from the floor (time allowing) which one or more speakers / panellists can respond to.

The session moderator will then ask the panellist two to three rounds of questions and judging on time left may direct Question 1-5 to selected panellists only in order to ensure that panellist will be able to give brief but meaningful input to the questions posed to them. (ie. if time does NOT allow, not each panellist has to be invited to respond to all five questions).

Question 1 to 5 (each panellist is given around 2 minutes to respond):

1. How can we achieve more together and upscale our collective ambition?
2. Who else needs to be around the table (and what type of resources could they bring) and therefore be invited to be part of the Global Partnership on Local and Subnational Action for Biodiversity?
3. Which global processes should we be linking to more closely and what would be the one message OR REQUEST you would like the Global Partnership to take to China in 2020?
4. What lies beyond 2020 and 2030 (the SDG target date) for cities and subnational governments and how can the Global partnership make this vision of yours take off?
5. How would you describe YOUR 2050 vision for the New Deal for cities and SNGs (sub-national governments), i.e. HOW would you contribute in a much stronger way to the MEAs?

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