



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Sustainable Territorial Development Committee

Strasbourg, 5 October 2010

URGENT APPEAL ON
CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

1. **Recalling** the joint Declaration “Acting together for biodiversity, the preservation of natural spaces and the combat against climate change ” co-signed on the 28 April 2010, by the Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe,
2. **Considering** the contribution of NGOs to the national and international debates on climate change and biodiversity,
3. **the international NGOs**, member of the Committee on Sustainable Territorial Development of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe consider that combatting climate change, preventing and reducing its effects, requires territory-oriented efforts in order to ensure the well-being of its inhabitants.
4. Indeed, they consider that only **strategies geared to the territories** (at the local, regional, national and continental level), strategies jointly planned and formulated by all stakeholders, will lead to a sustainable lessening and mitigation of impact of the climate change. It is paramount for the ecological, social and economic equilibrium of the countries as well as for the survival of endangered populations and biodiversity. It is a challenge for Human rights and Equity. The responsibility of the global community is at stake.
5. INGOs are convinced that the reduction of greenhouse gases, though necessary, will not be enough to curb climate change because **ecosystemic services** are equally related. Services such as forests for storing carbon, such as humid areas for supplying water resources, ground water and spaces for storing flood waters.
6. INGOs give high priority to anticipating the effects of climate upheavals through the **quick adaptation of the territories**, especially as concerns the use of the soils, protection against extreme events, the use of natural resources and the evolution of endogenous economic activities.
7. It is essential to preserve healthy **ecosystems** by combatting the causes of destruction or deterioration threatening them: for example, ill-designed substructures, urban sprawl, overexploitation of natural resources, increasingly insidious pollutions, the spreading of invasive species, disappearance of natural habitats and traditional landscapes, loss or severe degradation of cultural and bio diversity.
8. INGOs demand that every sectoral policy: environmental planning, housing, transport, agriculture, forestry, industry, energy should take account and include these recommendations. They must identify the **requirements and the consequences of the soaring global population growth**. They must also evaluate the absorbing capacity and potentialities of territories where “climate “refugees would settle.

9. **Using Nature's capacity to mitigate the impacts** of climate change proves more efficient and less costly than using the technical answers provided by physical substructures. **"Green substructures"** must be used systematically as tools in town and country planning, respecting traditional forms of land use and settlement structures as well as strengthening cultural and bio diversity.
10. **Echoing the Summit of Nagoya on biodiversity and the Summit of Cancun on climate, the member INGOs of the Sustainable Territorial Development Committee of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe deem it urgent to link climate change with cultural and bio diversity. They deem wide information necessary so that decision makers and the general public become aware of their interdependence.**