



Climate Alliance welcomes the EU Green Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change

Press release
5 July 2007

On 29 June 2007 the European Commission adopted the EU Green paper on Adaptation to Climate Change. The green paper was presented to a wide public in an event in Brussels on 3 July 2007.

Climate Alliance welcomes the EU Green Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change and the recognition of the double challenge of adaptation and mitigation. We are happy to see that the Commission puts emphasis on mitigation whilst recognising the need for adaptation.

Many decisions influencing directly or indirectly climate change adaptation are taken at the local level. The crucial role of local level in adaptation was also emphasised in many occasions during the event in Brussels. In practical terms EU and national governments should support 'integrated climate adaptation and mitigation plans' of local governments. Further support should be provided for exchanging good practices among local governments as well as wide awareness raising.

We think that especially in the areas of construction, urban and land use planning (including forestry and agriculture) and energy there is potential for overlapping actions for mitigation and adaptation. When resources are scarce it is important to find measures that reinforce both adaptation and mitigation policies. For example demand driven, decentralized energy supply based on renewable energy is less vulnerable for climate extremes and black-outs than big centralised power plants. In building sector using high energy efficiency standards contribute both to mitigation and adaptation.

The Climate Alliance is currently running a project on combining mitigation and adaptation strategies at local level. The project has developed an adaptation tool with series of key measures. This tool includes more than 40 adaptation measures covering impact types such as flooding, droughts and overheating, and looking at different categories such as information services, planning, water management and transport (The adaptation matrix and a list of evaluated adaptation measures are available at <http://www.amica-climate.net/>. An integrated online tool with further measures will be available at the end of 2007.). Tools such as this one are very valuable for public authorities and help them to identify and prioritise necessary actions.

Further steps are needed to integrate local governments into the EU climate change debate. The green paper includes a section on involving society, business and public sector in preparing comprehensive adaptation strategies; it also proposes to set up a European advisory group for adaptation to climate change. Climate Alliance calls upon the European Commission to invite local government organisations to participate in the advisory group. We will also propose organising a separate workshop with representatives of local governments to be able to look - in an integrated way - the different areas in which local governments can contribute to the EU adaptation agenda.

