



With support of



**Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation  
on climate change mitigation and adaptation between  
The United States Conference of Mayors and  
the Committee of the Regions of the European Union**

The scope of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to establish a framework for setting out practical arrangements aimed at cooperation between The United States Conference of Mayors and the Committee of the Regions of the European Union, with the support of the European Commission, on engaging in joint efforts aimed at tackling climate change and bridging the experiences of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and of the EU Covenant of Mayors.

### **Whereas the signatories**

- recall the urgent need to address climate change as one of the most important challenges facing humankind. They recognise that cities and regions could or already have a leading and pivotal role in tackling climate change within their scope of competence as service providers and producers, planners and regulators as well as advisors. This concerns both reducing climate change impacts by local actions as well as adapting their communities to unavoidable climate change;
- consider that, in order to successfully address the climate change challenge, it is crucial that local and regional authorities on both sides of the Atlantic take the lead by reinforcing their commitments, e.g. by anticipating and going beyond the objectives set at national and European level, through the implementation of concrete actions at local and regional level.
- highlight that excellent examples of this bottoms-up approach are the initiatives undertaken by the Committee of the Regions, in the framework of the EU Covenant of Mayors, and by The US Conference of Mayor in the framework of the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement;
- believe in the need to increase the exchange of best practice and cooperation between local and regional authorities on proven and innovative instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and by bridging across the Atlantic the aforementioned frameworks.
- feel that it is of utmost importance for local and regional authorities, which have a direct channel of communication to the citizens, to involve them in the debate and stimulate them to take concrete actions to reduce the common carbon footprint;

- see the need for national governments and the European Union to involve local and regional governments in their policy-making in the field of climate change.

**By signing this MoU, the signatories aim at<sup>1</sup>**

**1. raising awareness among citizens and local leaders.**

The signatories intend cooperating on launching a joint awareness raising campaign which will include, amongst others, communication tools for local and regional authorities to explain to their citizens what they could do in their own environment and local communities to reduce and adapt to climate change. The increased cross-Atlantic cooperation amongst local and regional authorities will strive at creating advanced leaders in tackling climate change as well as attentiveness across all generations, especially the youngest;

**2. joining local and regional forces in global climate policy making.**

In order to contribute to shaping a global climate policy agenda based on local and regional climate actions, the signatories consider accelerating their joint standing in policy areas such as improving the energy efficiency of buildings, promoting renewable energy sources and sustainable urban mobility, developing efficient waste management systems, influencing citizens' behaviour as well as improving land use policy and spatial planning to adapt to climate change.

**3. exchanging best practices in fighting climate change.**

Leveraging on the experiences of the EU Covenant of Mayors and the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, the signatories intend drafting a joint code of best practices, which would compile actions undertaken or being developed at local/regional level on both sides of the Atlantic. In order to enlarge mutual knowledge and use of instruments given to local and regional authorities, a "US-EU twinning for greening initiative" will be considered. This initiative would aim at encouraging the teaming up of cities and towns in the USA and the EU for sharing amongst practitioners and citizens of twinned towns their experiences and best practices in tackling climate change;

**4. sharing results of their cooperation with all interested parties**

The signatories intend co-organising events which will be targeted at taking stock of the progress achieved in implementing this MoU, at programming future joint actions where appropriate and at sharing their experiences with all interested parties. Common events would provide a platform for regional and local politicians and experts from the EU, the USA and beyond, to discuss the joint challenges which are ahead, to exchange information and best practices on local and regional action and how best to tackle them, as well as to discuss the necessary international and national frameworks needed to support such actions.

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<sup>1</sup> The signatories understand that this MoU does not obligate either signatory to an outlay of funds but rather rests upon the mutual agreement that each determines its own carrying out of the activities described.

Brussels, 5 October 2010

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