

ICLEI European Membership Assembly Invitation

European Secretariat

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Freiburg, July 1, 2015

Dear....,

We would like to cordially invite you to the ICLEI Membership Assembly on 15 October 2015, which is generously hosted by the European Office of the Region Rhône-Alpes in Brussels. It will take place during a strategically important period in which active participation and input from local governments is essential.

While the COP 21 will be just over one month away, we will be able to reflect on the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will have been agreed by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. In Europe we see an increasing dynamic in the process to come forward with a European Urban Agenda that should be concluded in the first half of 2016. The agenda for the upcoming 8th European Conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns (ESCT Conference) hosted by the Basque Country (Bilbao, 27-29 April 2016) is under preparation and will build on these frameworks and should also reflect the input that we receive during the Assembly.

ICLEI together with an alliance of partners has been pushing intensely for the recognition of the role of local and sub-national governments in the global climate regime. The focus towards COP 21 is now on underpinning the recognition by credible commitments, reliable emission data and reporting mechanisms based on a global protocol, and, most importantly, actions that lead to substantial emission reductions. These elements are necessary to enable cities and sub-national governments to tap into international climate financing mechanisms, both for mitigation and adaptation measures.

Therefore ICLEI together with partners has developed the so-called Transformative Actions Programme (TAP) that is now widely announced and promoted and will have its first climax with the presentation in the Local Action Pavilion during the COP 21 in Paris. The TAP concept will be introduced and discussed in the Membership Assembly. We would like to explore in how far the concept of transformative actions can be expanded from the sphere of climate policy into the wider idea of urban sustainability and how the concept could potentially get traction in a European context.

ICLEI is a membership organization of local governments and associations of local government.

ICLEI's mission is to build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global sustainability with special focus on environmental conditions through cumulative local actions.

ICLEI was founded in 1990 as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives.

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In the European context it looks like the Urban Agenda could potentially become the most relevant governing framework for local policies by bundling, coordinating and communicating most of the regulation, programmes and communication relating to cities and local governments. Of course, we would like to see that this framework encourages and supports transformative actions on the ground. At the ICLEI European Membership Assembly Deputy Director General Normans Popens from DG Regional and Urban Policy will present the status and idea of the EU Urban Agenda and how it will reflect the international frameworks resulting from the COP 21 and the Rio+20 process.

This discussion will be followed by an introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. This will be done by Stefanos Fotiou, Head of Unit Sustainable Lifestyles and Cities at UNEP. In the discussion we would like to explore in how far the concept of transformative actions can provide a supporting process for the local implementation of the SDGs and how this can provide a fresh impulse for Europe.

This aspect will also influence the agenda of the upcoming ESCT Conference in Bilbao, Basque Country on 27 -29 April 2016, which will be introduced in the final part of our Membership Assembly by the Basque Government, which will also show how the Basque Country managed its own transformation and how it can act as a showcase during the days of the Conference.

A light lunch will be served, which will allow for further networking and informal talks.

Please find a detailed draft agenda in the annex.

For more information, please contact events.europe@iclei.org. Please register to this event (no fee) here: <http://bit.ly/1FQoi0F>.

We are looking forward to welcome you to a rich and lively day full of interesting debates, networking and exchange. Your active participation, input and feedback is welcome and encouraged to guide us on our way forward towards a more sustainable and inclusive Europe.



Pekka Sauri
Chair
ICLEI European Regional Executive Committee



Wolfgang Teubner
ICLEI Regional Director Europe