



July 20, 2015

His Excellency Minister Laurent Fabius
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Développement international
37 Quai d'Orsay
75007 Paris

Dear Minister Fabius,

We write to commend you for the leadership France has shown in galvanizing the groundswell of climate action at all levels—in cities, regions, the private sector, and in national policies—in the lead-up to COP21. Solidifying this groundswell as the fourth component of the Paris Alliance for Climate Action signals a bold and welcome shift in global efforts to tackle climate change. We are particularly encouraged to see so many countries, from all over the globe, supporting the French government's initiative in this regard.

The French government, together with its partners in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda and with the broader surge of climate action around the world, now has an extraordinary opportunity to institutionalize and strengthen this "Action Agenda" over the next five years. We encourage you to seize this opportunity by building a robust framework for climate action at all levels following COP21. Strengthening the groundswell will not only enhance the efforts of cities, regions, businesses, and others to address climate change after 2015, but will also give confidence to national governments to meaningfully 'ratchet up' their contributions in the years to come. It would also mark a bold transformation of the evolving climate regime, and represent one of the most important legacies the French government will leave to the UNFCCC process.

To maximize the potential of the groundswell of climate actions, several key functions are needed: enhancing the visibility of climate actions at all levels; aggregating and tracking climate actions; following up with pledged climate actions to promote implementation; orchestrating new initiatives and scaling existing initiatives; and promoting learning and diffusion. Some of these functions are currently being met by a range of actors, including the Lima Paris-Action Agenda partners (e.g. via the action days at the COPs, the NAZCA platform, etc.), other international organizations and national governments, civil society groups, and researchers. But some key functions are going unmet, and all can be strengthened. We have prepared a memo listing various policy options to achieve this goal. Below, we highlight what we see as the most powerful steps France and its partners can take to drive the Action Agenda forward after COP21.

First, it is essential to **transform the Lima-Paris Action Agenda into an ongoing Action Agenda** that brings together future COP Presidents (perhaps in 3-year staggered terms like the G20), the UNFCCC, and other international organizations, as well as the larger community of cities and regions, businesses, and civil society groups that constitute the groundswell of climate actions. We favor a tiered, multi-stakeholder design that brings all relevant actors to the table, but that also allows for efficient governance and division of labor.

Second, to maintain momentum after COP21, the Action Agenda should **host a regular high-level meeting to launch new initiatives and follow up and expand on existing ones**. To maximize political support and strengthen national policies, this event could be linked to a revitalized UNFCCC work stream 2.



Third, to ensure that the action agenda continues to receive high-level political support, it may be desirable to **appoint a Special Representative for the Action Agenda**. This individual, or individuals, would ideally be dynamic and well-respected leaders with broad convening power, and would be charged with expanding the groundswell into the future.

Fourth, to increase the visibility of the full scope of climate action, and to track and aggregate climate action, **it is crucial for the NAZCA portal to continue to expand** and ideally institute a stronger multi-stakeholder element to its governance.

Fifth, we applaud the French government for beginning to circulate minimum criteria for sub-national and private sector commitments and initiatives. Evidence shows that well-designed initiatives are more likely to achieve their goals. Therefore, we believe the French government can go even further by **encouraging all initiatives to progressively move to meeting “SMART”—specific, measurable, accountable, resourced, and time-bound—criteria**. While it would be counterproductive to impose strict criteria on commitments and initiatives, the French government and the ongoing Action Agenda can help initiatives become SMART-er over time and highlight and support initiatives that succeed in this regard.

Sixth, just like with national pledges, the credibility of the groundswell of climate actions—ensuring that cities, regions, companies, and others meet their commitments—is essential to the sustained success of the Action Agenda. While it is impracticable and undesirable to regulate the heterogeneous array of climate actions, **it may be useful to appoint an official ombudsperson for the NAZCA platform**—an independent individual to whom complaints and inquiries regarding the information on the platform can be directed.

Finally, to support these actions, **it will be necessary for governments to allocate sustained resources at least for the 2016-2020 period**. While the amount of funding is not great (our initial estimate is €5 million per year for 2016-2020), regular and predictable support is essential for the robust framework described above to function. These resources would help to ensure an ongoing ‘return on investment’ for the significant resources France has contributed to the Action Agenda thus far.

We wish to reiterate our gratitude to you and your government for your leadership on this critical issue. We commit to working with you and the entire groundswell of stakeholders to ensure the success of the Action Agenda at Paris and well beyond.

Sincerely,

The Steering Committee of Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions

Ms. Nicolette Bartlett, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership

Mr. Brendan Guy, Natural Resources Defense Council

Dr. Sander Chan, German Development Institute

Dr. Thomas Hale, Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford

Mr. Todd Edwards, The Stanley Foundation

Dr. Angel Hsu, Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy

Ms. Ann Gardiner, Ecofys



Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions (GGCA) is a series of open dialogues that aims to bring the groundswell of climate actions from cities, regions, companies, and other groups to a higher level of scale and ambition.

Its objectives include:

- Increasing efficient coordination among cooperative initiatives and sub- and non-state networks.
- Improving analysis and understanding of “bottom up” climate actions.
- Building a positive narrative of pragmatic, concrete action on climate change.
- Identifying opportunities for the groundswell of climate actions and the intergovernmental negotiations process to support and catalyze each other.

Over the past year, GGCA has brought together city and regional networks, company networks, cooperative initiatives, governments, international organizations, and researchers to discuss and advance these objectives. By convening the community of actors that make up and support the groundswell of climate actions, GGCA seeks to realize the full potential of this extraordinary innovation in global governance.