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Local action critical in tackling climate change

EFA press release

MEPs from Wales, Scotland, Catalonia, Flanders, Corsica and Latvia have joined forces to emphasise the crucial role that historic nations and regions have to play in tackling climate change.

The European Parliament in Strasbourg has this week been debating and voting on the EU's priorities for the Copenhagen climate change summit which takes place in December. The EU's negotiating position will be crucial in achieving a successful outcome to the talks.

MEPs agreed to call for stringent emission reduction targets, funding commitments and penalties for countries failing to comply.

But the group of MEPs representing Europe's stateless nations and regions emphasised that effectively delivering the policies needed to tackle climate change will be largely dependent on work done at a local level. The MEPs have tabled a statement in the European Parliament stressing the important role of small nations and regions in implementing climate policy. The MEPs are **Jill Evans** (Plaid Cymru), **Ian Hudghton** and **Alyn Smith** (Scottish National Party), **Frieda Brepoels** (Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie), **Oriol Junqueras** (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya), **Tatjana Zdanoka** (PCTVL - Latvia), and **François Alfonsi** (PNC - Corsica).

Plaid Cymru MEP and President of the European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament **Jill Evans** said:

"Effectively tackling climate change will not be achieved without the crucial role that historic nations and regions are already playing. Around 80% of the actual mitigation and adaptation policies needed to tackle climate change will be delivered at local and regional level.

"We've already seen in Wales, Scotland and similar countries our governments taking radical and ambitious steps to tackle climate change and actually giving a lead on this issue.

"What we do at local level to tackle climate change will be critical to the success or failure of any agreement at Copenhagen. It will be critical in limiting global warming to less than two degrees which is what's needed if we are to avoid climate catastrophe. That's why our voice must be heard at Copenhagen."

Ends

Note - MEPs statement copied below

Explanation of vote on Preparation of the Copenhagen summit on climate change

In the resolution adopted by the EP a specific chapter stresses the great importance of regions and local authorities in the consultation, information and implementation of the climate policy. Up to 80% of mitigation and adaptation policies will happen at the regional and local level. Several regional or sub state governments are leading the way on radical policies to fight climate change.

As Members of the European Free Alliance representing European nations and regions we fully support the direct involvement of sub-state bodies and regional governments in the promotion of sustainable development and the efficient response to climate change.

In this context the work of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) has to be underlined. This Network has already set up a partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

We therefore call the explicit recognition of regional governments in the context of the Copenhagen agreement recognising the key role they are playing in mitigation and adaptation policies.

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