

Without hope there is no will and no action: cities collaborate for 1.5°C

Interesting reflections, success stories and renewed enthusiasm around the possibilities of effectively implementing the climate action agenda that the planet and people need were part of the #ACADAY held at the UN Climate Change Conference, COP28, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

In a series of panels held in the WWF/ACA pavilion, Alliances for Climate Action (ACA) were able to connect and present their visions, accompanied by high-level speakers. This, in line with the objective of the ACAs, an initiative promoted by WWF that seeks to mobilize actions and the collaboration of subnational and non-state actors in the face of the climate crisis.

"Although science shows us that the window of opportunity to not exceed 1.5°C is increasingly smaller, as ACA we are convinced of the power of this alliance to concretely carry out, in the territories and the various economic sectors, the transformations that will allow us to face the climate emergency," said Luli Pesqueira, Senior Coordinator of Global ACA and Climate Action Program of WWF Mexico.

The opening event focused on the role of subnational governments and non-state actors in strengthening the NDCs towards 2030. It was attended by Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, WWF Climate and Energy Leader; Katherine "Trin" Custodio, Executive Director of WWF Philippines; and Gonzalo Muñoz, COP25 High Level Champion. The panel was moderated by Luli Pesqueira.

Manuel Pulgar-Vidal emphasized that it is not a matter of conditions, but of contribution and courage to implement the measures urgently needed to meet climate commitments. On this point, he highlighted as key "strengthening the ability of subnational governments to develop their own plans and for these plans to feed into the national process", a task in which ACA has a relevant role to play.

Champion Gonzalo Muñoz pointed out that although several environmental treaties have already been signed, it is now time to implement them, as in the case of the Paris Agreement, "and that implementation happens in the ACAs, the only thing we must do is to implement them as smartly and quickly as possible and for that the ACAs are absolutely perfect".

Katherine "Trin" Custodio, executive-director of WWF Philippines, announced the launch of ACA Philippines, which will be held next year. "We want to be a platform that will accelerate synergies among different sectors and be able to work together to move faster," she said. He also explained that the founding group of ACA

Philippines is made up of some of the largest companies in the country, which together account for almost 30% of the GDP and provide around 300.000 jobs.

This was followed by the side event "UACA: A Year of Impact", dedicated to the work of ACA United Arab Emirates. Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak Champion of COP28, valued the contribution of this climate alliance to continue building momentum around climate action, contributing to "collaboration between governments and non-state actors to really facilitate discussion and dialogue to reinforce ambition and unblock obstacles, ensuring understanding of what type of policies should be put in place, what type of incentives and, of course, what type of regulations".

Laila Mostafa Abdullatif, CEO of Emirates Nature-WWF, highlighted the progress of the alliance. She also presented two platforms to contribute to climate action by UACA members: a tool for measuring emissions in organizations, aligned with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol; and the UACA Climate Dashboard on track 2.0, the first of its kind in the country, focused on monitoring key climate metrics. Nawal Al-Hosany, permanent representative of the United Arab Emirates to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), also valued UACA's national contribution.

This was followed by a panel with representatives of UACA member organizations, moderated by David Ramos, head of Sustainability at HSBC MENAT, in which Ricardo Bosshard, director of WWF Chile and advisor global ACA, also participated. "ACA builds bridges, conversations and drives increasingly urgent initiatives for effective and rapid climate action that complements national efforts and allows us to accelerate transitions that can focus on the 1.5°C line" he said.

The closing of the ACA Day was in charge of the municipalities, with representatives from Porto Alegre (Brazil), Cerro Navia (Chile); Sydney (Australia); eThekweni (South Africa); Merida (Mexico) and Tokyo (Japan), who stressed that they are ready to join other mayors to the ACAs in their country to contribute to the processes of updating the NDCs, highlighting that the transitions have to be made in the cities and with the people, in a context of the real economy.

Among the cases presented, the mayor of Cerro Navia, Mauro Tamayo, highlighted the work of the Food Bank implemented in this commune, where a collaboration with WWF Chile was established. In addition, representatives from Tokyo, Merida and Sydney highlighted the work with the construction and building sector to reduce emissions through efficiency, renewable energy and low-carbon materials.

The ACAs bring together more than 6,000 cities, state, regional and tribal governments, businesses, investors, religious, cultural and academic institutions and civil society organizations. They are present in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Japan, Mexico, South Africa, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates and the "America Is All In" alliance in the United States.