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Climate action - an opportunity for cities

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Leaders of major European cities met on Friday in Copenhagen for discussions on climate action ahead of COP 21 in Paris next month. They stressed the need for a global climate deal to recognise the important role of cities in addressing climate change, and emphasised the efforts already happening at local level.

Many European cities are already world leaders on climate action. They have a lot of experience to share and should not be underestimated as part of a global climate deal. Cities are home to half the world's population and emit two thirds of global CO₂.

Speaking after the discussions, Johanna Rolland, EUROCITIES president and mayor of Nantes, said:

"The challenge ahead of us is huge, but we are keen to highlight the opportunities of climate action for cities. This is a chance to create new jobs and improve social cohesion, support innovation and help households and businesses save money, all while cutting emissions."

The discussion took place during EUROCITIES 2015 Copenhagen/Malmö, our annual conference, on 4-6 November. The conference focused on sustainable growth and quality of life.

Frank Jensen, lord mayor of Copenhagen, hosted the political discussion. He said:

"We are already doing a lot: improving the energy efficiency of new and old buildings, encouraging low carbon mobility and energy production, and getting citizens involved in the process. Climate change is a very real threat, but taking action now can make our citizens healthier and happier, and our cities more attractive and resilient."

EUROCITIES is keen to ensure that a global climate deal at COP 21 recognises the full potential of cities in addressing climate change. We want to encourage cities around the world to share their experiences and learn from each other.

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Notes to editors:

- EUROCITIES: www.eurocities.eu
- EUROCITIES statement on COP 21: <http://bit.ly/1IXouCy>
- EUROCITIES 2015 Copenhagen/Malmö: www.eurocities2015.eu
- Twitter: @EUROCITIEStweet via #EUROCITIES2015