



## PRESS RELEASE

### COP21 Paris 2015

### Less CO2 emissions in cities through business-civil society joint engagement



Paris, May 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

More than 50 decision-makers from the Grand Paris Alliance™, major companies, start-ups, representative of civil society, local authorities and foreign economic missions gathered together on May 5<sup>th</sup> at the invitation of Schneider Electric and the Grand Paris Alliance™ (*Cercle Grand Paris de l'Investissement Durable™*). An event hosted by Luc REMONT, Chairman of Schneider Electric France, at the company's headquarters in Rueil-Malmaison near Paris.

The countdown for the Paris 2015 Conference on Climate Change (COP21-CMP11) has begun: just 200 days still remain to galvanise the administrative authorities, companies, public and civil society into action to ensure the conference's success. Are all the necessary ingredients in place? What, if any, are Grand Paris' plans for the climate? What should be our priorities for the next 6 months?

Such were the key issues emerging from lively exchanges among **4 leading figures in relation to COP21 and urban development prospects** during discussions led by moderator **Nicolas BUCHOUD**, Chairman of the Grand Paris Alliance and founder of Renaissance Urbaine.

For Senator **Ronan DANTEC**, one of the two people spearheading the *World Summit on Climate and Territories* (Lyon, 1 and 2 July), COP21's priority will be to lay robust foundations for a realistic agreement over a global target of stabilising climate change at under +2°C.[\[1\]](#)

COP21 is a key stage in a long-term process. It should signal the start of a new era, the ultimate challenge being to preserve both our civilisation and world peace.

The success of COP21 will be contingent on the lasting involvement of protagonists other than those in central government, essentially local and regional players but also civil society, companies, individual citizens, through their various initiatives and projects. French President, François Hollande, will be present in Lyon, which will send a clear signal as regards his unqualified support.

During the actual COP21 conference, the Grand Palais, the Petit Palais, the National Air and Space Museum will be some of the places where people will be able to meet and discuss in addition to the areas set aside at Le Bourget for civil society and inter-governmental negotiations.

**Gilles VERMOT-DESROCHES**, leader of the MEDEF (French employers' federation) COP21 working party and Vice-Chairman of Schneider Electric with responsibility for sustainable development, stressed that the countdown had begun. Driving down CO2 emissions is a challenge facing civilisation as we know it. Companies and other economic players have a leading role to play.

One of the major highlights on the programme will be the first ever *Business Climate Summit* [2] on 20 and 21 May in Paris, a key international event to be jointly chaired by Pierre-André de CHALENDAR (Saint Gobain) and Jean-Pascal TRICOIRE (Schneider Electric). It will be followed by *Climate Finance Day* on 22 May. [3]

To drive down CO2 emissions, agreement over a truly workable approach to carbon pricing is a priority. Insurance companies and the funds they manage or in which they invest play an increasingly important role. In its work on COP21 (to be published very shortly), the MEDEF will be recommending the introduction of a worldwide carbon tax, a proposal marking a vital turning point.

According to **Philippe LANGLOIS d'ESTAINOT**, Deputy Mayor of Rueil-Malmaison (Hauts de Seine) with responsibility for sustainable development, COP21 remains something remote and often poorly understood by the public at large.

The local authorities will need to ramp up their efforts to bring the population on side. This can be done in a variety of ways.

Rueil, which has long subscribed to the "21" and "sustainable development" agendas, has launched a range of different schemes. Some are for local residents, such as the programme spearheaded by the THERMIE association to make it easier for home owners to bring their property into line with energy-saving standards. [4] Others target companies to help them in their environmental action and build awareness among their staff.

It will also be vital for the various different local and regional authorities in Greater Paris to work more closely together to fuel local policies and increase the environmental impact of local development projects (eco-districts) along with the billions invested in public transportation (Grand Paris Express). [5]

Chief Economist at OECD and main author of *The Metropolitan Century*, the OECD's baseline report issued in February 2015, **Dr Rüdiger AHREND** reminded the assembly that metropolises were now a fact of international life and needed to be addressed as such.<sup>[6]</sup>

A number of large towns and cities have populations, economies and even decision-making powers that exceed those of many States. In 2030, the world will count more than 40 metropolises with more than 10 million inhabitants.

Cooperation between local and central government is a must. Cooperation between territories, companies, etc. within these larger metropolitan areas will be crucial.

Econometric studies carried out by OECD have shown that there is a direct link between cause and effect, between fragmented governance and a slump of several percentage points in economic performance in terms of GDP, with the resulting adverse impact on green growth promotion capacity.

The major urban areas have a key role to play in curbing CO2 emissions.

[1] <http://en.rhonealpes.fr/1204-actualite-evenements.htm>

[2] <http://www.businessclimatesummit.com>

[3] *Climate Finance Day* is being jointly organised by the CDC, the EIB and Paris Europlace

[4] <http://plateau.conseilsdevillages.com/actualites/contenus-des-conferences-thermie>

[5] Together with the Mont Valérien local authority association, Rueil-Malmaison was the winner of the 2015 national "Positive energy territories" (TEPOS) appeal for projects

[6] <http://www.oecd.org/publications/the-metropolitan-century-9789264228733-en.htm>

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## **For information about COP21 (official website)**

<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/fr>

## **SAVE THE DATE**

4<sup>th</sup> annual Forum of the Cercle Grand Paris de l'Investissement Durable™ / The Grand Paris Alliance™

***Disruptive Alliances, Reinventing Growth: the New Logics of Metropolitan Development - 22 et 23 juin 2015***

For information and registration: [info@cerclegrandparis.org](mailto:info@cerclegrandparis.org)