

In Paris it became 'chic' for sub-nationals to provide multilateral support for climate change finance. Now it must become 'de rigueur' !

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- At COP21, Quebec announced Cdn\$25.5 million of climate finance for developing countries, including Cdn\$6 million through the multilateral LDC Fund.
- Al Gore thanked the Quebec people; he said they were “becoming true heroes in the world’s effort to solve the climate crisis” and setting an example that would reverberate to regions and countries around the world.
- He was right. The Quebec model immediately became *chic* in Paris: the Brussels, Flanders and Walloon regions of Belgium, in addition to the city of Paris, all announced multilateral climate finance pledges.
- Other subnational governments are now considering following Quebec’s lead; a contribution to multinational climate finance may soon be *de rigueur* for the wealthy cities and regions of the world which are signatories of the Under2MOU.

On December 5, Action Day at COP21 in Paris, the Premier of Quebec, Philippe Couillard, announced the province’s contribution of Cdn\$25.5 million of climate finance for the developing countries, including Cdn\$6 million for the [Least Developed Countries Fund](#) (LDCF) managed by the [Global Environment Facility](#) (GEF).

The significance of the announcement was captured by Al Gore’s address to the press conference, in which he expressed “deep gratitude, admiration and congratulations” for Quebec’s initiative. He said that he “could not find adequate words to describe how significant this [initiative] is” because it illustrates how the wealthy regions of the world are able to reach out in partnership especially to the least developed countries to enable them to participate fully in solving the global climate crisis. He stressed the importance of the Cdn\$6 million being channelled through LDCF to the countries that need the assistance the most. “Here Quebec is showing the way.” He ended by saying that the people of Quebec were “becoming known as true heroes in the world’s effort to solve the climate crisis” and that their gesture “will reverberate with other regions and nations around the world”.

Quebec’s announcement was followed by announcements of pledges from Belgian regional governments to the multilateral [Green Climate Fund](#) (GCF): €500,000 from the Brussels Capital Region, the Flanders Region €3.5 million, and the Walloon region €7 million (per year until 2020). The city of Paris also announced its own contribution of €1 million to the GCF.

Where do we go from here? One logical next step would be for other members of the [Western Climate Initiative](#) (which offers administrative support to the GHG emissions trading scheme that includes Quebec, California, Ontario and Manitoba) to consider following Quebec’s example.

Why stop there? By the end of the COP, over 120 states and regions had joined the [Under2MOU](#), which was launched in 2015 by California and the German State of Baden-Württemberg with the aim of galvanising action among regions to limit warming to below 2°C. Under it, signatories from developed and developing countries commit to either reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 to 95 percent below 1990 levels or limiting per capita annual emissions to less than 2 metric tons by 2050. In other words, this is a club of regions that want to be more ambitious than any global climate agreement could ever be. New members joined the club before the COP, but many regions announced their adhesion in Paris. The signatories of the pact now represent more than 720 million people and \$19.9 trillion in combined GDP, equivalent to more than a quarter of the global economy. To date, the focus has been on domestic mitigation. However, if it becomes *de rigueur* for the signatories from wealthy nations to follow the example of Quebec, Paris and the Belgian regions in contributing multilateral climate finance, this would involve a fundamental transformation of global climate and development finance.

On behalf of Oxford Climate Policy, I would like to congratulate Premier Couillard and Minister Heurtel for their groundbreaking announcement. It was an honour, a privilege, and a pleasure for us to have been able to help bring the idea of [subnational contributions to multilateral finance](#) to fruition.

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For more on the author's views on COP 21 and its implications click [here](#)

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