

# Submission from the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice

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19 February 2016

4. The SBI invited Parties, admitted observer organizations and other stakeholders to submit to the secretariat, by 19 February 2016, their feedback on the organization of the 3rd in-session Dialogue on Article 6 of the Convention and their views on the agenda for the 4th in-session Dialogue, which will focus on public access to information, public participation and public awareness, as well as on international cooperation on these matters.

**FCCC/SBI/2015/L.11**

The Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice ('The Foundation') proposes that the fourth in-session Dialogue on Article 6 of the Convention include a focus on:

1. Good practices and lessons learned from the participation of grassroots practitioners in the design, planning and implementation of climate actions in order to reflect the value of local knowledge
2. Ensuring the complementarity of work under Article 6 of the Convention with the Sustainable Development Goals, including how activities under Article 6 can contribute to the achievement of the targets for Goals 13 and 16, namely targets 13.2, 13.3, 13.b and 16.7.

In the second in-session Dialogue on Article 6 the Foundation presented a case study on the effective engagement of grassroots practitioners at the international level. In that we identified that:

- Some of the most effective solutions to the adverse effects of climate change are already being provided by the most vulnerable
- Creating platforms for sharing those solutions is crucial to advancing the climate change process at the local, national and international levels
- More focus should be placed on the participation of women as they have been identified as being at the heart of creating effective climate change responses.

Additionally we placed emphasis on the methods that assist grassroots practitioners to participate and add their voices to the UNFCCC including holding capacity building workshops at the UNFCCC and utilising plain language in UNFCCC processes so that the negotiations are more accessible.

There continues to be a need to engage with grassroots practitioners as part of climate response design, planning and implementation. Learning from Parties that have successfully engaged grassroots practitioners in their climate strategies, including both mitigation and adaptation responses, will assist in building the capacity of other Parties to incorporate grassroots practitioners into these processes. The Foundation has undertaken a number of case studies in this area, such as in El Salvador where specific measures taken to build the capacity of women to participate in environmental decision making has enhanced climate action.<sup>1</sup>

We encourage the Secretariat to follow up on the fruitful discussions that took place in the second session of the Dialogue by taking examples from Parties, other UN Agencies and observers as to how they have developed and benefited from grassroots engagement and participation in their climate responses. The sharing of this information will assist in disseminating best practices for Parties considering building mechanisms to engage grassroots practitioners in their climate responses going forward.

The Foundation notes that 2016 marks a turning point in the global discussion of climate change. This includes in relation to Article 6 where the importance of strengthening knowledge, technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change was recognised and made part of a new platform of discussion<sup>2</sup>. Additionally the Paris Agreement directly recognises the need for climate responses to recognise human rights in particular the rights of the most vulnerable. Moreover the Paris Agreement acknowledges that the importance of public awareness, public participation and public access to information, with respect to enhancing actions under the Agreement<sup>3</sup> as well the key role of public awareness in capacity building.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly 2016 sees the first full year in which the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be active. In particular the following targets are of specific relevance to the work under Article 6 of the UNFCCC:

- 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning
- 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation
- 13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

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<sup>1</sup> *Women's Participation; an Enabler of Climate Justice* (2015) Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, Dublin

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 136, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties decision 1/CP.21

<sup>3</sup> Article 12, Paris Agreement, as contained in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties decision 1/CP.21

<sup>4</sup> Article 11(1) *ibid*

- 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

A key element to the integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning in a manner that respects human rights is to ensure adequate public awareness and inclusive public participation. This includes through the engagement of women, youth and marginalized communities.

The coming together of the international climate and development processes as articulated in Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement is an important milestone that should be harnessed.

## Recommendations for the 4<sup>th</sup> Dialogue

Considering the above, the Foundation suggests the 4<sup>th</sup> in-session Dialogue includes two items in the agenda that address the issues set out in the first paragraph of this submission:

1. Good practices and lessons learned from the participation of grassroots practitioners in the design, planning and implementation of climate actions in order to reflect the value of local knowledge
2. Ensuring the complementarity of work under Article 6 of the Convention with the Sustainable Development Goals, including how activities under Article 6 can contribute to the achievement of the targets for Goals 13 and 16, namely targets 13.2, 13.3, 13.b and 16.7.

We would further encourage the Secretariat to invite other relevant UN agencies to participate in the discussion, in particular where they have examples of good practice in relation to the engagement of grassroots practitioners in decision making processes.

We further recommend that the Secretariat ensure that the above discussion topics include substantial input from women, in line with the UNFCCC's commitment to gender balance,<sup>5</sup> and ensure that they include good practices that are gender-responsive.

The Foundation thanks the Subsidiary Body on Implementation for this opportunity for observers to express their views on the Agenda for the 4<sup>th</sup> in Session Dialogue.

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties decision 23/CP.18