

ECONGO

Education, Communication and Outreach NGO Community

**ECONGO SUBMISSION FOR THE 5TH DIALOGUE ON ACTION FOR CLIMATE EMPOWERMENT
(ACE)
TO BE HELD IN MAY 2017 IN BONN, GERMANY**

Background

We would like to congratulate the UNFCCC Secretariat for the on-going efforts, including the four previous Dialogues, to strengthen the operationalisation and domestication of the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) initiative relating to Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. We are grateful for this opportunity to provide feedback on the 4th Dialogue and make recommendations on the structure and content of the upcoming 5th Dialogue.

Clearly, the realisation of climate resilient communities largely depends on how well leaders and the public are informed about climate change issues, including mitigation and adaptation measures and impacts. Furthermore, the transition to sustainable economies and resilient environments requires enhanced climate education, public awareness, and community sensitisation through a synergistic, integrated approach that interlinks education, training, public awareness and engagement, and international collaboration and cooperation.

ECONGO, a “network of networks” for international climate education, communication and outreach, stands ready to provide support at and beyond the 5th Dialogue in Bonn, which will focus on climate change education, training and international cooperation. As a newly formed community dedicated to fostering climate literacy through effective education, ongoing excellence in communication, and targeted messaging through social media and other outreach, ECONGO’s goal is to inform and inspire urgent climate action at every level of society.

Importance of ACE

The upcoming 5th Dialogue is an opportunity to remind the world of the vision of the original Article 6 of the UNFCCC, renamed Action for Climate Empowerment in 2015, and of the importance of Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, which emphasizes the vital role that climate education, information, engagement and international support must play in building the capacity of nations to reduce climate risks and increase climate resilience. We acknowledge that some progress has been made in these areas through the efforts of the Secretariat and other United Nations partners, and many of these successes have been highlighted at previous Dialogues. But access to climate information and public awareness of the causes, effects, risks and range of responses to climate change remain largely unfunded and present daunting challenges in most countries of the world, whether developed or not. Research by Ming Lee and colleagues published in *Nature Climate Change* (2015) has found that 40% of adults around the world have never heard of climate change, and even in nations with higher levels of awareness, climate-smart policies and practices are often lacking.

The urgent need for robust climate education, communication and outreach apply to every corner of the globe. Communities around the world are affected by the devastating impacts of climate change but lack the knowledge and know-how to effectively respond to such calamities. Some high-level global leaders never learned the basics and fail to appreciate the urgent imperative of prioritizing climate action and making informed climate decisions. High emitters who need to rapidly reduce their climate emissions all too often don't have practical examples or opportunities to mitigate their impact on the climate system, while those most vulnerable to immediate climate impacts often have few options or information on how to reduce their vulnerabilities or adapt to changing climate.

These challenges have been fueled by the general lack support and specific funding for localized and domesticated climate information at local to national levels, and are magnified by a fragmented global approach to climate information dissemination at national to global scales. Through the Paris Agreement, the nations of the world have implicitly called for rapid reduction of carbon emissions and concentrations, but technological breakthroughs will only be a partial solution. Engaging the public in developing adequate responses to climate change through effective education, communication and outreach, as was implicitly called for in the original UNFCCC, is imperative.

For these reasons, ECONGO was birthed to support existing efforts within and beyond the United Nations community, to identify gaps, and to help build a global "network of networks" platform for NGOs and enthusiasts involved with climate education, communication and outreach. The intention is not to in any way replace the vital efforts of the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNITAR's CC: Learn, UNESCO's Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development or any related programmes, but rather to complement by providing additional value from outside the United Nations ecosystem and to serve as a supporting backbone for local to global efforts to increase the collective impact of informing and engaging society.

ECONGO's Submissions -

Meeting Structure:

Reflecting on our partners' experiences at previous Dialogues, ECONGO would like to make the following submission of recommendations for the structure of the meeting. We ask that the Secretariat:

- I. Allow for an interactive meeting space, wherein the focus is on content, strategy, and collaboration.
- II. Accept an interactive discussion on the power of a "Network of Networks" to maximize collective impact and a brief presentation on ECONGO and its logical framework and scalability.
- III. Offer opportunities for remote access participation via a web platform in order to facilitate inclusivity and a breadth of perspectives.
- IV. Provide those present at the meeting with a mode to continue collaboration after the meeting-- either with an exchange of contact information.

Discussion Agenda Points:

ECONGO would like to make the following submission of substantive agenda points to be addressed:

- I. Parties who do not have the ACE National Focal Points (NFP) should be encouraged to accelerate their nomination processes and submit their names to the UNFCCC Secretariat or explain their decision not to do so;

- II. Parties with ACE NFPs need to be supported with technical and financial assistance in developing their National ACE Strategy for effective resource mobilisation and implementation of their respective programmes;
- III. Parties should abide by their commitments to the Convention and Paris Agreement by implementing ACE programmes at local, regional, national and international level based on the principles of equity, transparency and accountability;
- IV. The UNFCCC Secretariat, the Green Climate Fund and related bodies should provide more guidance on the financing mechanism of the implementation of the ACE programmes at national and international levels, and to consider requiring ACE education, communication and outreach efforts be included in all funding proposals ;
- V. All Parties should be encouraged to fully incorporate ACE in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and in related position papers submitted to the UNFCCC COPs and related meetings, as well as in proposals to the Green Climate Fund;
- VI. The UN Alliance on Climate Education, Training and Public Awareness is invited to collaborate closely with ECONGO in implementing localized and domesticated ACE programmes in all nations of the world;
- VII. The NFP and Parties are encouraged to engage young people and incentivize substantive youth delegate programs in order to facilitate intergenerational equity in the decision-making processes as well as to recognize the opportunity for Parties to learn from youth;
- VIII. ACE programmes should have a special practical focus on community resilience, mitigation and adaptation initiatives that are adapted to local culture and societal climate while ensuring particular attention to vulnerable communities who are consistently and systematically forgotten; and
- IX. UNFCCC should encourage North-South and South-South international cooperation related to climate education, communication and outreach in order to enhance innovation, technical capacity, knowledge sharing and capacity-building amongst Parties.

If invited, ECONGO is ready to present at the 5th Dialogue its initial logical framework for integrating education, communication and outreach (figure 1 below), and to discuss the potential benefits of using a “powers to ten” approach (figure 2 below) to social scaling in order to more effectively inform and engage the public--from individuals to the ten billion people expected to live on the planet in the year 2050.

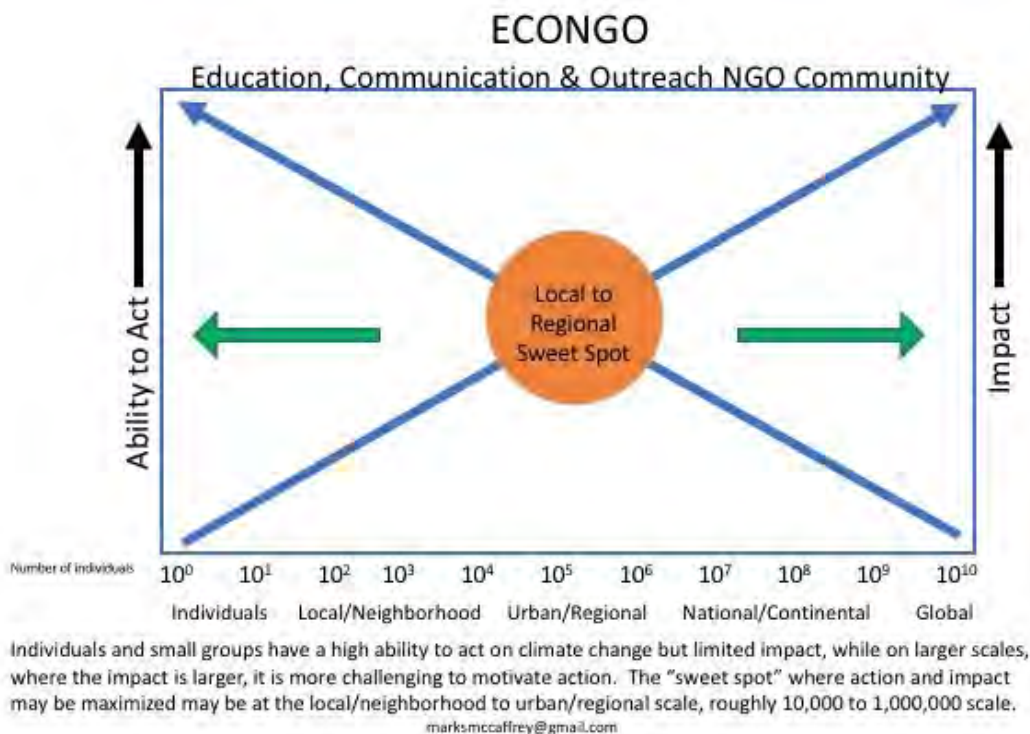
Education, Communication & Outreach Community

ECONGO

A New "Network of Networks" to Maximize Collective Impact & Innovative Solutions for Climate Action
 Launched at COP22 - Supporting UNFCCC and Related Constituencies & Organizations
 Capacity-Building Through Effective Education, Communication & Outreach

ECO-System	Education	Communication	Outreach
Inputs Financial, human and materials resources	Funding and support for educators, train-the-trainers, clean technology including renewables and energy efficiency	Funding and support for reporting and research, viable channels for disseminating information, interested audiences	Funding and support for social media experts and trusted messengers
Activities Tasks and actions taken	Professional development, networking, effective practices and resources, monitoring and assessment	News and information gathering; writing of articles and news; press conferences and releases	Development of time sensitive messages and strategic campaigns to engage, inspire and convey key information and actions
Outputs Delivery of product or service	Needs assessments; learning goals; curriculum; metrics and strategies to deploy and measure learning; deployment of renewable energy on schools & communities	Articles, programmes, films, web resources and other forms of information delivery through appropriate channels	Social media, presentations, advertising and promotion, and face-to-face conveyance of information
Outcomes Measurably increased ability to make informed climate decisions	Climate literate individuals and communities taking informed action; schools and communities as living laboratories and energy hubs	Robust information sharing to reduce risks and maximize sustainable practices	Inspired and motivated individuals empowered to take climate action
Impact Reduced risks and increased resilience	Global community working together to achieve climate action on local to planetary scales		

marksmccaffrey@gmail.com



Submitted by:
Mark S. McCaffrey
ECONGO Focal Point
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