

Proposals for the 2017 5th dialogue on ACE/Article 6 of the Convention under the Doha Work Programme.

The official Youth Constituency to the UNFCCC (known as “YOUNGO”) is pleased to offer this submission for SBI-46. Education, access to information, public participation, training, and international cooperation are integral levers for climate action. As both the recipients and agents of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE), young people have a key role to play in all these matters. This submission concerning the 5th Dialogue on ACE offers several recommendations from YOUNGO to promote this underrepresented pillar of the Convention.

1. Feedback on the format of the 4th dialogue

In reflection of the 4th dialogue on ACE and article 6 of the convention, the exchange was extremely interesting. We particularly appreciated several aspects of the dialogue, detailed below:

- Interactive sessions were invaluable to discussing issues in an effective manner. However, these types of sessions were too short due to the presentations running over time. This was particularly frustrating for participants who had input and ideas, but were given insufficient time to fully engage with the topics.
- The ACE dialogue is consistently a special place in the negotiations wherein observer participation is valued. Interactive sessions especially provided great opportunity for observer participation and exchange with delegates.
- The Presentations were very interesting and we appreciated that YOUNGO had the opportunity to present. The presentation by the Aarhus Convention stood out particularly for its attention to taking a rights-based approach to climate governance. In critique, we feel that the presentations would be more effective if organizations spent less time presenting themselves and instead focused on key, substantive components that generated impact in their respective projects.

Considering our reflections, we have several recommendations to improve the upcoming dialogue:

- To increase time dedicated to interactive sessions, we propose that future dialogues reduce the number of presentations and/or shorten the time allowed to each presentation.
- Further, we ask for the Secretariat to provide guidelines or a template for presenters so as to focus more on lessons learned, concrete obstacles, and strategies for moving forward. We anticipate that this will keep the energy in the room high and targeted on outcomes and moving forward with the ACE agenda.
- In order to increase accessibility and thus a range of perspectives, we suggest that online participation be added. YOUNGO has had much experience with online participation and offers its services to facilitate this potential online component of the dialogue.

2. Questions/topics/content to be tackled during the dialogue

Our accumulated experience working on ACE, numerous conversations with delegations, and participation in recent workshops, have raised many issues. In Marrakesh, we identified the following topics and questions that we suggest should be further discussed during the dialogue in Bonn:

- **Discussion of the UNFCCC Guidelines on ACE and the work of ACE Focal Points**

In the continuity of the publication of the ACE guidelines in Marrakesh, the ACE dialogue is a space to further discuss the guidelines and how to best use them moving forward. We suggest a workshop wherein countries that have already taken initial steps to develop national ACE strategy can exchange best practices and facilitate discussion between ACE Focal Points.

- **Create links to other Negotiation Areas**

The thematic approach of alternating between the different ACE items has been interesting, however we feel that it has reached its limits. To avoid a repetition of the same debates every two years and in order to widen the reach of the ACE discussion we hope to see other policy areas being discussed during the ACE dialogue. By exploring themes like adaptation, mitigation, or loss and damages, the dialogue could breach the gap between ACE and the other negotiations. It could also add relevance to different negotiators and bring them to the table for discussion.

- **Progress and Funding: where do we stand?**

The ACE dialogues are often inspirational, but often fail to give a clear view of where ACE implementation stands. Therefore, we would appreciate updates on the following:

- ACE Focal Points in each delegation are essential for the implementation of Education, Training, Participation programs on Climate Change. In November, only half of the parties had identified a Focal Point. After meetings with delegations, we can testify that ACE is still relatively unknown in some delegations. Therefore, we think it is important for this Dialogue to consider why many parties do not have their ACE FPs, so any difficulties or obstacles can be identified and overcome as soon as possible;
- Funding is a major barrier to implementation, and thus would like to know what kind of funding have been allowed to ACE related project since the beginning of the Doha Work Programme. The Global Environment Facility could be invited to give updates on projects related to ACE that they have funded;
- Our [analysis of the NDCs](#) showed us that, out of the 196 Parties to the UNFCCC, only 63 countries (32%) mention education. It seems to us that the inclusion of ACE in NDCs and in Low Carbon strategy should be discussed in further detail, especially as a component of raising ambition, and be assigned with indicators of ACE implementation;
- There has been a lot of talk last year on how to structurally enhance international cooperation between countries, particularly through regional workshop. As UN organizations were invited to support these efforts it would be good to get an update from them, starting with the UN Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness on how they intend to do this.

3. Desired outcomes from the dialogue

In order to ensure the Dialogue is productive for parties and stakeholders, we propose several desired outcomes that would contribute to action on the Doha Work Programme:

- The compilation of an outcome document from the Dialogue with ACE Action Points (concrete next steps) submitted by parties and other stakeholders to increase or enhance their action on ACE. Such actions points should be measurable and timebound (aiming to be completed either by COP23 or the 6th ACE Dialogue). Examples of action points might be for those parties without an ACE National Focal Point to appoint one, to implement new domestic policies or programs for ACE, to form new partnerships, etc;
- Identify topics on which to issue calls for further submissions under SBI related to ACE. The ACE Dialogue presents a perfect opportunity for parties and stakeholders to identify pertinent questions and topics for deeper exploration in the form of official submissions under the SBI. We find that such submissions are a useful format for engagement, thus leaving the Dialogue with topics determined and scheduled for calls for submissions would make good use of the limited time available in person, while also promoting further actions and enhancing international collaboration on these matters via the sharing of submissions between parties and stakeholders;
- Agreement/endorsement of an ACE Platform to facilitate party-stakeholder engagement between ACE Dialogues. While submissions are one useful option, it would help to create a broad and dedicated mechanism or platform under the Secretariat to facilitate engagement on matters related to ACE during the time between ACE Dialogues.

Conclusion:

ACE is a core issue to YOUNGO, since youth are both participants in ACE agenda and implementers of it. As YOUNGO, we believe that youth should increasingly be targeted as an audience for public awareness and training programs, as well as for participation in the climate policy process itself. We want to maintain and institutionalize partnerships between youth and delegations, and would like to remind parties that including Youth Representatives in their delegations would help to bridge the gap between young individuals and negotiators implementing ACE. YOUNGO members will be happy to participate to in the 5th dialogue on ACE to feed in the numerous discussions and offer support in the implementation of the Doha Work Programme.