



**European Committee
of the Regions**

Brussels, 27 February 2017
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Subject: Submission for the SBI 46 in-session workshop on opportunities to further enhance the effective engagement of non-Party stakeholders

At its forty-fourth session the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) agreed to convene an in-session workshop at SBI 46 on opportunities to further enhance the effective engagement of non-Party stakeholders with a view to strengthening the implementation of the provisions of decision 1/CP.21 (FCCC/SBI/2016/8, par. 163). In this context, the European Committee of the Regions wishes to submit to the attention of the SBI some proposals on observer participation that we hope could be taken into consideration. Such proposals can be summarised as follows.

On the engagement of non-Party stakeholders:

1. better integration of regions and cities within the UNFCCC process is necessary and would allow for feedback from the ground to be channelled back to the UN level in a timely manner. It is therefore necessary to establish a permanent and direct dialogue between the different levels, starting from the local and regional level. Measures to enhance this dialogue include:
 - regular exchanges between regions' and cities' representatives and the COP presidencies, Climate Champions as well as the UNFCCC Secretariat;
 - trilateral dialogues involving cities, regions and Parties in the framework of the UNFCCC structures and in particular during COPs;
 - daily debriefings for regional and local authorities during the COPs;
 - Parties' (countries) participation in the Friends of the Cities informal group meetings;
2. the CoR calls for the further development of the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and its corresponding platform, the Non-State Actors Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA). These could be fully integrated into the UNFCCC Secretariat through the Global Climate Action Agenda launched by the newly appointed Climate Champions. This should in turn become the basis for fully-fledged multi-level governance on climate action;
3. the UNFCCC could formally recognize the role of the existing major multi-stakeholder international coalitions as key aggregators: this can further improve the legitimacy of the process and improve outreach. The results of the work done by these networks and their affiliates could be regularly communicated to the UNFCCC and its Parties. Regular reporting of such achievements could go hand in hand with the

formulation of options to enhance action in the run-up to and in the context of the COPs. A system of voluntary reporting by initiatives and actors could be put in place to track progress in delivering climate action and to recognize outcomes which support the achievement of the purpose and goals of the Paris Agreement;

4. Party and non-Party stakeholders could be convened on a regular basis to enhance inter-institutional dialogue and improve collective understanding and efforts to address implementation obstacles;
5. the (pre-)COPs should serve as an opportunity to showcase successes at field level and provide ground for new initiatives through events, including those held in conjunction with sessions of UNFCCC bodies as well as other relevant fora. However, the amount of side events organised in the framework of the COPs should be kept under control with a view to avoid their excessive proliferation and the consequent dispersion of the audience;
6. the UNFCCC may wish to associate non-Party stakeholders in the progressive refinement of the technical examination process which was strengthened by decision 1/CP.21 with the aim to bring it more in line with the key topics and priorities emerging from the discussion between Parties and non-Party stakeholders;
7. the UNFCCC may wish to continue on the very promising and inclusive path of receiving technical or thematic submissions by non-Party stakeholders; it may further consolidate this practice by providing structured but flexible guidance on the content of such submissions with a view to better operationalise them;
8. slots for interventions by non-Party stakeholders may be increased in number in the context of the UNFCCC procedures where these allow and depending on the discussion subject;

On the organisation of the in-session workshop in May:

1. the workshop should possibly take place at the very beginning of the SBI session so that the outcome of its discussions could be timely transmitted to the other UNFCCC bodies for considerations. Its global duration should not exceed 6 hours to favour focused discussions;
2. based on the results of the current stakeholders' consultation process, a maximum of four topics could be selected which will then inform the content of the panel discussions/breakout sessions;
3. a background paper summarizing the overall UNFCCC consultation and decision-making process should be prepared with a view to help newly appointed representatives gain a thorough understanding of it and play a fruitful role;
4. the talks that will take place during each session should be based on a discussion paper to be prepared and circulated ahead of the meeting and outlining the key challenges and proposals for improving non-Party stakeholders' engagement. Experienced and carefully thought facilitation and guidance are needed to steer the discussions towards tangible outcomes.