

**SUBMISSION OF
ICLEI – LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY
ON WAYS TO ENHANCE THE ENGAGEMENT OF OBSERVER
ORGANIZATIONS
as discussed in SBI32 Agenda Item 16.d
with respect to para.19 contained in document FCCC/SBI/2010/L.21**

World Secretariat

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1. ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of more than 1200 local governments as well as national and regional local government organizations who have made a commitment to sustainable development.
2. ICLEI welcomes SBI32's decision to invite Parties and observer organizations to submit views on “ways to enhance engagement of observer organizations in the UNFCCC process”. ICLEI also wishes to express gratitude to the UNFCCC Secretariat – specifically all current and previous UNFCCC Executive Secretaries together with line managers and the staff of the Observer Organizations Liaison Office- for their extensive efforts in facilitating the engagement of stakeholders and observer organizations in the UNFCCC process.
3. ICLEI's submission includes general information about the organization's involvement in the United Nations and UNFCCC processes, an overview of local governments' unique position in global climate governance, views on modes of engagement and an overview of good practices for optimal engagement.
4. At the outset, ICLEI would like to note that, within the UN system, multilateral environmental agreements (MEA) are processes that enable the highest level of stakeholder participation in decision-making, implementing and monitoring. The UNFCCC also introduces diverse innovative mechanisms to ensure broad participation while engaging the largest number of NGO representatives.
5. ICLEI believes that the principle of transparency shall be respected when considering review of civil society's involvement in the global negotiations. In particular, ICLEI stresses that stakeholders shall have a clear view of the negotiation process and that all their interests and points of view are represented.
6. Art. 7.6 of the UNFCCC is the most important legal background for observers' involvement in the UNFCCC process and ICLEI acknowledges the progress achieved in this arena since 2002. ICLEI therefore invites SBI to build on the findings and proposals presented in

Secretariat notes ^{1,2,3} and decisions of SBI17⁴ and SBI20⁵ which can help guide the observer involvement process.

7. ICLEI further highlights other important emerging factors including, but not limited to:
- An increase in the number and diversity of observers and constituencies;
 - an increase in the complexity of issues in the UNFCCC agenda;
 - experience gained by Parties, the Secretariat and by observers over time;
 - the review process conducted by the Secretariat as well as consultations during the meeting of the UNFCCC Executive Secretaries with Constituency Focal Points preceding COP15.

ICLEI hopes the SBI32 succeeds in adopting another set of substantive actions to ensure sustained, comprehensive, transparent and effective engagement of observers in the UNFCCC process.

ICLEI in the UN and UNFCCC Processes

8. ICLEI has Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council and coordinates local government representation in several UN processes related to Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda. ICLEI is the only local government network with observer status at all three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC-climate change, UNCCD-desertification, UNCBD-biodiversity) as well as being an observer to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
9. ICLEI was accredited at the UNFCCC Secretariat as an observer organization in 1995 and has been the focal point for Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency (LGMA) ever since. In parallel to the conferences of the Parties, ICLEI hosted Municipal Leaders Summits on Climate Change in 1995, 1997 and 2005 and, organized Local Government Climate Sessions in 2007 and 2008, and a Local Government Climate Lounge in 2009. Throughout these processes, ICLEI attracted thousands of local government delegations to the COP sessions, contributed to negotiations through submissions and interventions and facilitated effective involvement of the LGMA Constituency. The Constituency steadily increased to a membership of 14 active organizations as of 2010. ICLEI is also the first local government network to partner with the Nairobi Work Programme of the UNFCCC on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Local governments' unique role in the global climate governance

10. Cities and local authorities, when acting in accordance national constitutions and legislation, are critical to designing and implementing practical climate action. The final negotiation text⁶ under the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative

1 FCCC/SBI/2002/13 – Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings Effective Participation in the Convention Process

2 FCCC/SBI/2004/5 – Promoting Effective Participation in the Convention Process

3 FCCC/SBI/2005/5 – Recent developments in the United Nations on relations with civil society

4 FCCC/SBI/2002/17 – para. 49-50

5 FCCC/SBI/2004/10 – para. 95-109

6 FCCC/AWGLCA/2010/8

Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) acknowledges this fact within Chapter-I by referring to sub-national and local governments as “governmental stakeholders”. ICLEI welcomes the growing recognition of local governments in the UNFCCC negotiation process and hopes for even more synergy between national and local-level policy-makers.

Modes of Engagement

11. ICLEI believes that submissions, interventions, side events and bilateral meetings are all important elements of communication for Parties and observers. ICLEI looks forward to continuing the current inter-communication practices and also hopes to heighten the quality of these processes.
12. With respect to interventions at plenaries, ICLEI proposes that representatives from civil society shall not deliver their speeches at the end of sessions. This view is mainly based on the issue of time; sessions frequently run longer than expected. Earlier submissions may also allow Parties to reference or react to the comments and proposals delivered by representatives of civil society.
13. ICLEI supports the option to cluster side events based on topic, target group or stakeholder group; this strategy is expected to offer a more effective environment for interaction and time/space management.
14. ICLEI welcomes the new online registration system introduced by the Secretariat and looks forward to further improvements including VISA assistance and registration by specific days of the week. While an online registration system may enable better monitoring and planning, ICLEI recommends that venue capacity limitations be communicated as far in advance as possible to allow for new arrangements. ICLEI also notes that constituencies have different backgrounds which should be taken into account when specific measures and limitations are applied.

Good Practices of ICLEI

15. ICLEI highlights the Local Government Climate Roadmap⁷ - implemented through a broad coalition of global, regional and national networks of local governments between COP13 (Bali) and COP15 (Copenhagen) - as an example of good practice to improve national and local dialogues between stakeholders and negotiators. Such a constructive interaction enables Parties to revise and improve negotiation strategies as well as build trust and capacity at the local and national level so that decisions adopted at the international level can be implemented more effectively.
16. The Local Government Climate Lounge⁸ which was hosted by ICLEI during COP15 in Copenhagen is also worth highlighting as a good practice. The Lounge offered an advocacy platform for approximately 1,500 registered local government representatives, including more than 200 mayors, during the two weeks period of COP15. Through more than 70 events, including mayoral-ministerial level negotiation meetings with more than 20 countries, high level interviews, regional/national panels

⁷ www.iclei.org/climateroadmap

⁸ www.iclei.org/index.php?id=10553

and workshop sessions, media launches and daily briefings, the Lounge evolved into the largest, longest and highest-level local government “event” during a COP.

17. ICLEI further notes that both the Local Government Climate Roadmap and the Local Government Climate Lounge were made possible through generous support from various governments, development agencies, as well as local governments and their networks and sponsors. ICLEI believes that appropriate mechanisms for all constituencies can be initiated through arrangements with COP host countries to enhance the involvement of observers and constituencies