

September 19, 2012

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Nairobi Work Program (NWP)

Martin-Luther-King Str 8

Bonn, GERMANY

To Whom It May Concern:

**Re: Suggestions for the Nairobi Work Program and Future Program of Work**

The World Federation of Engineering Organizations is pleased to submit this letter to present our views and recommendations for future areas of work for the Nairobi Work Program. We are committed to continuing work to fulfill our Action Pledges that were submitted in 2008. In a separate communication, we submitted a progress report on completed activities and upcoming plans for those pledges. This letter provides our recommendations on the program and suggestions on areas of focus for the program of work ahead.

We believe that the Nairobi Work Program provides a useful framework and forum for the continued pursuit of work that supports adaptation planning and implementation to current and future climate impacts and should be continued.

**Recommendation #1**

**The Nairobi Work Program should be continued for another five years with a program of work that reflects and builds on the progress to date.**

Within the members of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations there are more than 15 million engineers worldwide. Each day these engineers work to provide a quality of life for people through the effective planning, design, construction, operation and ongoing maintenance of buildings and infrastructure. Infrastructure influences and benefits all sectors of the economy, in developing and developed countries across all geographic regions of the world.

The World Bank estimates that more than 2/3 of the world's population will be living in urban centres by 2025. The number of cities with populations exceeding 10 million people will also double in this timeframe. The availability of sufficient infrastructure that is resilient to current and future climate impacts to accommodate this demand is and will continue to be a prime concern and challenge for all countries.

Engineers are committed to contributing to the solutions for the problems and issues that changing climate poses to infrastructure. We are seeking to implement practical, cost-effective solutions to improve the resilience and reliability of the world's infrastructure. These must address current and

future climate impacts on infrastructures for the duration of their 25 to 100 year life cycles. A focus on buildings and infrastructure will initiate practical adaptation action by engineers and other professionals. It will provide evidence for appropriate policies, procedures, infrastructure codes, standards and best practices.

### **Recommendation #2**

**The World Federation of Engineering Organizations recommends that the NWP establish the adaptation of buildings and infrastructure as one of its principal themes in its work program for the next five years.**

We believe there is an under-utilized resource of people, resources and results from the NWP Partners whose work needs to be communicated effectively to decision-makers and end-users at a more local level where adaptation is ultimately implemented. One of our challenges, but also opportunities, is to effectively disseminate this information to the wider community that includes not only the UNFCCC and its various committees at the policy level, but also to the member countries and their communities that could make good use of these findings in a localized and effective manner.

### **Recommendation #3**

**The NWP should continue its series of focal point forums at UNFCCC meetings and regional events.**

The focal point forums that have been held at UNFCCC meetings are a good start and enable exchange of information among those able to attend. However, this communication effort needs to be expanded. With the increasing availability of the Internet, webinar technology and social media the potential for widespread communication and dissemination of learning and experiences is ever-increasing. This being said, approximately 1/3 of the world does not have access to the Internet so in-person events must still be organized and resources found to enable participation.

### **Recommendation #4**

**The NWP should investigate and organize other forms for the regional delivery of workshops and information in partnership with Action Pledge organizations. The first workshops should be organized for SIDS and LDCs to build their capacity to absorb more intense training and education.**

Practical, cost-effective adaptation of infrastructure requires further work in three key areas: 1) the vulnerability and resilience of existing infrastructure to current and future climate; 2) the design and construction of new infrastructure using best practices and updated codes, standards and related instruments and, 3) the costs of adaptation of existing and new infrastructures considering three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental factors. Experience and knowledge of these elements will provide the information necessary for decision-makers and owners of infrastructure to adapt within their local legal and regulatory frameworks. In turn this will inform policy-makers to develop or amend policies at the right time based on the evidence and experience in adapting local infrastructure.

## **Recommendation #5**

**That the NWP promote and encourage vulnerability assessments of all categories of infrastructure as well as promote the development and implementation of tools that provide the economic, social and environmental costs of adaptation in a form suitable for decision-makers and infrastructure owners.**

In addition, we have a number of suggestions for specific go-forward actions for the NWP Secretariat that would support the efforts of organizations that have committed action pledges.

### **Suggestion #1**

The Secretariat, with the assistance of NWP Partners, develop a list of contacts and organizations at the state local and community level that are responsible for the planning, design, operation and management of community resources including infrastructure, eco-systems, watersheds and so forth.

This will provide NWP with an “end user” community of contacts to which engagement, communication and promotional activities can be directed.

### **Suggestion #2**

Organize webinars between focal point meetings that present and highlight the work of NWP Partners working in the country or region where the webinar is delivered. The target audiences should include the end-users but should also include as appropriate, people and organizations that may deliver these services (i.e. local consultants) to the end users.

### **Suggestion #3**

Sponsor or endorse conferences, workshops, seminars or side events of member states holding their own events that will elevate the NWP “brand”. This could include providing advice and support to local organizers for potential speakers and trainers from the NWP partners on subjects relevant to the event and the audience.

### **Suggestion #4**

Since adaptation is implemented at the regional or community level, we suggest the NWP invite selected communities to present their needs, issues and concerns as well as their adaptation practices at forums where policy-makers are the target audience.

This bottom-up approach would foster more informed policy-making and resource allocation at national and international levels.

**Suggestion #5**

In future UNFCCC meetings, the NWP should set up a dedicated information booth and invite partners to participate, perhaps on a rotating basis, over the time of the meeting. Furthermore, the NWP should consider organizing its own set of side events with the active participation of NWP partners and, if necessary, secure a dedicated area within the conference footprint to hold such events.

**Suggestion #6**

The NWP should facilitate an ongoing discussion of adaptation needs with NWP Partners that require climate science support so that the climate community develops a full appreciation of these needs. This discussion could also be extended to the regional and local end users with the help of NWP partners.

The World Federation of Engineering Organizations would be pleased to further discuss these ideas and participate in their implementation as appropriate, working in partnership with the NWP Secretariat, other NWP Partners and member countries.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our input. The World Federation of Engineering Organizations remains very much committed to be an active contributor to the important work of the Nairobi Work Program.

Yours truly,

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