



August 1, 2016

H.E. Ambassador Laurence Tubiana, France
H.E. Minister Delegate Hakima El Haite, Morocco
UNFCCC High-level Champions for Climate Action

Dear Ambassador Tubiana and Minister El Haite:

The Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE) is pleased to submit the following response to your call for input on defining the Road Map for Global Climate Action Agenda.

The BCSE is a coalition of businesses and trade associations representing existing clean energy solutions from the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy sectors in the United States. The Council has been an accredited business & industry observer to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 1992. As a long-term observer to the process, we commend both the historic political achievement of the Paris Agreement at COP 21 and the explosive growth of climate action and commitments taken by non-Party stakeholders.

Please find below our views in response to the questions posed in the [Road Map for Global Climate Action Agenda](#):

1) The Current Situation

The Council agrees that pre-2020 action is a key element for implementation and success of the Paris Agreement, especially in mitigation. In 2015, a record-level of \$329 billion was invested globally in clean energy. These increased investments provide a foundation for achieving the ambition pathway of 1.5°C set in the Paris Agreement. By shining a light on clean energy investment trends, successes and challenges, the Global Climate Action Agenda can demonstrate that countries are taking action and increase the ambition of non-state actors.

There is also a need in the pre-2020 period to coordinate the understanding and analysis of the nationally-determined contributions (NDC), and to connect governments with stakeholders, such as clean energy technology providers, that can provide technical assistance to countries to help build-out national policies and market structures that will help meet them meet their NDC targets. This assistance includes practical knowledge of the technology, financial and legal frameworks, and capacity-building of local workers that is needed to create a sustainable market for clean energy solutions. There are critical infrastructure choices that will be made by policy-makers in the pre-2020 period that will influence the

ability to meet NDC targets by 2025 or 2030.

2) The Role of the High-level Champion

A critical role of the High-level Champion is to serve as the interface between action on the ground and the UNFCCC negotiation process. By doing so, an important feedback loop is created between the inter-governmental process and what is happening in the “real world.” Both audiences need to know what the other is doing, so that the most informed policy and investment decisions on climate change and clean energy can be made. The work of the High-level Champions as the official Ambassadors of climate action can deepen the knowledge of state actors of what is taking place outside the realm of the UNFCCC and it can also broaden the global audience of non-state actors by reporting out government commitments and actions.

The work of the High-level Climate Champions needs to be visible, potentially through country or regional events, such as listening-sessions, roundtable dialogues, internet webcasts and coordination with pre-existing international conferences on climate change. The audiences also need to be diverse, with outreach to policymakers, private sector and other stakeholders in civil society.

3) Transparency & Tracking

It is important that voluntary climate commitments be periodically reviewed, and that pre-existing mechanisms are leveraged for this function. The use of core data and reporting partners in the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) to consolidate commitment information and results is a good model to follow, so that a mechanism for measurement and reporting is already established when making a commitment.

Private sector companies making climate change commitments are accountable to a broad range of stakeholders. They seek guidance on measurement protocols from organizations like the World Resources Institute and utilize organizations like the Global Reporting Initiative and CDP for reporting. These organizations should continue to play active supporting roles in NAZCA activities.

4) High-level Event

To have a real and continued impact, the now annual High-Level event needs to engage a blend of committed political visionaries, private sector executives, civil society leaders and sub-national government actors. In order to achieve that appropriate mix, and in particular to attract CEOs of leading clean energy companies, as much advance notice as possible is needed with a clear outline of what the speaking opportunity will be. At a minimum, 4-6 months’ notice would be preferred. To truly galvanize public support, live webcast and advanced social media promotion should be built into the program, to make it interactive with the global community.

5) The Role of the TEMs

The inclusion of the Technical Expert Meetings (TEMs) to support enhancement of climate action prior to 2020 within the official schedule of the UNFCCC meetings over recent years has created a valuable in-session space for clean energy technology providers to share their real-world experience and expertise with governments. The Council would like to see this allocation of in-session time for TEMs continue through 2020 and beyond, as it creates an important feedback loop where governments and experts from business & civil society can dialogue on implementation issues.

Previous TEMs covering renewable energy, energy efficiency and carbon capture and storage have brought together an impressive array of experts and business leaders to make presentations and contribute to a shared discussion on the topic. The hosting of follow-up TEMs on renewable energy and energy efficiency, as well as follow-up official side events to share success stories are good precedents to follow. None of these topics are “one-off” in nature and require a continued conduit for information sharing.

The format and structure of these TEMs are critical to their success. It requires more private sector panelists, from a diversity of private sector perspectives. It also requires more time for Q&A and dialogue. Having TEMs structured in this way could create a virtuous cycle, where more private sector voices become involved in the UNFCCC process because they have a platform to speak about their technology solutions.

The Council offers the following recommendations for technology-focused TEMs to continue and to enhance a solution-oriented focus:

- A more transparent and open planning process. Recognizing the UNFCCC Secretariat staff is often overburdened with numerous other tasks, perhaps countries could take on leadership of various TEM topics, similar to how the Clean Energy Ministerial program areas have volunteer country leads.
- Synchronize TEM topic areas with needs of countries’ nationally determined contributions (NDCs), so that discussions at the TEM aim to jump-start technology deployment and action towards NDC goals.
- Ensure a diversified and practical panel of experts through:
 - Increased private sector participation. Outreach to identify industry experts should go beyond inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and should include technology providers. In order to identify the right individuals, industry associations could nominate experts 4-6 months in advance of the TEM.
 - Inclusion of the perspective of sub-national actors from the city, state and regional levels, as it is at this level at which infrastructure decisions and projects need to be

created, implemented, replicated and scaled. Professional associations that represent cities or states, such as The Climate Group, C40, ICLEI, United Cities and Local Governments, could be approached to help identify the proper participants. Exploring the important role of capacity-building of human resources (ex. technicians to install and maintain and operate systems) to ensure sustainable success of the deployment of clean energy technologies.

- Taking an innovative approach to structuring the TEMs so as to attract the participation of more private sector voices. Possible ideas include rapid-fire presentations or networking functions after the TEM. The TEMs will be most valuable if they are interactive, with real exchanges between policymakers and industry experts as a way to ensure that the logistical realities of the clean energy transition are clear to the country representatives in attendance.
- Effort should be made to leverage existing international public-private partnerships such as the UN Sustainable Energy for All Initiative Energy Efficiency Accelerator Platform which includes private-sector, civil society and government actors. Similar public-private partnerships exist in other areas of clean energy technology and solutions.

The Council would caution against using the space of the TEMs to report out on the Global Climate Action Agenda, simply because of the value of this time and space is to go in-depth on a particular technology solution and to explore more technical details. There could be linkages however, through selection of some of the panelists that are leaders in the Action Agenda space.

The hosting of the TEMs in-session “opens the door” where clean energy technology providers can provide technical details on what is needed to sustainably deploy solutions where they are needed most. The consistent nature of hosting the TEMs is important, because innovations in technology and business models are changing rapidly and clean energy technology costs are falling, the “status quo” one year may look quite different the next year.

As the UNFCCC negotiations make progress on implementing decisions of the Paris Agreement, perhaps the role of the TEMs within the inter-governmental process can expand and evolve. The Council strongly supports the continuation of this process and thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Sincerely,



Lisa Jacobson
President
Business Council for Sustainable Energy