

Ideas on the High Level Event for COP22

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Background

This is an informal note containing ideas for the COP22 High Level Event

This short note is written for both the High Level Champions and the Moroccan Government COP commissioner and his organising committee. It sets out an idea for the High Level Event¹ and its relation to Low Emission Solutions Conference, TEMs, and related activities at COP22 in line with broader arrangements for the future of climate action (see related business memo on the future of the private sector action). It is prepared by a group of business and public-private organisations who have been engaging in the Climate Action Agenda.

It builds on some informal discussions with the COP22 Champions and the COP 22 Commissioner and members of the organising committee in Rabat 23-24 June 2016; the useful Road Map for Global Climate Action prepared by the COP Champions, particularly the ideas on how best to shape the High Level Event including the strategic opportunity of leveraging the Technical Expert Meetings; and also discussions about the High Level Event and the action agenda at COP22, with the COP22 Champions on June 29th in London at the time of the London Business Climate Summit.

As the first High Level Event following Paris, it is crucial for COP22 to set a strong precedent that accelerates climate action into 2018, 2020, and beyond. The private sector is strongly committed to working with the Champions, Presidency, and other partners to deliver an exceptional High Level Event.

Context

The action agenda must maintain its momentum post Paris

Recognising that the Paris Agreement represents the start and not the end of the climate action agenda, the leading business organisations as well as city/state/region collaborative initiatives have continued to work together since COP21, to develop and plan ideas with the intent to establish a common framework for delivering expanding and reporting on the impact of the ambitious initiatives launched in the run up to the Paris Climate Conference by 2020, with a key 2018 review milestone.

Strengthening this groundswell of climate action from all sectors remains a critical strategic objective in order to maintain and increase momentum; de-risk the politics for governments of taking climate action at the national level; and enabling the delivery of countries' own NDCs, especially in the run up to the 2018 and 2020 deadlines in the Paris Agreement.

¹ Paris decision text para 121

A more distributed leadership network is emerging for delivering the action agenda

Mechanisms like LPAA played a catalytic role at COP21, helping to spur wider movement and collaboration in the climate action agenda. Undoubtedly this helped to secure the overall political outcome. Since Paris, however, the business action and public-private collaboration platform is necessarily expanding in line with the scale of the challenge – it is becoming a much wider effort than UN processes alone. Consequently, a new, more distributed leadership model is materialising for the action agenda into 2016 and beyond. This draws together – and leverages the complementarities of – the major business action platforms such as We Mean Business, WBCSD, The World Economic Forum, UN Global Compact, etc., whilst also seeking collaboration with other related international initiatives and organisations such as SSDN, the World Bank, the ICC, sub-national networks such as the new Global Covenant of Mayors, the Compact of States and Regions and the Under 2 MOU.

Since Paris, this distributed leadership model is exploring the potential to

- (i) coalesce activities around a number of key thematic tracks;
- (ii) promote the emergence of one major business climate summit midway through the year co organised by these groups through to 2018/2020. The 2016 London Business Climate Summit (28-29 June) represents the first in this regard, with similar summits proposed for June 2017 in Delhi and June 2018 in California (the latter potentially as part of a broader non-state actor summit);
- (iii) maintain and build one connective thread for knowledge share and coordination, including by progressively tracking and reporting on individual climate actions and initiatives, e.g. via the Business Determined Contributions
- (iv) help identify and co-deliver a small number of significant lighthouse initiatives, supported by Mission 2020, that complement NDC activities, and which will help contribute to a collective tipping point in emissions by 2020

Movement on the NDCs is occurring in parallel

At the same time as the post-Paris action agenda materialises among some of the world's leading business/public-private organisations and their platforms, public sector activity is also increasing as governments seek to build out their NDC commitments into more specific national (and sub national) clean development/ green growth investment plans with an eye to the 2018 review. A number of new programmes, funds and coordination mechanisms have been catalysed at and since Paris to help governments turn their NDC commitments into action tracks, in time for progress review by 2018.

Useful discussion tracks such as the Technical Expert Meetings (TEMS) have also been established under the Paris Agreement to help governments advance their understanding of how to catalyse action in the NDCs across key themes, with the potential of a gathering together of such tracks at the time of COP. To this end, the TEMS offer much potential.

Opportunity for a High Level Event that creates substantive public-private Action interaction at COP

The context of this new delivery agenda emerging across both non-state actors *and* governments offers an excellent opportunity to design the High Level Event as a substantive public-private action summit at COP22 supported by the major business, cities and other non-state actor groups and the COP22 Presidency and COP Champions. The High Level Event will enable both governments and non-state actors to work closely together in the acceleration and delivery of climate action in time for 2018. It will also provide a trigger to ensure a rolling process of encouragement of governments to set more ambitious targets based on business and public private progress in implementing emission reduction approaches.

Such a High Level Event can help realise the Paris decision text which charges the Champions with holding an annual High Level Event at COP to provide an Action Agenda function. However, it could also *deepen* the impact of that event. It would avoid the historic COP model where business organisations or other non-state actors are invited to simply present and discuss their various projects and initiatives in a manner often a step or two removed from substantive discussion with governments on delivery.

In sum, COP22 offers the Champions an excellent opportunity to host the inaugural Champions High Level Summit, as a *“pilot”* High Level Event focused on sharing knowledge, catalysing focused policy debates around large scale low-carbon solutions, deepening cooperation and designed to drive meaningful, substantive public-private collaboration between the Parties, their NDCs and the innovation and resources offered from the non-state actor community. The Champions’ report following COP could assess the effectiveness of the inaugural High Level Event, indicate how the TEMS and other related workstreams could advance work over the coming year, and suggest, if deemed successful, for a repeat of the High Level Event at COP 23.

Design and Focus of the High Level Event

The inaugural High Level Event could have a high level segment, and then be structured around parallel tracks. Each track offers a day of substantive, informal interaction between senior government officials and expert non-state actors, with a separate high-level segment for Ministers, CEOs, Mayors, etc.

As it would be extremely hard to adequately reflect all of the core themes of the LPAA in the High Level Event, a few core themes of most relevance to business and multi-stakeholder initiatives, plus some areas the COP22 Commission identifies as important could be identified. These themes could change for the next event at COP23, based on the strategic sense of the Champions.

Discussions in Rabat and London identified three main themes of relevance for the COP22 inaugural High Level Event – land use/resilience, clean energy scale up and finance/related policy accelerators - and these are reflected in the figure overleaf.

A Suggested Thematic Structure for the inaugural High Level Event

High Level Opening	
Sectors	
1. Land Use and Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Forests (including non-tropical forests) b) Agriculture c) Land Restoration (including soil conservation and tackling desertification) d) Water Security (including water for agriculture, water for energy)
2. Accelerating Clean Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Renewables b) Energy Productivity c) Energy Access d) Clean Energy Zones /Trade Agreements
3 Finance and related Policy Accelerators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Asset allocation and management b) Project and Program finance c) Insurance d) Carbon Pricing and Fossil Fuel Subsidies e) Disclosure f) Public Sector Procurement

Consistent with the Paris Text, the discussions at the inaugural High Level Event will also provide a platform for various initiatives of relevance to report on progress and, crucially, explain to governments and others what opportunities exist for expansion of scale and ambition.

The discussions within each theme (the Forests discussion within the Land Use Theme for example) would take place in an informal round table format, rather than a panel and audience format. Each discussion will last 120 minutes or so, ensuring significant time for small breakout interactions at each table plus informal networking. The sessions would be for about 40-50 people in each discussion topic, allowing for both meaningful participation overall, and for an ability to hold smaller, round table discussions. It is crucial to ensure coherence and continuity between the Low Emissions Solutions Conference, the TEMs, and the High Level Event.

Each discussion will be designed to promote substantive interaction among senior issue experts across the public and private sector, rather than focused upon the delivery of panels per se. Each discussion would occur under the Chatham House rule. The exception would be the High Level opening, which would be a Principal level on-the-record event.

This modular design approach for the High Level Event offers key government officials whose NDCs focus on particular themes to swap knowledge, identify good projects and jointly develop ideas for action with the world's best public and private sector experts, investors and initiatives also working on those themes of interest to them. It also means

Parties can identify in advance the discussion areas of most interest to them, and focus on those ones accordingly, bringing in key officials as necessary for that discussion.

Throughout such a day of discussions at the High Level Event, matchmaking could occur. In the spirit of a “marketplace”, officials from various Parties could discuss with business leaders, city mayors, investors, issue experts and civil society groups the status of their NDCs and where design or delivery bottlenecks are occurring; and the non-state actors can help apply their initiatives, resources and innovation to help Parties overcome these bottlenecks, either through applying or adapting their existing projects and insight, or by triggering new public-private activity. A strong emphasis will be given to ensuring substantive public-private interaction takes place in each discussion, and a particular focus throughout will be on leveraging the non-state actor knowledge, expertise and resources available to help structure initiatives that can support officials in emerging economy and developing country to better deliver their NDCs.

A Link to the TEMS

The sessions at the inaugural COP22 High Level Event can also help to augment the TEMS. For example, the Champions report emerging from COP22 and reflecting on the inaugural High Level Event could make recommendations as to the focus and arrangements of the TEMS for the coming year, such that they can be designed to help advance aspects of the work identified in the High Level Event sessions for report back at COP23.

Links to other Non-State Actor Activities at COP22

The inaugural High Level Event should be framed as part of a coordinated series of interactions that, when viewed together, achieve three purposes at COP22 regarding the action agenda, namely to:

1. *Track/showcase* progress and delivery of non-state action
2. *Promote Substantive exchanges and match-making* between experts, decision-makers, and operational entities to deepen and scale up action
3. *Project a public narrative* of delivery of commitments and acceleration of action to the media and a wider audience

The various side events in the first week of COP22, including the Caring for Climate Initiative would be geared toward item 1 of the above.

The various substantive discussions in the Inaugural High Level Event and the discussions in the WBCSD/SSDN solutions workshops would be geared toward item 2 of the above.

The high level segment of the High Level Event and a number of other Principal level media briefings and communications (including the subsequent Champions report from the COP) would be geared toward item 3 of the above.

In terms of timing, it is suggested that the inaugural High Level Summit could take place early in the second week of COP, ideally Sunday or Monday after many of the private events and before the main negotiations begin. Sunday 13th November could be an option, ahead of the WBCSD/SSDN solutions workshops. The outcomes/identified action from the Summit could then feed into the technical working discussions of the Low Emissions Solutions Conference to be advanced or discussed further as and where relevant.

Overall, the High Level Event might draw together 200 or so experts and officials for the day's discussions, including in many cases from outside of the traditional climate negotiator or environmental /climate networks of participating governments and non state actor entities. This would cement its position as the world's pre-eminent public-private action agenda summit on climate change and create a new, broadening dimension to the COP. It would also offer a clear legacy from COP22 through to 2018 and 2020, as the instigator of the inaugural High Level Event.

Informal Advisory Group

To ensure maximum practical impact from such an undertaking, a suggestion would be for the Champions, in consultation with the COP22 Commissioner and organising committee, to create an informal advisory group for the High Level Event. The informal advisory group could be drawn from a range of public and private institutions, as well as regional stakeholders of particular relevance to that COP, for COP22 for example across Morocco /North Africa.

Co-chaired by the COP Champions, this group would provide advice in the design of the summit and help in the resourcing and delivery of key segments of relevance. A model for reference could be the informal group that Minister Manuel Pulgar created for the Lima COP20. Indeed, given his experience, Mr Pulgar could be a good potential (permanent) co-chair for this group, working alongside current COP Champions.

With a likely focus on land use, clean energy and finance (asset allocation, project finance and associated policies, such as carbon pricing, fossil fuel subsidy removal etc) a suggested advisory group for the Champions to help them co-design the High Level Summit is proposed below.

The World Economic Forum would provide a support role to the champions to convene this group by phone, and digitally through to COP 22 to help them in the High Level Event design. To this extent the Champions Advisory Group would form an adjunct to the Friends of Climate Action, and could report back /take advice from the broader network of Friends of Climate Action, to help in the design and delivery of the inaugural High Level Event, thereby further syndicating its concept.