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Arrangements for intergovernmental meetings

Views 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

Summary report by the secretariat

Summary

This report summarizes the proposals made by Parties and non-Party stakeholders 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 received by the deadline of 28 February 2017. Topic covered by the proposals include: making maximum use of the diverse and specialized expertise of non-Party stakeholders; the potential contribution of non-Party stakeholders to processes and discussions related to strengthening national action and enhancing ambition; increasing the opportunities to provide substantive input to Parties and expanding possibilities for input; enhancing practices that facilitate engagement regarding, for example, admission, registration, access and financial support; and showcasing climate action in innovative ways, including through platforms, dialogues and consultations. A number of the proposals highlight examples of non-Party stakeholder engagement in other intergovernmental processes.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. At its forty-fourth session, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) noted the evolution of stakeholder engagement in the UNFCCC process and recalled the increased recognition of, and references to, various non-Party stakeholders¹ in the Paris Agreement and decision 1/CP.21.² It reaffirmed the value of contributions from observer organizations to deliberations on substantive issues and acknowledged the need to further enhance the effective engagement of observer organizations as the UNFCCC process moves forward towards the implementation and operationalization of the Paris Agreement.³

2. In that context, the 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. It invited Parties, observer organizations and interested United Nations agencies to submit their views on the matter by 28 February 2017, and requested the secretariat to prepare a summary report on the views contained in those submissions to be used as background information for the workshop.⁴

3. In total, 43 submissions were received by the deadline of 28 February 2017. Of those submissions, 1 was received from a Party (from Malta and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its member States), and 42 from non-Party stakeholders (6 from intergovernmental organizations and 28 from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) admitted as observers to the UNFCCC process, and 8 from non-admitted organizations). Of the 43 submissions, 4 were made on behalf of an NGO constituency and 1 on behalf of a group of 11 observer organizations.⁵

B. Scope of the report

4. This document briefly reviews the previous efforts made by the SBI to enhance the effectiveness of observer engagement and the key outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris relating to non-Party stakeholders. It synthesizes the key issues and proposals contained in the submissions referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, although not all the information contained in the submissions could be captured in a single concise document.

5. The submissions cover a range of key topics, with many proposals focused on how to make maximum use of the diverse and specialized expertise of non-Party stakeholders. Many proposals highlight the potential contribution that non-Party stakeholders could make to the processes and thematic areas that relate to strengthening national action. Other proposals concern enhancing the engagement of admitted observer organizations within the intergovernmental process by increasing their opportunities to provide substantive input to

¹ “Non-Party stakeholders”, in the context of the UNFCCC process, include both observer organizations and organizations without observer status.

² FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 161.

³ FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 162.

⁴ FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraphs 163 and 164.

⁵ The Party submission is available on the submission portal at http://unfccc.int/documentation/submissions_from_parties/items/5900.php. The submissions from non-Party stakeholders are available on the UNFCCC website at http://unfccc.int/documentation/submissions_from_non-party_stakeholders/items/7481.php.

Parties, as well as expanding the possible types of input. In addition, proposals were made to enhance the practices that facilitate engagement, for example regarding admission categories and process, registration, access and financial support, as well as proposals for innovative modes of engagement, such as through platforms, dialogues and consultations. Some proposals highlight examples of non-Party stakeholder engagement in other intergovernmental processes.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

6. The SBI may wish to reflect 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. It may also wish to consider the relevant proposals made by Parties and non-Party stakeholders and to provide guidance, as appropriate.

II. Background

A. Observer organizations in the UNFCCC process

7. The SBI periodically takes stock of, and provides guidance on, the practices for engaging observer organizations in the intergovernmental process. In this context, the SBI has repeatedly reaffirmed the fundamental value of effective participation by observers and the value of their contribution to the deliberations on substantive issues.⁶ A stocktake of more than 20 years of observer engagement in the intergovernmental process was provided in document FCCC/SBI/2016/2. Notably, at the time of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the cumulative number of observer organizations admitted to the UNFCCC process had reached a total of 2,064, almost doubling since 2008.⁷ The increase in the participation of observer organizations reflects the growing diversity of non-Party stakeholders active in matters relating to the Convention. That document also provided a detailed update on the implementation of the steps taken by the SBI to enhance observer engagement in the intergovernmental process in the period 2014–2015.

8. Previous steps taken by the SBI include convening, in conjunction with SBI 34, an in-session workshop to further develop ways to enhance the engagement of observer organizations. The workshop featured presentations by Parties and representatives of eight NGO constituencies on proposals for enhancing the existing means of observer participation and for creating possible new means of participation. Parties and observers engaged in a frank and open discussion of issues relating to the proposals. The discussions served as input to the consideration of the matter at SBI 34⁸ and relevant conclusions were adopted.⁹

9. At SBI 46 another workshop will be convened, which will allow Parties and observer organizations to express their views through a constructive and practical dialogue with a focus on analysing the effectiveness of the current modes of participation, structure

⁶ Information on past decisions and conclusions pertaining to observer engagement is available via the UNFCCC online mandate search for observer engagement tool at http://unfccc.int/parties_and_observers/ngo/items/9558.php.

⁷ The total number of admitted observer organizations now stands at 2,121.

⁸ FCCC/SBI/2011/INF.7.

⁹ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraphs 175–178.

and language related to the engagement of non-Party stakeholders, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Paris Agreement, its work programme and pre-2020 action.

B. The Paris Agreement and decision 1/CP.21

10. To set the stage for the workshop referred to in paragraph 9 above, it may be helpful to review the outcomes of the Paris Conference, where Parties welcomed the efforts of all non-Party stakeholders to address and respond to climate change and invited them to scale up their efforts and support actions to reduce emissions and/or to build resilience and decrease vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.

11. Decision 1/CP.21 contains provisions that specifically mandate or broadly inspire non-Party stakeholders to engage in various aspects of the implementation of the outcomes of the Paris Conference:

(a) Provision of support by organizations in a position to do so for the preparation and communication of the intended nationally determined contributions of Parties that may need such support (paragraph 15);

(b) Development of recommendations by relevant organizations and expert bodies outside the Convention for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change (paragraph 49);

(c) Voluntary cancellations by non-Party stakeholders, without double counting of units issued under the Kyoto Protocol, including certified emission reductions that are valid for the second commitment period (paragraph 106);

(d) Registration of climate actions on the Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) platform (paragraph 117);

(e) Parties encouraged to work closely with non-Party stakeholders to catalyse efforts to strengthen mitigation and adaptation action (paragraph 118);

(f) Engagement in the technical examination processes (TEPs) on mitigation and adaptation (paragraph 119);

(g) Engagement in a high-level event building on the Lima–Paris Action Agenda (paragraph 120(d));

(h) Engagement by high-level champions of non-Party stakeholders for the furtherance of the voluntary initiatives of the Lima–Paris Action Agenda (paragraph 121(b)) and provision of support to the champions by relevant organizations (paragraph 123);

(i) Establishment of a platform for exchange of experience and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner concerning local communities and indigenous peoples (paragraph 135).

12. Many non-Party stakeholders are already advancing climate action, and its acceleration is required at all levels, in all countries and across all issues relating to the implementation of the Convention and its Paris Agreement. This trend creates new possibilities for ways to engage non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC process and new opportunities to track, demonstrate and recognize climate action being undertaken by non-Party stakeholders.

III. Engaging non-Party stakeholders

13. The vital role played by non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC process and the urgent need to enhance and expand that role in the light of the Paris Agreement is underscored in nearly all of the submissions. It is widely recognized that they are essential for ensuring transparency, strengthening accountability and keeping the global community fully focused on the issue of climate change. The proposals recognize how non-Party stakeholders could assist Parties in making progress towards their broad policy goals, and highlight the need for new practices that more fully ‘tap into’ and utilize their expansive knowledge. Some stress the need for more substantive consultations with non-Party stakeholders as well as stronger efforts to utilize the vast capabilities of the research community and the technical expertise of other non-Party stakeholders. Non-Party stakeholders can be instrumental in: monitoring and supporting the intergovernmental process; translating information for external audiences and promoting public acceptance, ownership and support; and fulfilling key informational needs as Parties develop the review processes under the Paris Agreement.

14. A number of the submissions, including that from the European Union, express appreciation for the existing modes of engagement and channels for substantive input that have been developed over the years, such as plenary interventions, side events, briefings with presiding officers and the Executive Secretary, plenary overflow arrangements during sessions, and the ability to make substantive submissions via the UNFCCC website. Existing constituency functions are also considered important by admitted observers in the current context. The long-standing practice of holding dialogue and discussion with observer organizations within the UNFCCC process is also highlighted in many submissions.

15. Many of the submissions focus on innovative ways to engage non-Party stakeholders, including civil society, research organizations, businesses and investors, subnational and local authorities and others, in strengthening the development of the Paris Agreement implementation rule book, the enhanced transparency framework, the global stocktake and the implementation and compliance mechanism. They highlight the key constituted bodies, processes and thematic areas that could benefit from their expertise and experience. The proposals include:

- (a) New partnerships, initiatives and approaches that could strengthen and facilitate action and enhance ambition at the national level;
- (b) New opportunities for non-Party stakeholders to make substantive input to the intergovernmental negotiating process and better utilize their expertise;
- (c) New practices, processes and methods, including new approaches to current practices, that could enhance engagement in the coming years.

16. The submissions highlight some key considerations when seeking to tap into the diverse and specialized expertise of non-Party stakeholders. They note that the traditional process of seeking consensus on substantive input at the constituency level often requires considerable time. In moving towards implementation of the Paris Agreement, such an approach could pose difficulties for smaller clusters or independent organizations that have been invited to make specific policy inputs or to design expert papers. As new types of organization become more active in the process, new ways of engagement may be needed to help non-Party stakeholders to provide input. It was suggested that the implementation of the Paris Agreement necessitates an increased thematic and sectoral focus.

17. Some of the submissions propose a differentiated approach, whereby an organization with the appropriate expertise in a particular issue would be allowed to

provide targeted input directly. It was noted that, if such opportunities for contribution could be provided, problems of access and fairness in relation to other non-Party stakeholders would also need to be addressed. It was suggested that Parties should adopt new rules for engagement with non-Party stakeholders, which must be differentiated on the basis of the nature and interests of the non-Party stakeholders. It was also suggested to create stakeholder engagement teams for substantive and organizational matters. Non-Party stakeholders, for example, could support knowledge-related capacity-building within the process, particularly by providing science-based learning opportunities for Parties.

18. For the workshop referred to in paragraph 9 above, observer organizations may wish to reflect on how the proposed approaches, methods and tools for engagement, as well as any new responsibilities, could facilitate providing input to the key long-term elements of the UNFCCC process, particularly the global climate action agenda, the development of the Paris Agreement implementation rule book, continued progress on nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and long-term climate pathways, and improved practices for engagement with constituted bodies. Although not part of the mandate, some of the submissions include suggestions regarding the development of the workshop structure, including a potential advisory group of non-Party stakeholders working with the secretariat and the SBI Chair.¹⁰

A. Enhanced engagement in the nationally determined contribution process and the global climate action agenda

1. Experience of non-Party stakeholder engagement in the nationally determined contribution process

19. In its submission, the European Union shared its positive experience with public participation in the NDCs and the adaptation planning process. It noted that the engagement of non-Party stakeholders in the implementation phase of the Paris Agreement is highly valuable and that access to information is crucial. In its experience, public participation in the decision-making process on climate significantly increases awareness and support in relation to the relevant legislation, and it not only increases the quality of decision-making but also leads to more cost-efficient and effective decision-making. It suggested strengthening possibilities within the UNFCCC for exchanging information and best practices on public participation, respecting the national decision-making, participation and consultation processes, such as via global climate action, the NAP Expo, technical expert meetings (TEMs) and TEPs, Action for Climate Empowerment, and the local communities and indigenous peoples platform.

2. Proposals for the nationally determined contribution process

20. A number of the submissions from non-Party stakeholders highlight the value of engaging stakeholders in the development of NDCs, which will help secure their broad acceptance and implementation as well as advance efforts to increase ambition. The proposals include: the increased participation of business in the NDC review and preparation process as part of the five-year cycle at the national and international levels; the need for permanent consultation and dialogue frameworks for NDCs at the national level; the need to further facilitate non-Party stakeholders' dialogue with the least developed

¹⁰ Those suggestions were channelled to the SBI Chair through an online collaboration platform launched in January 2017 by the secretariat to develop the design of the workshop in consultation with all NGO constituencies.

countries to assist North–South capacity-building; and non-Party stakeholder involvement in the development of climate plans and climate-energy action plans for up to 2050.

21. To ensure the consistency and continuity of the NDCs, some of the submissions call for establishing a space alongside the five-year global stocktake where Parties could consult with their subnational counterparts prior to submitting their revised NDCs. This would help demonstrate how the actions and ambitions of subnational governments can make a direct contribution to the NDCs and their implementation. The submissions note that low-emission development strategies will need the engagement of non-Party stakeholders during the implementation phase. The 2050 pathways platform could be promoted more broadly as the vehicle for mobilization.

3. Global climate action and champions

22. A number of the submissions highlight the need to strengthen, enhance and further define the role of the global climate action champions in order to encourage wider participation. The submission from a Party highlights the forthcoming business plan for prioritized action by the champions and the secretariat, and calls on the secretariat to disseminate this plan as soon as possible. Non-Party stakeholders call for enhancing interaction with the champions by: increasing the number of meetings between the champions and observers; expanding the opportunities for briefings; having the champions moderate an annual ‘pre-COP’ with constituencies, with a written summary for consideration by the COP; holding focused formal dialogues with observers; nominating a non-Party stakeholder as a champion; allowing for ‘ambassadors’ from the current constituencies to work with the champions; creating an online collaboration platform for the champions; and convening a dedicated day for non-Party stakeholders with the champions during sessions of the COP.

23. All these measures would have the purpose of creating space for these stakeholders to formally present their actions and views to one another and to Party stakeholders, and facilitating more global collaboration. Further, it was suggested that the champions, at high-level events, should reflect the full range of issues under discussion by the COP. Some submissions propose that the champions should promote the direct involvement of business and industry, rather than serving as synthesizers and conveyors of views. In particular, the need to involve developing country business communities and small and medium-sized enterprises in the process was noted. It was also suggested that the champions could showcase positive examples of and best practices for interaction between Party and non-Party stakeholders.

4. Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

24. The Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action was highlighted as essential in transitioning to the implementation stage of the Paris Agreement, with many stressing the need to track the progress of global climate action initiatives. Increased synergies between the UNFCCC process and global climate action are sought, as well as clarity on the expectations for the long-term engagement of non-Party stakeholders as part of and outside global climate action. Proposals call for: increasing the number of meetings under global climate action; arranging a steering committee under global climate action, with a focus on holding a ‘Business and Industry Day’ at COP 23; and expanding the use of the TEMs through global climate action. Some propose that global climate action make full use of sectoral focal points and their extensive network so as to coordinate efforts within the thematic sectors. They note that this issue warrants consideration in the context of the budget for the next biennium.

B. Enhanced input to the intergovernmental process

1. Interventions

25. The following are called for in the submissions:

- (a) Increased intervention opportunities in plenary proceedings, as constituency members have heterogeneous views and one statement cannot be completely representative;
- (b) Increased time allotment for observer interventions,¹¹ preferably equal to that provided for Parties;
- (c) More opportunities to address contact groups;
- (d) Improved access to informal consultations;
- (e) The establishment of a forum for observers to make formal presentations to Parties.

2. Establishment of a channel, forum and dialogues in formal processes

26. Some of the submissions stress the importance of establishing channels for direct dialogue, both formal and informal, with non-Party stakeholders. The proposals include: holding business round tables to showcase the diverse business opportunities related to climate solutions; using the pre-session period to showcase successes at the field level and to promote new initiatives; and organizing specific thematic dialogues and consultative dialogues as an official part of the programme of work at COP sessions, particularly during the high-level segment. Some other submissions add that a high-level event should evolve under a long-term narrative instead of having disparate one-off events at each COP session. Also proposed were: policy dialogues for the transport sector; an ‘action day’ for water issues, whereby the impact of dedicated thematic days on the negotiations should be ensured; an interactive discussion group for the Climate Technology Centre and Network, the Green Climate Fund and agriculture-focused non-Party stakeholders; and dedicated pavilions at COP sessions to showcase youth-led climate action and highlight regional and state-level initiatives. Some observer organizations stress the need to showcase climate solutions from groups of ‘rights-holders’.

3. Technical examination processes and technical expert meetings

27. Non-Party stakeholders call for the development of mechanisms to increase their involvement in the TEPs and TEMs, with a view to having more systematic association. This would provide important opportunities for information-sharing, capacity-building and knowledge exchange for subnational and business actors, in addition to scaling up and replicating key practices at the local level. The submissions propose a follow-up process to enable continued interaction with experts from the various constituencies. Some note that, in the implementation phase of the Paris Agreement, the increased involvement of non-Party stakeholders could be particularly beneficial for the discussions of Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement on the development of the enhanced transparency framework and the collective assessment of progress.

28. Calls were also made for the increased involvement of non-Party stakeholders in the preparation of the TEMs, including: proposing representatives from state and regional governments for participation in the TEMs; ensuring the availability of appropriate industry experts; and developing a roster of subnational experts. It was suggested to strengthen the

¹¹ Currently, single Parties are asked to refrain from making statements due to time constraints, but groups of Parties can make statements.

link between the TEMs and other UNFCCC mechanisms and bodies, like the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

4. The 2018 facilitative dialogue and global stocktake

29. Many of the submissions emphasize that non-Party stakeholders could make valuable contributions to the facilitative dialogue and the global stocktake, which need to reflect the climate-related efforts that cities, companies and other non-Party stakeholders can make alongside States and international organizations. They call for including non-Party stakeholders, specifically subnational actors, in the development of the modalities for the global stocktake. They also call upon Parties to explicitly allow non-Party stakeholders to make written submissions and oral interventions as input to these multilateral discussions. Proposals were made for non-Party stakeholders to provide scientific insights through participation in technical workshops and submission processes. These could feed into the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Parties should ensure that public access to all discussions and relevant documentation is a standard practice in these important review processes.

5. Examples of stakeholder engagement in other processes

30. Some of the submissions note that non-Party stakeholders have an impressive record of informing other international processes and helping to ensure accountability. They help to monitor compliance with obligations and pledges, provide relevant information and expertise, and work to identify barriers to implementation, such as gaps in capacity, funding or technical knowledge. Some submissions recommend that Parties establish a recognized institutional interface for business and industry, built on the model of other such consultative bodies, such as the International Organisation of Employers and the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Examples of other United Nations forums for bringing business into a working dialogue include the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the United Nations Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

31. Some submissions highlight experience drawn from the Convention on Biological Diversity, like the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations experience in developing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It was noted that the Committee on World Food Security has gone beyond the traditional United Nations grouping of ‘members versus observers’ to create a space for active engagement: the Civil Society Mechanism, founded as an autonomous part of this committee, is a network of civil society organizations that share information on policy debates and processes to influence the committee.

C. Enhanced practices, processes and mechanisms for engagement

1. Role of constituencies

32. A number of the submissions highlight the importance of ensuring coherence across UNFCCC bodies and processes through constituency-based engagement. Some stress the importance of the balanced involvement of all major groups, with due consideration of women, the agriculture sector and smallholder farmers, especially from developing countries. In addition, some submissions note that any changes to the role of the constituencies should be made only after rigorous consultations with the constituency groups, and that there must be no discrimination among any of the current constituencies. A number of the submissions call for the official recognition of new constituency groups,

including one representing the finance sector, so as to better differentiate between the input of long-term investors and that of individual companies. Other submissions call for an enhanced role for specific existing constituencies and recognition of this role as Parties develop a future climate regime.

2. Conference practices

33. Observers made proposals to enhance engagement through improved support for constituencies, such as: providing a full-time side event room for youth NGOs; ensuring that Transport Day is well coordinated with ministers' schedules; ensuring connection between the blue zone and the green zone at conferences; and providing well-organized networking opportunities. It was also proposed to consolidate official and non-official events, with information by topic or sector, into a centralized calendar that is accessible through multiple means of communication such as websites, social media and e-mail. One submission suggests facilitating engagement by providing a more comprehensive overview of the sessions, as well as events during the sessions, thus enhancing ownership of decisions made.

3. Financial support and capacity-building

34. Provision of financial support for participation was proposed to ensure the full participation and capacity-building of groups with less financial resources, such as indigenous peoples, women and youth groups, in particular from the global South. Proposals made include: promoting the capacity-building of youth participants, such as a youth delegate programme, whereby Parties consider the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations; a youth negotiator hub for intergenerational mentoring, partnerships and knowledge-sharing; and regional training workshops as peer-to-peer education and outreach activities held between sessions in various regions.

35. In addition, proposals were made for assigning new, additional and predictable financial resources to the constituencies as well as to provide for secretariat staff to assist them. Some submissions also call for financial support for business associations to develop strategies and support companies in the implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as for business networks that facilitate the interaction between businesses and negotiators. Other proposals concern developing financing mechanisms for local authorities.

4. Admission categories

36. Some of the submissions propose separate admission categories for observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders. A key challenge noted by some non-Party stakeholders is the securing of accreditation to attend UNFCCC sessions. Subnational stakeholders, for example, must rely on their national counterparts or admitted organization partners to have their representatives registered. It was proposed that Parties could provide a formal admission mechanism to subnational stakeholders and increase their allocation of participants that can attend negotiating sessions. Some submissions suggest the following:

- (a) Formally recognizing multi-stakeholder international coalitions as key aggregators;
- (b) Assigning focal points within the secretariat for thematic and sectoral non-Party stakeholders;
- (c) Providing for broader citizen participation;
- (d) Changing the terminology for formal status from "observer" to "admitted non-state actor" to reflect the active role of non-Party stakeholders in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

37. It was further noted that, under the UNCCD, business and industry entities obtain observer status through direct accreditation by the Conference of the Parties and are formally engaged in the process.¹² Another submission further suggests that no evidence of qualification should be required for participation in the process, whereby governments, intergovernmental agencies, NGOs and businesses can work as equals.

5. Conflict of interest

38. Some submissions propose differentiating among non-Party stakeholders with regard to their interests and obligations, to safeguard against possible conflict of interest. They express concern about the term “stakeholder” and the equality of actors that it implies. They highlight the need to distinguish between: States as “duty-bearers”; groups of “rights-holders” like indigenous peoples, women, workers and youth; and private interests that could be in conflict with the goals of the Convention.

39. Other submissions call for differentiation between public-interest NGOs and academic institutions on the one hand and private sector entities and those that represent their interests on the other, and specifically proposes that business-interest non-Party stakeholders should not have access to the norm- and standard-setting activities of the UNFCCC. Those submissions call for an operational definition of conflict of interest and policies to prevent the secretariat from receiving private funding and entities with conflicts of interest from being granted observer status. In addition, several submissions stated that the exclusion of non-Party stakeholders on the basis of conflict of interest or other grounds would be detrimental to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the furthering of global ambition in the NDCs.

6. Registration

40. Proposals for increasing flexibility for observer organizations to manage their registration include: extending registration timelines and providing transparent delegation quota allocations; allowing greater flexibility of quota management, such as permitting badges to be transferred between members; and factoring the size of an organization into its quota allocation. Observers also propose dividing the quotas between the “negotiations week” and the “high-level week”. This would allow senior management to participate in high-level dialogues and technical-level experts to participate at other times.

41. Related proposals call for daily registration, or nomination on a daily basis, to provide for short-term attendance. In addition, the rules could allow for: changing the name of a nominee in case of emergency;¹³ replacing a confirmed nominee by an alternate; and providing additional badges to organizations that act as an umbrella for other groups.

42. Observers also call for an extension of the time for the confirmation of registration badges¹⁴ as well as for the application period for side events and exhibits. They call for the timely provision of a list of the non-Party stakeholders present at a session, organized by country, to facilitate networking and knowledge-sharing. In this context, some submissions propose creating a clear strategy that ensures the broad and balanced representation of countries and social groups such as youth and indigenous peoples.

¹² UNCCD decision 5/COP.10, paragraph 4.

¹³ In accordance with the conclusions of SBI 34 (FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(e)(i)), the secretariat already enables the replacement of names of nominated representatives of admitted observer organizations in the online registration system before and during sessions in exceptional circumstances, subject to the availability of resources.

¹⁴ The current period for confirmation of registration badges is three months, closing a few days before the session starts.

7. Online platform and consultation system

43. Several of the submissions call for developing an online platform for non-Party stakeholders and propose a range of possible uses. Some call for an online platform, building on NAZCA, for collaboration among non-Party stakeholders with a view to enhancing participation in national, regional and global processes. Others call for a platform, with an official United Nations mandate and hosted by the secretariat, that could also provide knowledge exchange for direct interaction between Parties and non-Party stakeholders, particularly science-based organizations (e.g. offering or requesting scientific advice on a particular subject).

44. The submissions also call for the further development of NAZCA by integrating it into the UNFCCC process through global climate action and fully reflecting the social fabric of the actions taken by cities and local authorities. Some submissions envision a global digital platform, managed by civil society itself, to increase project matchmaking opportunities. An online platform could also facilitate collaboration in relation to several aspects: integration of local action and NDCs; mapping of civil society action on the Sustainable Development Goals; and using peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing for climate action. An all-of-business and all-of-society approach should be taken to expand the space for voluntary submissions and pledges to enable much wider mobilization of business than current mechanisms.

8. Written submissions

45. To facilitate access to submissions by observers, proposals were made to link them directly to the same UNFCCC web pages devoted to Party submissions as well as to develop a submission portal dedicated solely to non-Party stakeholders' submissions.¹⁵ It was suggested that, in the current implementation phase of the Paris Agreement, Parties could provide more structured but flexible guidance to non-Party stakeholders on the content of their submissions, with a view to the better operationalization of inputs and suggestions.

9. Non-Party stakeholder consultative mechanisms

46. Some observers call for creating an officially recognized mechanism for business engagement, such as a 'business solutions platform' to discuss private sector opportunities related to clean energy and low-carbon technologies. Through the constituency focal point, a consultative body of experts could respond to requests from Parties for interaction with the business community.

47. Others call for a civil society organization panel, as under the UNCCD, which coordinates input from constituencies and collaborates with different bodies to provide input to the intergovernmental process. It could meet at least twice annually in person and once per month using video or telephone tools. The panel could also prepare a work programme and organize fundraising for its operations. Submissions note as related examples the International Organisation of Employers and the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

48. The submissions also contain proposals for establishing private sector negotiation groups to work with Parties in the decision-making process and to build their capacity, especially for developing countries.

¹⁵ A submission portal dedicated to non-Party stakeholders will be made available soon.

10. Time and space availability

49. A few of the submissions raise the issue of the time and space constraints on their coordination work and side events where they can showcase their work, and propose to expand the availability of time and meeting rooms for coordination and side events.

Annex

Currently available modes of engaging observer organizations in the intergovernmental process in accordance with the conclusions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

- **Intervention opportunities:** presiding officers are invited to seek opportunities for observer organizations to make statements.¹
- **Use of observer inputs:** presiding officers are invited to make greater use of observer inputs in workshops and technical meetings.²
- **Regular briefings:** presiding officers are invited to increase opportunities for regular briefings and debriefings as a means for dialogue for observer organizations with presiding officers and Parties.³
- **Submissions:** the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) recalled its conclusions from SBI 20 that request for submission of information and views could be extended to non-governmental organizations where appropriate and on the understanding that such submissions would not be issued as official documents, in order not to expand the volume of documentation, but would be made available on the UNFCCC website. The SBI requested the secretariat to continue its efforts to make these submissions more accessible on the UNFCCC website.⁴ An online submission portal that will enable observer organizations to make submissions electronically. It is scheduled to be launched later this year.
- **Ad hoc opportunities for engagement:** Global Stakeholders Dialogue, Voices for Climate fair, consultation processes, etc.⁵
- **Flexible registration:** the **replacement of names** of nominated representatives on the online registration system is allowed in exceptional circumstances.⁶
- **Webcasting** of meetings: all plenary meetings, informal stocktaking plenary meetings, meetings of the high-level segment, press briefings and media training sessions at the sessions of the governing and subsidiary bodies are webcast. Selected special events and secretariat side events are also webcast, subject to the availability of resources and where appropriate. In addition, meetings of the Compliance Committee, the Executive Board of the clean development mechanism, the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee and the Standing Committee on Finance are regularly webcast. Meetings of the Technology Executive Committee, the Designated National Authorities Forum, the Transitional Committee for the design of the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Committee and the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, and workshops on long-term finance have also been webcast when resources have allowed it.⁷

¹ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(a)(i), and FCCC/SBI/2016/2, table 2.

² FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(a)(ii), and FCCC/SBI/2016/2, table 2.

³ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(a)(iii), and FCCC/SBI/2014/6, paragraph 30.

⁴ FCCC/SBI/2010/27, paragraph 148.

⁵ FCCC/SBI/2016/2, table 2.

⁶ FCCC/SBI/2016/2, table 2.

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2016/2, table 2.