



Enhancing WS2 through Political Visibility, Better Convention Body Engagement, and Expanded Technical Outputs **2 September 2015**

Submission by the Republic of Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

This submission builds on AOSIS's previous submissions on WS2, as well as the June G77 submission on WS2.

AOSIS believes that there should be a comprehensive decision on the WS2 Action Agenda in Paris. This submission provides details on key issues that we think are essential for the Paris agreement:

- First, we should be focused on enhancing the connection between the technical work and the political engagement, so that new, voluntary, cooperative, near term, mitigation initiatives emerge from this process;
- Second, we need to scale up the efforts and coordination of the Convention Bodies to help implement the valuable mitigation opportunities and policy options that are being identified in the technical process;
- Third, we must ensure continuity of the considerable work that has been undertaken by the incoming and outgoing COP Presidents, if WS2 is to be a sustainable driver of new action.

To achieve these objectives, we are suggesting the following strategies:

- Appointing two high-level Champions to provide continuous political visibility and momentum;
- Enhancing the engagement of the Convention Bodies; and
- Increasing the visibility of the outputs of the technical process.

1. Appointing Champions to Provide Continuous Political Visibility and Momentum

The Secretary-General's Climate Summit, the Lima Action Day and the Lima Paris Action Agenda are unique and ambitious efforts to bring together leaders from national and local governments, the private sector and civil society, with the objective of launching new cooperative efforts to address climate change.

This on-going cooperation between France, Peru, the Secretary-General's Climate Team, and the UNFCCC secretariat has brought continuity to this series of high-level events, which has maintained the initiative as a relevant and dynamic, and highly visible forum for cooperative action. This should continue. However, it heavily relies on the significant capacity of successive COP Presidents, something that cannot be guaranteed in the future. As the COP Presidencies of Peru and France noted in their recent briefing, high-level leadership of this process is necessary.

For this reason, AOSIS is calling for the appointment of two high-level Champions, supported by an expert staff, to provide enduring support within the context of the broader WS2 process on enhancing cooperative action. This enhances the invitation given to the COP Presidents and the Executive Secretary in Lima to convene annual high-level events (Decision 1/CP.20, para. 21).

The Champions would be appointed by successive COP Presidents and should be individuals who have occupied high-level positions, hold the broad trust of both developing and developed

country Parties, and have demonstrated convening power. Each incoming COP President would appoint one Champion to serve for two years (the year they host the COP and the subsequent year), which would result in staggered terms for Champions, providing greater continuity.

The Champions would have three primary responsibilities:

- **Scaling up existing cooperative initiatives.** The Champions would help existing cooperative initiatives leverage the WS2 action platform to strengthen their work, mobilize additional resources, and attract new partners. Initiatives demonstrating significant progress and/or in a position to scale up their activities would be offered a prominent role at the annual high-level event.
- **Launching new cooperative initiatives.** The Champions would bring together relevant partners in government, civil society, and the private sector to develop and launch new cooperative initiatives at the annual high-level events. These new initiatives would operationalize opportunities and address barriers identified in the TEMs.
- **Enhancing the coherence of Workstream 2.** The Champions would contribute assistance to the secretariat to ensure that WS2 develops in a coherent way, with the TEMs informing the high-level event (including through the SPM) and vice-versa. This would help strengthen the link between the technical and political processes, which is currently lacking.

As explained in previous AOSIS submissions, this Champions proposal is not seeking to create a new implementing institution, nor should the Champions directly oversee or manage any particular cooperative initiative. Rather, the Champions should serve a facilitative role, ensuring an effective and high profile platform for initiatives, with the work of the initiatives taking place outside the UNFCCC.

The roles of the Champions involve engaging governments and non-state actors such as civil society and the private sector on political, but also on policy and technical levels. Therefore, the Champions should be supported by a small staff of entrepreneurial individuals with experience and connections in the relevant policy areas and industries being addressed under WS2, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, cities, etc. As was done with the Transitional Committee for the GCF, some of this staff could be seconded from Convention Bodies, the Financial Mechanisms or outside expert organizations. The support staff would engage with existing and new cooperative initiatives at the technical level in an effort to strengthen their work and help facilitate their engagement in the technical and political processes under WS2.

Assisted by the support staff, and working in close collaboration with the current and incoming COP Presidents, the Champions would ensure continuity in the high-level events and lessen the administrative and coordination burden of future COP Presidents, while allowing the COP President discretion to shape the high-level events. Formalising such a dynamic, cooperative, and action-oriented form of high-level engagement would invigorate the UNFCCC by attracting a broader range of stakeholders who do not currently have a meaningful opportunity to participate in the process.

2. Enhancing the Engagement of Convention Bodies

Part of the strength of having the WS2 Action Agenda as a part of the UNFCCC process is that it can draw on both the considerable knowledge and resources of the Convention Bodies, as well as the convening power of the Convention. The Convention Bodies are often the parts of the UNFCCC that have the best knowledge about implementation of climate action.

The Convention Bodies have started to engage in the technical expert meetings, but their participation in the meetings, and their action to help the implementation of policy options resulting from the technical process, need to be scaled up.

Because of the different governance relationships between the COP and the Convention Bodies and Financial Mechanisms, a one-size-fits-all policy of a COP direction is not advisable. Instead, AOSIS suggests three mechanisms to increase the engagement of the Convention Bodies:

- **Directions and Requests from the COP:** explicit directions to the TEC and CTCN to engage in the TEMs and their outputs, and report on their engagement in their annual joint report to the COP. Requests from the COP to the other Convention Bodies to engage in the TEMs and utilize the outputs of the TEM in their work.
- **Inter-Convention Body Working Group:** This regular meeting of representatives of the Convention Bodies, secretariat and Financial Mechanisms. These meetings would be able to take stock of action that the Convention Bodies and Financial Mechanisms are taking to assist with the implementation of policy options from the technical process. In addition, there should be a focus on cross-body coordination on unlocking persistent barriers. The secretariat would be asked to report to the COP on these meetings.
- **Secondment of Convention Body Staff to Co-Champion Support Team:** The small team needed to support the work of the Co-Champions in coordinating the work of the WS2 Action Agenda should be constituted by a number of staff seconded from the Convention Bodies and Financial Mechanisms. Not only do these staff have invaluable knowledge on implementation of climate action and considerable contacts with Parties, but their involvement will act as a link back to their home organizations. This method was used for the Transitional Committee of the GCF to great success.

3. Increasing Visibility of Technical Outputs

The technical expert meetings (TEMs) should foster greater action by Parties unilaterally and through multilateral cooperation by: (1) building a collective understanding of the opportunities with high mitigation potential and significant co-benefits and (2) identifying ways to remove barriers to policy implementation and technology deployment. The technical outputs of the TEMs are essential for advancing these objectives.

Workstream 2 has already produced several technical papers containing high-quality information on opportunities and barriers. In addition, a summary for policy makers will be released in November in advance of COP21. These technical outputs should be used in a number of ways:

- **Providing information to increase unilateral action.** By making available succinct and relevant information on mitigation opportunities and their significant co-benefits, Parties and non-state actors will be more likely to take action. While there is significant information on many global mitigation opportunities, the existing sources of information are rarely presented in a user-friendly manner; their comprehensiveness limits their usefulness.
- **Improving coordination of Convention bodies.** The information in the technical outputs should help relevant Convention bodies - e.g., Green Climate Fund, Standing Committee on Finance, Technology Executive Committee, Climate Technology Centre and Network, and Capacity Building Forum - identify potential synergies in their activities around specific mitigation opportunities, particularly with respect to the removal of barriers to implementation. The technical outputs should also identify barriers that are currently not being addressed and which could be taken up by the Convention bodies or within any of the broader thematic negotiations.

- **Improving effectiveness of multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation.** Not all barriers need be addressed within the UNFCCC. Many barriers, including those faced by developed countries, maybe more effectively addressed through multilateral cooperation outside the UNFCCC. The technical outputs can point Parties and non-state actors toward successful cooperative initiatives. They can also highlight opportunities for new forms of cooperation, particularly when certain barriers are not currently being addressed.
- **Focusing discussions at annual high-level events.** The summary for policy makers should be a key input into annual high-level events on enhancing ambition. It should focus discussions on near-term opportunities and facilitate actionable outcomes, such as mobilizing new resources, launching new cooperative initiatives, and strengthening existing initiatives.

While much of this technical information currently exists in various sources outside the UNFCCC, there is value in capturing this information within the context of WS2 so that it can better inform bodies and processes as described above. This information could be made more useful if transferred to a curated, regularly updated and easily searchable online resource, which is organized around policy options. A report by Ecofys last year suggested that such an online resource does not currently exist.¹ There are a number of possible homes for this online menu of policy options, such as in the secretariat linked to the NAZCA portal or utilising the online tools being developed by the CTCN.

¹ Available at: <http://www.ecofys.com/files/files/ecofys-2014-towards-a-policy-menu-to-mitigate-ghg.pdf>