

# The Environmental Integrity Group

23 February 2021

To the attention of the UNFCCC Bureau members  
Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
United Nations Regional Information Centre  
UN Campus  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
D-53113 Bonn, Germany

Excellencies,

The Environmental Integrity Group (EIG) would like to express its gratitude to all Bureau members for your efforts to bring us to a successful conclusion of negotiations at COP26 amidst the uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the postponement last year of COP26, we believe the expectations for this conference have increased. We have to come at COP26 prepared not to begin the negotiations, but to conclude our work. With only a few months until COP26, we have to make the most of the time on our hands to progress in an efficient and strategic manner.

As a crucial milestone on the road to Glasgow, the EIG calls for a meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies to take place in June 2021 in virtual format, as well as for a continuation of the work of the SBs in autumn 2021 in the lead up to COP26. These sessions are imperative if we want to stand a chance of reaching a successful conclusion in Glasgow. The EIG looks forward to receiving the dates of the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies at the earliest convenience, so as to begin planning.

In our preparations for the SBs and COP26, the EIG fully supports the proposed way forward presented by the COP25 and COP26 Presidencies. We also kindly ask that SBSTA and SBI Co-Chairs hold consultations and virtual exchanges over the coming months with delegations, and capture the progress of these deliberations in writing. Only through a judicious use of formal and informal discussions, calls for submissions to garner parties' views, and written outputs to capture the progress of deliberations, will we adequately advance in our work. The world will be looking for concrete results in Glasgow and, as a matter of principle, we should prioritize in our preparatory work those areas of the negotiations that have to conclude at COP26. This includes advancing the negotiations on the conclusion of the Enhanced Transparency Framework, on the rules necessary for the operationalization of Article 6, and on Common Time Frames. At the same time, as the COP will also have to deliver on critical issues not covered by the SB agendas, we encourage informal discussion led by the presidencies on how to prepare for the deliberations of the common post 2025 finance objective,

on how to build on the enhanced NDCs, Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies, and newly announced net zero emissions targets, and on how to enhance adaptation ambition and implementation. This will allow us to arrive in COP26 ready to adopt the necessary decisions and to concentrate on the full breadth of the COP's agenda.

As we plan for the work ahead, we must be guided by the spirit of inclusivity, representation, and transparency. We must also recognize that the global health crisis requires our utmost flexibility. We applaud the Secretariat's efforts to work bilaterally with delegations to identify suitable options to ensure proper connectivity and full participation for all delegations in the virtual discussions. The EIG stands ready to support these efforts in any way possible. We also encourage us to schedule future virtual discussions in a way that allows for group coordination, by allowing time between each discussion sessions. We should minimize holding parallel discussions in order to accommodate small delegations. The EIG also reiterates its readiness to participate in virtual discussions held at different time zones, in order to ensure full equality of treatment between regional groups. Finally, we encourage you to draw from the successful experiences of other fora in dealing with virtual meetings, namely the G20 2020 Saudi Arabian Presidency, negotiations at the WHO, and the recently successfully concluded line-by-line negotiations in the preparation of UNEA.

Amidst the unprecedented and immediate challenge caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the world needs ambitious decisions on climate change that deliver safety and prosperity for all in the long run. Allow me to reiterate the EIG's full dedication to an ambitious outcome at COP26. Our members stand ready to support members of the Bureau in the preparations of this successful conference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Franz Perrez', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

On behalf of the Environmental Integrity Group  
Franz Perrez

Ambassador  
Head of the International Affairs Division  
Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)