



Background note

Process to strengthen the observer engagement in the UNFCCC

Table of Contents

1	Purpose and objectives.....	3
2	Basic background information.....	4
2.1	Observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders	4
2.2	NGO Constituencies and informal groups.....	9
2.3	Intergovernmental Organizations	14
2.4	Current modes of observer engagement	14
2.4.1	Throughout the year	14
2.4.2	Formal sessions of UNFCCC.....	17
2.5	Constituted Bodies.....	24
2.6	Technical infrastructure	25
2.6.1	Registration and accreditation policies.....	25
2.6.2	Database	26
2.6.3	Online systems interfacing observer organizations	26
2.6.4	Human resources	27
2.6.5	Interpretation	27
2.6.6	Disability inclusion.....	28
2.6.7	Staff resources	28
2.7	Practices from other intergovernmental processes	29
2.7.1	Practices within the UN system	29
2.7.2	Practices from IGOs.....	31
3	Agenda items	31
3.1	Observer organizations	31
3.2	Representation and equitable access.....	32
3.3	Admission.....	33
3.4	Current modes of observer engagement	34
3.5	Constituted bodies and support team.....	35
3.6	Financial Support and logistical arrangements.....	35
o	Annex 1. Mandates relating to observer engagement.....	37



List of Figures

Figure 1. Number of admitted organizations.....	4
Figure 2. Number of registration nominations and quota	7
Figure 3. Regional breakdowns by headquarters	8
Figure 4. Regional breakdowns by observer participants' nationality.....	9
Figure 5. NGO constituency breakdowns	10
Figure 6. Further breakdowns of organizations.....	11
Figure 7. ENGO constituency breakdown.....	12
Figure 8. ENGO constituency breakdown by organizations at COP26	13
Figure 9. ENGO constituency breakdown by individual members at COP26	13
Figure 10. Non-Party stakeholders submissions 2019-2021	15
Figure 11. Number of intervention opportunities each constituency took advantage of.....	18
Figure 12. Historical number of side event applications, selected organizers, leads	20
Figure 13. Historical number of exhibit applications and selected exhibitors (incl. co-exhibitors)	20
Figure 14. Daily attendance of virtual exhibits at COP26	22
Figure 15. Side events attendance on the COP 26 platform.....	23
Figure 16. Views of side events on YouTube	23
Figure 17. Historical growth of observer admission and resources on observer support function	29



1 Purpose and objectives

In accordance with the concept note on the review process to strengthen observer engagement in the UNFCCC process, the secretariat prepared a draft background note and circulated to the NGO Constituency Focal Points and a few IGOs who are participating in Phase 1 for their further inputs. This document is a compilation of their inputs and open to further additions that serve as the background information for the focus groups in Phase 2.

- **Basic background information** on relevant statistics, reference documents and mandates as an aide-memoire; and
- **List of agenda items** to be discussed during focus groups and through written submissions.

The process to strengthen observer engagement in the UNFCCC is an **informal process** that was **initiated by the Executive Secretary, Patricia Espinosa**.

The objective of the first section is to assist the readers to contextualize the engagement issues to be discussed, trigger their thinking, and deepen the understanding of the mandates surrounding the observer engagement. Practices from other processes have been often reviewed in the UNFCCC process but the differing contexts (unparalleled size of COPs, the convention articles not referring to civil society, etc.) have often prevented the simple copying of practices elsewhere into the UNFCCC process. This basic background information is intended to assist the readers to propose solutions that build on existing and established precedents and fit the contexts unique to the UNFCCC process or solutions that alter those contexts so that suitable measures can be found addressing the identified challenges.

The second section on agenda items was co-created with constituencies and augmented by inputs from the participants in Phase 1 of the process identified in the concept note.

The adoption of the Paris Agreement brought in a new context of stakeholder engagement where Parties invited non-Party stakeholders to scale up climate action. Parties also “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 into the implementation and operationalization of the Paris Agreement”¹. With the Paris Agreement Work Programme concluded, it is opportune to conduct consultations and reviews for possible recalibration of observer engagement specifically, and the UNFCCC process more broadly, to better serve the purposes.

¹ FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 162

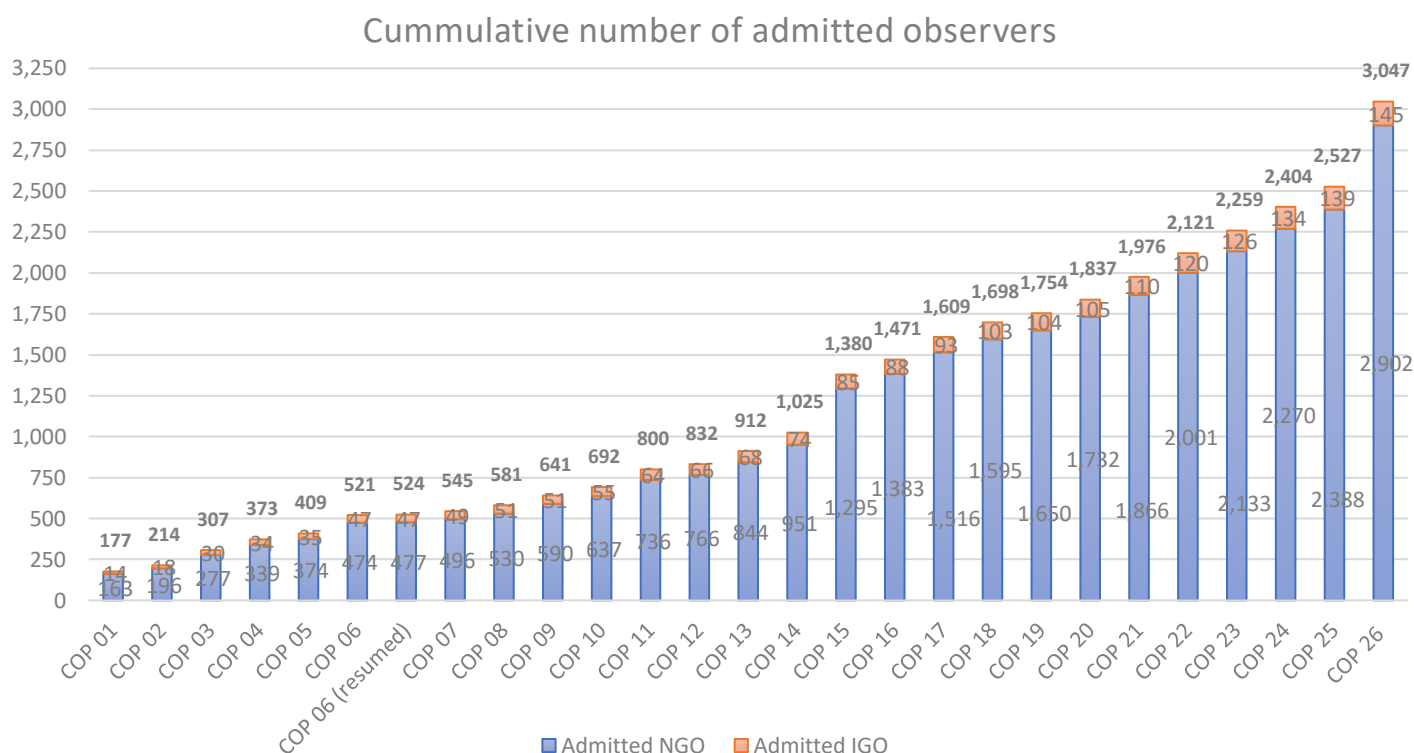


2 Basic background information

2.1 Observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders

- a) The term “Non-Party stakeholders (NPS)” was first introduced in the COP 21 decision that adopted the Paris Agreement ([decision 1/CP.21](#)). It includes “civil society, the private sector, financial institutions, cities and other subnational authorities, local communities and indigenous peoples” i.e., those whose actions are needed to deliver the goals established but who do not have legal obligations arising from the treaty.
- b) Of the NPS, those who have observer status in the UNFCCC are:
 - (1) UN organizations (do not require admission per Article 7, paragraph 6 of the UNFCCC)
 - (2) [Intergovernmental organizations](#) (IGOs, require admission by the COP)
 - (3) [Non-governmental organizations](#) (NGOs, require admission by the COP)

Figure 1. Number of admitted organizations





Annotation:

Chart 1. Number of admitted organizations shows that it took 14 years to reach the first 1,000 organizations, additional 8 years to reach 2,000 organizations and additional 4 years to reach 3,000. While it is the result of successful work of observers, if the majority remains active in the UNFCCC process, it will eventually become difficult to allocate even a quota of 1 per organization at COPs.

- c) UNFCCC COPs **are not open to the public**. All attendants need to be duly accredited as one of the following categories.
- i) Representatives of Parties to the UNFCCC nominated by the National Focal Points
 - ii) Representatives of UN organizations nominated by the heads of UN organizations
 - iii) Representatives of Admitted IGOs nominated by the Designated Contact Points
 - iv) Representatives of Admitted NGOs nominated by the Designated Contact Points
 - v) Representatives of Media assigned by the accredited news agencies
 - vi) Representatives of Global Climate Action (GCA) activities assigned to speak at or organize GCA activities.
 - vii) Staff of UNFCCC secretariat and the UN headquarters approved by the Executive Secretary to support the conference
 - viii) Technical staff assigned by the host country to support the conference
- d) The purposes of participation are as diverse as the number of activities that take place in the two weeks.
- Follow the negotiation to be able to provide tailored substantive inputs to Parties
 - Follow the negotiation to ensure transparency to the workings of a complex intergovernmental process
 - Follow the negotiation to raise public awareness, and enhance public access to information
 - Facilitate inputs from geographically diverse sources and from a wide range of expertise and perspectives to ensure reflection of stakeholder voices in the final outcomes of the COP
 - Identify complementarity with other related intergovernmental process and aid in delivering alignment with other established objectives, in particular the SDGs and other multilateral environmental agreements
 - To put pressure on Governments to work towards more ambitious outcomes
 - Bilateral meetings with Parties
 - Networking with other observers and non-Party stakeholders
 - Showcasing climate action at pavilion events
 - Showcasing climate action at UNFCCC official side events
 - Hosting and attending side events and exhibits in order to highlight key issues, influence, exchange information and knowledge
 - Attending side events and exhibits to learn about climate change issues



e) Scale of participation at UNFCCC COPs and requests for registrations

As *Chart 2* shows, since COP 21, the number of registration requests had been more than ca. 27,000 on average and that of participation/quota allocation is more than 8,000 on average.

Conference badges are divided by types of participants and not by the types of purposes of their activities. Some Party badge holders may mainly work in the negotiation meeting rooms while other Party badge holders may only work in pavilion halls. Same for observers – some observers may only need to access pavilion and climate action event areas, while other observers who are only following the negotiations may not be able to receive enough quota because those who only need to access pavilion halls compete for the quota allocation.

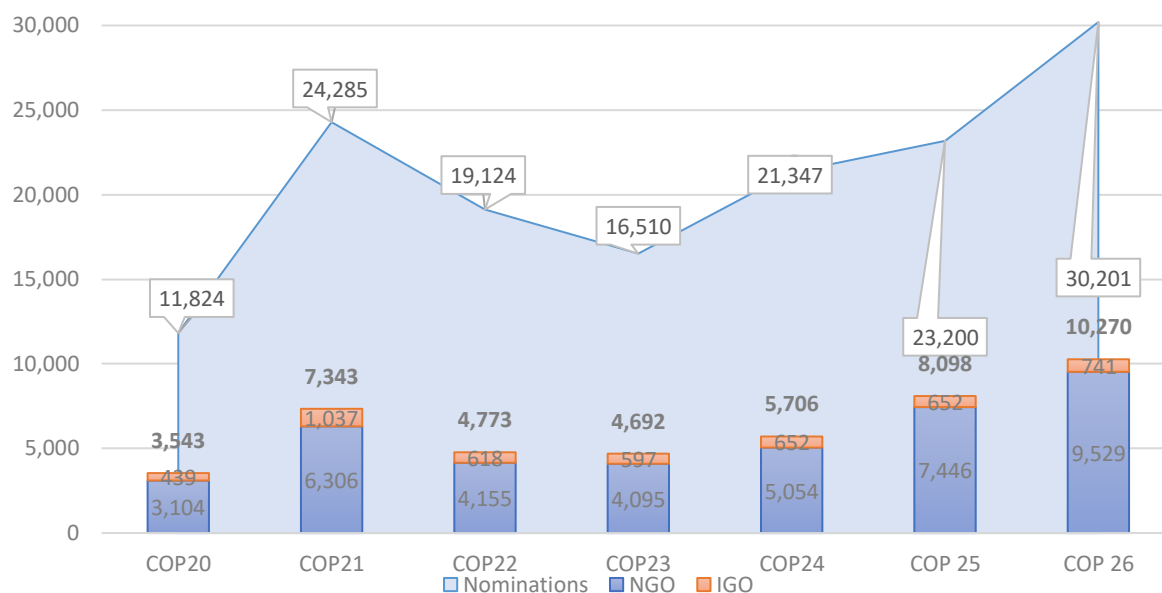
In the current participation mechanism, it is not possible for the secretariat to predictably regulate access of participants according to the mandates and purposes of their activities. This is an issue because when the UN Department of Safety and Security needs to demarcate particular areas for high-level events, the only option to control access is by the type of participants, not by the purpose of activities.

As shown in *Chart 2*, the number of IGO participants is significantly lower than the NGO category. It is often decided to treat IGOs along with Parties because the impact of access restriction is much smaller.

It is important to find ways to enable diverse NGO participants to be represented, particularly those from marginalised communities or countries experiencing the greatest climate impacts, and facilitated for the respective mandates and purposes of their activities.



Figure 2. Number of registration nominations and quota



f) Diversity of participants

The diversity of UNFCCC observers as demonstrated in *Chart 5* and *Chart 6* translates into rich discussions and wealth of resources that UNFCCC Parties can tap into, and ensures legitimacy and transparency of the process.

Ensuring meaningful, inclusive, fair and transparent engagement across all segments of stakeholders has become very difficult due to the sheer number of observers as shown in *Chart 1*. As the scale of participation increases and the diversity of stakeholder grows, the sliver of the engagement opportunities (speaking slots, side event slots, registration quota, meeting space, access to negotiation meeting rooms, etc.) gets smaller, causing frustrations among observers and increasing the burden on the resources to organize a COP annually that is "operational 24/7" with tens of thousands of participants, particularly in developing countries.

a) Regional breakdowns

Parties have repeatedly noted regional imbalance of observer participation.



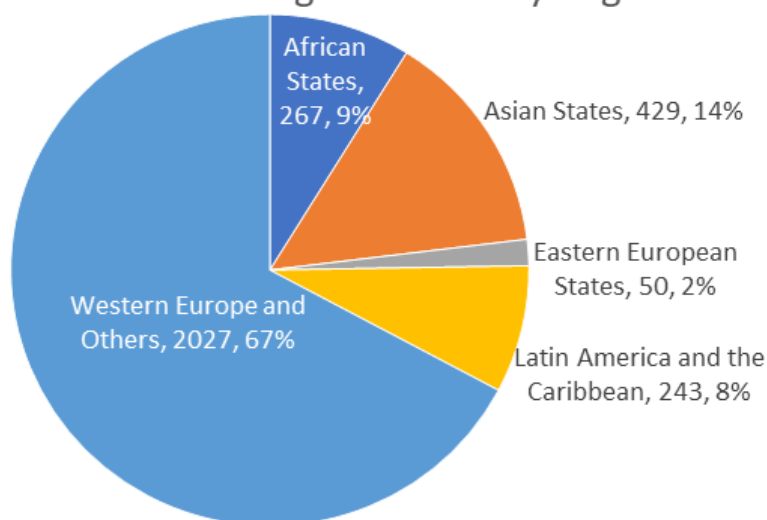
Mandate: The SBI encouraged the COP Presidency to explore ways to increase the participation of observer organizations, including youth organizations and organizations from developing countries.²

Mandate: The SBI also requested the secretariat to explore ways to encourage broad participation of observer organizations, in particular of those from developing countries and of youth organizations, including through remote participation.³

Even though many organizations in the developed countries nominate representatives from developing countries, from the snapshot of COP 26 participants' nationalities, the regional imbalance is not mitigated through the nominations.

Figure 3. Regional breakdowns by headquarters

Admitted Observer organizations by Region



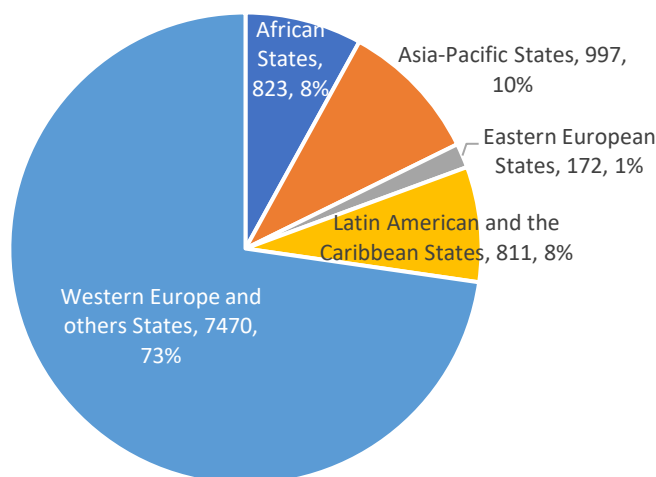
² FCCC/SBI/2021/16, paragraph 114(b)(ii)

³ FCCC/SBI/2021/16, paragraph 114(d)(ii)



Figure 4. Regional breakdowns by observer participants' nationality

Regional breakdowns by participants' nationality at COP 26



Annotation:

Despite the efforts of developed country NGOs to nominate developing country participants, the statistics show that the proportion worsens when we look at the breakdowns by nationality.

2.2 NGO Constituencies and informal groups

Of the three observer categories, NGOs have a Constituency system. In addition, the secretariat recognized additional informal groups as active in the UNFCCC process.

a) What are NGO Constituencies?

As explained in the [note on NGO Constituencies](#)⁴, NGOs “admitted as observers by the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC process have formed themselves into loose groups with diverse but broadly clustered interests or perspectives.” The list of all the NGO Constituencies is available on [the UNFCCC webpage](#).

The nine NGO Constituencies mirror the nine Major Groups defined in the UN SDG process ([Future We Want – Outcome document](#), paragraph 43). Each Constituency has its own governance structure⁵ and its Focal Point(s). The list of Constituency Focal Points (CFPs) is

⁴ Also available in [Spanish](#) and [French](#).

⁵ YOUNGO: <http://www.youngo.uno/about/>



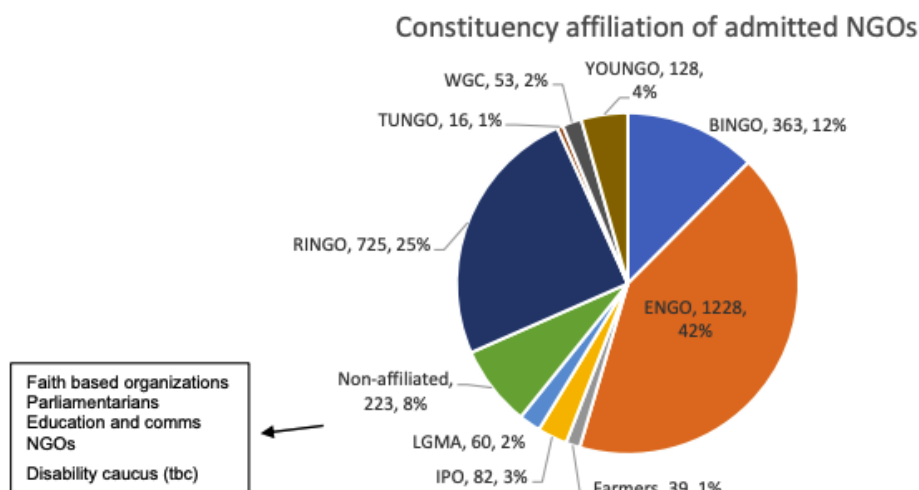
available [here](#). Given the number of admitted observers shown in *Chart 1*. Number of admitted organizations, “without the cooperation of constituency focal points, it would not be possible for the secretariat to maintain effective interaction with interested stakeholders.”

The roles of NGO Constituencies are:

- provide a conduit for the exchange of official information between their constituents and the secretariat;
- assist the secretariat in ensuring effective participation appropriate to an intergovernmental meeting;
- coordinate observer interaction at sessions including convening constituency meetings, organizing meetings with officials, providing names for the speakers' list and representation at official functions;
- provide logistical support to their constituents during sessions;
- assist the secretariat in realizing representative observer participation at workshops and other limited-access meetings.

Furthermore, Parties recognized the roles of Constituencies in the cover decision of [the COP 26 Glasgow Climate Pact](#) for the first time (paragraph 67).

Figure 5. NGO constituency breakdowns

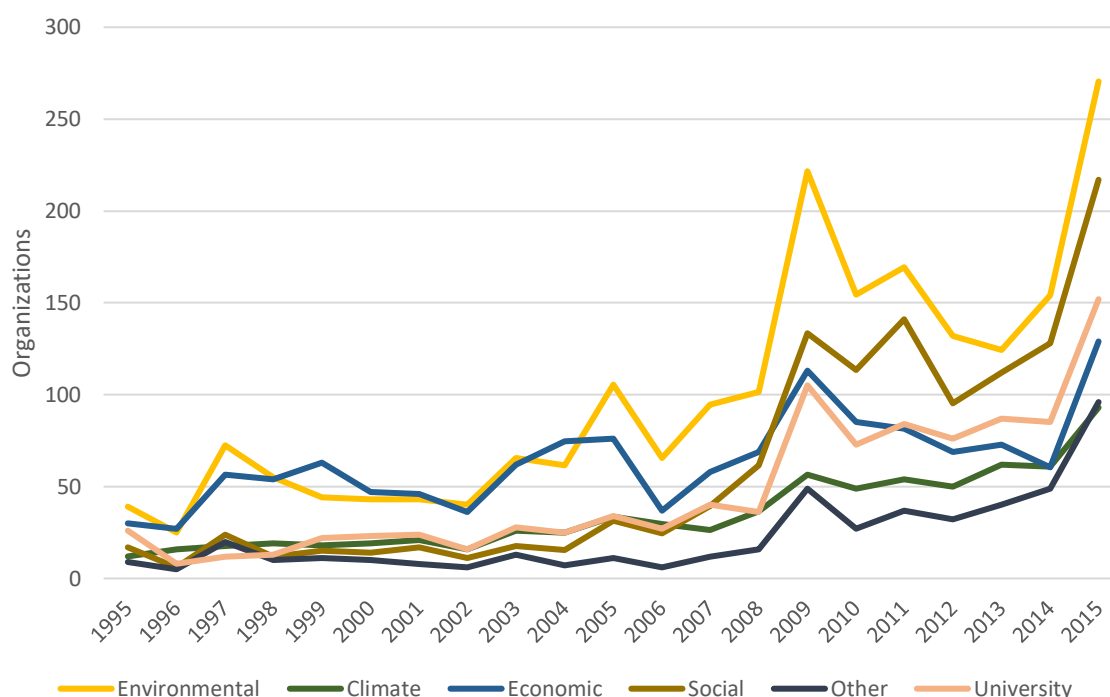


Annotation:

These are by the number of organizations and not by the participants representing the organizations. The largest group is ENGO followed by RINGO then BINGO.



Figure 6. Further breakdowns of organizations



Source: Allan, J. I. (2021). *New Climate Activism: NGO Authority and Participation in Climate Change Governance*. University of Toronto Press.

Annotation:

Since COP1, there is a widening diversity of NGOs participating in COPs. Environmental NGOs and organizations with business-related organizations tended to dominate the civil society presence early in the history of the UNFCCC. Starting around the time of the Bali COP in 2007, a wider range of organizations focused on different issues started to attend and steadily grew in numbers leading to the Paris COP.

The figure below categorizes NGOs and businesses that participated in COPs based on the primary aim in their mission statement. The economic category is entirely non-profit trade associations, or business-oriented organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce as the criteria set by Parties include non-profit/tax-exempt status. The social category includes NGOs with a mission devoted to social equity issues, such as Indigenous Peoples' rights, women's



rights, or global justice. Development organizations are also included in the social category. Many of the organizations in the 'other' category relate to cities or regions.

b) How to become a member of the NGO Constituencies?

During the application for admission, all applicants are asked to identify which Constituencies their organizations would belong. The secretariat shares the information on newly admitted organizations with the Constituency Focal Points for them to start sharing information and engaging.

Although Constituencies initially started as loose groups of “NGOs admitted as observers by the COP to the UNFCCC process”, they are increasingly engaging the individuals without affiliation or the organizations without UNFCCC admission status. While this strengthens the quality of their inputs because a wider scope of voices is reflected, it also renders the substantive meaning of COP admission obsolete as the inputs to the UNFCCC process are reflecting the views of individuals or organizations that the COP has never admitted.

As the number of organizations increases, the coordination of Constituency members has also been difficult for CFPs, particularly when thousands of participants who have never engaged in the inter-sessional coordination join COPs and expect the CFPs to cater to their logistical needs for facilitation to attend the limited-access meeting.

The largest Constituency, ENGO, has been represented by two networks within – Climate Action Network (CAN) and Demand Climate Justice (DCJ). However, the majority of ENGO members are not covered by the two networks as shown in Chart 7. 8. and 9 on ENGO constituency breakdown. When the secretariat has enough capacity, the distribution of tickets for the limited-access meetings (one of the functions of Constituency Focal Points) is managed by the secretariat, but otherwise the opportunities are given to the two networks who coordinate the active members.

Figure 7. ENGO constituency breakdown

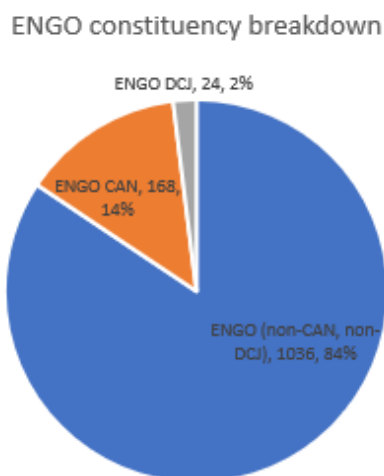




Figure 8. ENGO constituency breakdown by organizations at COP26

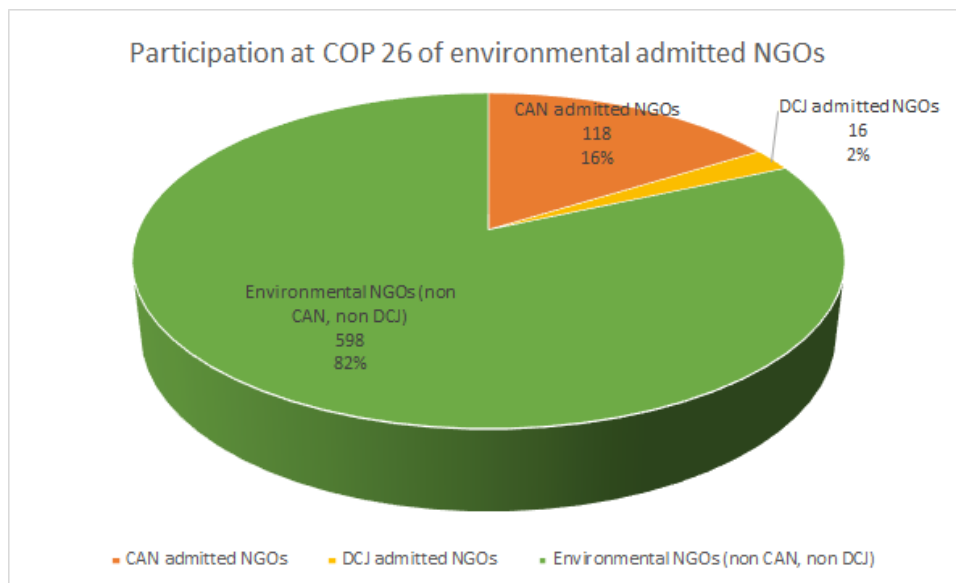
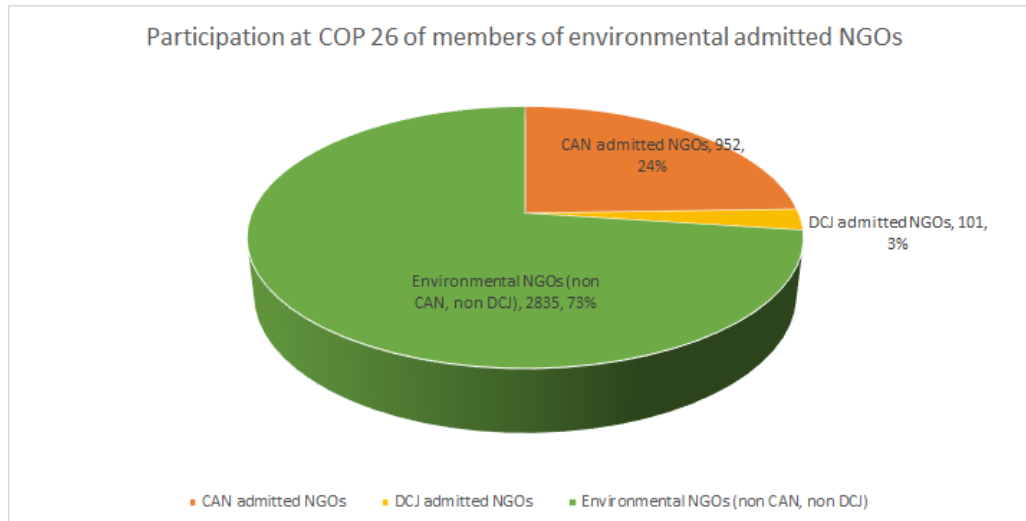


Figure 9. ENGO constituency breakdown by individual members at COP26



Annotation:

As shown in the Chart 7, 8 and 9 a large portion of ENGO admitted organizations are not represented by two networks within the Constituency – Climate Action Network (CAN) and Demand Climate Justice (DCJ). As shown in Chart 8, at COP26 598 (82%) admitted ENGO organizations were not part of CAN and DCJ, respectively 118 (16%) and 16 (2%). The situation is slightly different when looking at individual members, in Chart 9, with 2835



(73%) ENGO members not represented by CAN and DCJ, compared to CAN individual members 952 (24%) and DCJ members 101 (3%).

c) What are Informal NGO Groups/Caucus?

In addition to the nine Constituencies, the secretariat recognized additional ‘[informal NGO groups](#)’. Informal groups are groups that are not defined as Major Groups in the aforementioned Outcome document but the secretariat recognizes them as groups of observer organizations admitted by the COP active in contributing to the UNFCCC process with particular thematic thrusts that are not visibly or adequately covered by the work of the existing nine Constituencies. They receive certain support from the secretariat during the sessions. Faith-Based Organizations, Parliamentarians, Education and Communications NGOs have been recognized in 2014 and a disability caucus is currently forming. The list of Focal Points is available [here](#).

2.3 Intergovernmental Organizations

There is ca. 140 IGOs admitted in our process. There is no self-coordination mechanism like NGO Constituencies.

Each organization has its own Member States to support on a particular thematic area, and provide technical and political inputs relevant agenda items. Their heads are often former Ministers and Ambassadors, and there are expectations for an appropriate level of protocol treatment which is sometimes difficult when there are a large number of observer participants at sessions.

2.4 Current modes of observer engagement

Observers can engage in the UNFCCC process in various modalities:

- i) Throughout the year
- ii) Formal sessions of UNFCCC (1st sessional period is usually May-June and 2nd sessional period is November-December every year)

2.4.1 Throughout the year

- (1) Make [submissions](#) in response to the calls for submissions by different bodies and constituted bodies on various issues under discussion.

(a) Mandates:

- (i) Secretariat to post submissions from observer organizations on the UNFCCC website in a way that makes them accessible to Parties;⁶*
- (ii) Presiding officers of subsidiary bodies and constituted bodies to make greater use of inputs by non-Party stakeholders in workshops and technical meetings, as well as through submissions;*

- (b) NGO Constituencies cannot make submissions as such: UNFCCC submission portal is designed for Parties and duly admitted observer organizations as its users. This is due to the security verification process where the contact details of the National Focal Points and Designated Contact Points are registered with the UNFCCC central database where the submission portal can verify the users’

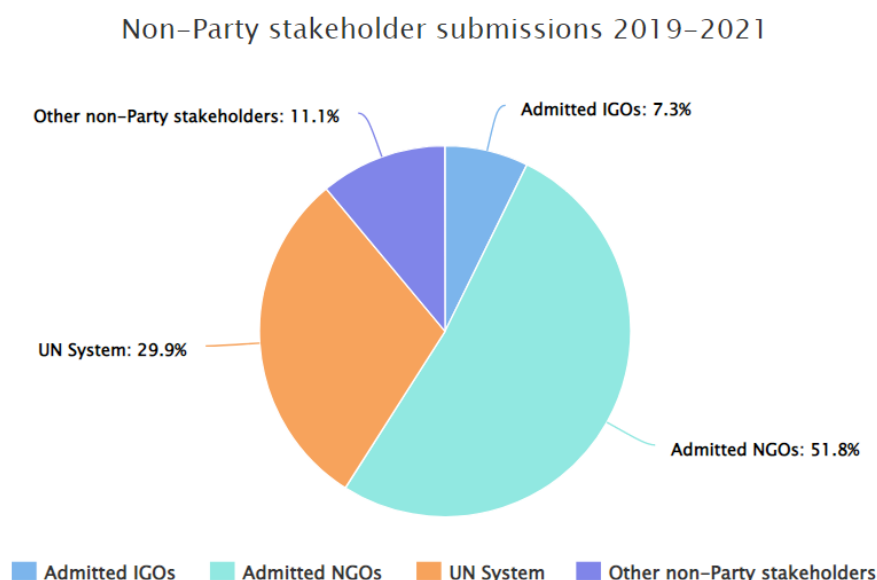
⁶ For exhaustive list of mandates relating to observer admission and secretariat’s work refer to Annex 1.



authenticity. NGO Constituencies are not an admitted organization and the entities are not acknowledged by the submission portal. The established practice is for one of the constituency members with admission status to use its account and submit ‘on behalf of’ the constituency.

- (c) The unit of agent recognized in the UNFCCC process is at the level of organization (or Party) and not at the level of individuals. Submissions are made on behalf of an observer organization and not on behalf of an individual within an organization. This becomes an issue for academic institutions such as universities where the organization does not endorse one view over others and submissions have to be made on behalf of individual researchers and not as an organization, where two submissions of opposing views could come from.

Figure 10. Non-Party stakeholders submissions 2019-2021



- (2) Follow intersessional meetings of the constituted bodies (cf. mapping table for constituted bodies, work programmes and other initiatives and activities of the secretariat)
- (a) *Mandate: see a separate document titled “mapping table of constituted bodies, work programmes and other activities”.*
- (b) *Mandate: SBI invited the presiding officers of the ... constituted bodies, subject to the availability of funding, time and space:*
- (i) *To increase opportunities for admitted observer organizations to make interventions and provide regular briefings on the advancement of work;*
- (ii) *To make greater use of inputs by non-Party stakeholders in workshops and technical meetings, as well as through submissions;⁷*

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2017/7, paragraph 119(a)



- (3) *Interact with COP Presidencies and COP incoming-Presidencies*
- (a) *Mandate: COP Presidencies are invited to consider convening intersessional open dialogues virtually in addition to in-person open dialogues during sessions of the COP*⁸
 - (b) *Mandate: The SBI encouraged the COP Presidency to engage stakeholders in the lead up to and during the sessions of the COP and the CMP.*⁹
- (4) *Interact with Party delegates through national channels*
- (a) *Mandate: SBI encourages all Parties to further engage stakeholders at the national level*¹⁰, *including information dissemination and consultation;*
 - (b) *The SBI noted that some Parties voluntarily support the participation of admitted NGOs in UNFCCC meetings, and encouraged those Parties to also provide voluntary support, in particular to admitted NGOs from developing countries. The SBI invited Parties to provide information on the voluntary support provided*¹¹.
- (5) *Collaborate through partnerships among NPS, constituencies if applicable, and with the secretariat*
- (a) *Mandate - Presiding Officers: The SBI recalled the conclusions from its thirty-fourth session agreeing that the existing means of **engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness, through various ways as set out in the conclusions, and requested the presiding officers, the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP, all Parties and the secretariat to bear in mind these conclusions in engaging stakeholders.***
 - (b) *The SBI agreed that the existing means of engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of **fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness**, through:*
 - (c) *Inviting the presiding officers of various bodies, as relevant, subject to the availability of funding, time, and space, to:*
 - (i) ***Seek opportunities for observer organizations to make interventions;***
 - (ii) ***Make greater use of observer inputs in workshops and technical meetings in accordance with the conclusions of the SBI at its seventeenth session in 2002;***
 - (iii) ***Increase opportunities for regular briefings and debriefings as a means for dialogue for observer organizations with presiding officers and Parties;***¹²
- (6) *Keep abreast of various communications from the secretariat:*
- (a) [Formal communications](#)
 - (b) *Presiding Officers' communication on sessions ([SBI Chair Lobby](#); [SBSTA Chair Lobby](#))*

⁸ FCCC/SBI/2021/16, paragraph 114(b)(i) (SBI 52-55)

⁹ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(b)(ii) (SBI 34)

¹⁰ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(c) (SBI 34)

¹¹ FCCC/SBI/2019/9, paragraphs 137 (SBI 48)

¹² FCCC/SBI/2011/7 – paragraph 178(a) (SBI 34)



2.4.2 Formal sessions of UNFCCC

This section outlines the current modes of engagement during UNFCCC COPs: 1. Following the negotiation meetings; 2. Engage in dialogues in both closed and open settings; 3. Organizing events and exhibits; and 4 other activities.

(1) Follow the negotiations:

Observer organizations that are duly admitted by the COP are able to attend the UNFCCC sessions.

Mandate:

- Article 7, paragraph 8 of the UNFCCC provides for organizations to be represented at sessions without the right to vote.
- Subsequent COP decision¹³ enabled them to attend contact groups and the SBI further recommended that the first and the last informals where contact groups are not established may be open to observers, recognizing the right of Parties to keep informal meetings closed.¹⁴
- The SBI in 2021 also encouraged all Parties to continue the practice of meetings being open to observers, as appropriate.¹⁵

When Parties and time allow, co-facilitators of contact groups and informals also create space for observers to intervene at the end of the meetings.

During the plenary meetings, the COP President and the SB Chairs ensure space for NGO Constituencies to deliver statements.

Mandate: the SBI repeatedly invite the Presiding Officers to seek intervention opportunities¹⁶ and requests the secretariat to report biennially.

During the high-level segment (HLS) of the COP, the IGOs represented by their heads, NGO Constituencies and NGO Informal Groups address the joint meetings of the COP, the CMP and the CMA.

In COP 26, NGO Constituencies took advantage of a total of 58 opportunities for plenary interventions and HLS statements, and 16, 42, and 41 respectively at COP 25, COP 24, and COP 23.

¹³ Decision 18/CP.4

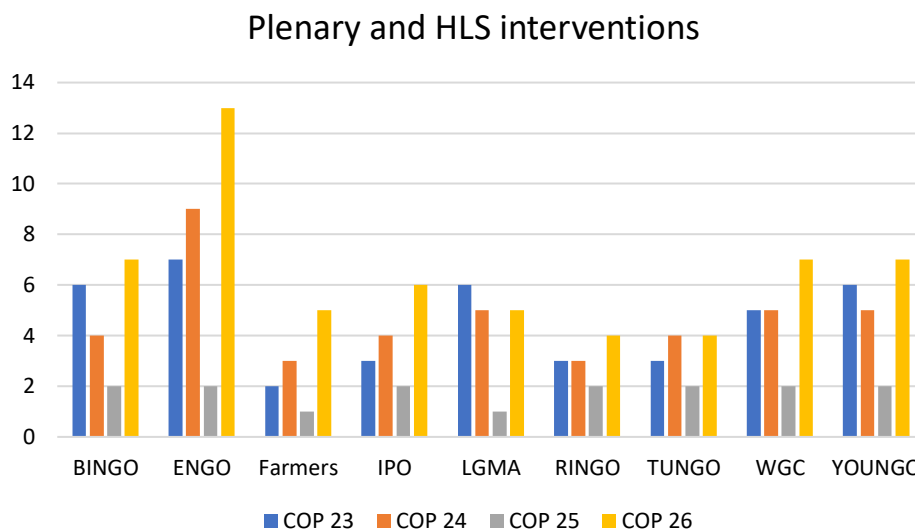
¹⁴ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 167

¹⁵ FCCC/SBI/2021/16, paragraph 114(c)(i) (SBI 50-55)

¹⁶ FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178(a)(i) (SBI 34)



Figure 11. Number of intervention opportunities each constituency took advantage of



(2) Engage in dialogues in both closed and open settings;

- (a) **Closed setting:** one of the ways in which observer organizations interact with Party delegations and other observers/NPS is bilateral meetings on site. Parties and observers are able to book rooms on a first come first served basis. While participants can enjoy free-of-charge booking in the proximity of the negotiation meetings inside the venue, they in turn need to accept that a) the confirmation of the booking can only be given the evening before the meeting day; b) it is subject to last-minute cancellations or change of rooms if the negotiation requires such changes; c) Priorities are given to Party booking over the observer booking; d) Number of meeting rooms and layout is subject to availability. Those who need predictability and certainty are invited to find a solution on a commercial basis outside the blue zone.

NGO Constituencies and Informal Groups are supported by the secretariat in terms of securing one hour booking every day throughout the two weeks of the conference as they facilitate inputs from geographically diverse sources and from a wide range of expertise and perspectives to ensure reflection of their voices in the final outcomes of the COPs.

(b) Open setting:

- (i) **Driven by the secretariat and COP Presidency** include mandated in-session workshops, observer dialogues with the Executive Secretary, with the COP President, with SB Chairs, the Secretary General and/or the High-Level Champions, as well as COP Presidency initiative events.



Mandate: The SBI suggested that the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP and the secretariat

- *To explore ways to enable admitted NGO constituencies to have an **open dialogue with Parties**, whereby agenda-setting, as well as programming of the dialogue, are conducted jointly among the admitted NGO constituencies, the Presidency, the Bureau and the secretariat as appropriate, on the understanding that any outcomes of such a dialogue should have persuasive value only, expecting the Party-driven nature of the UNFCCC process¹⁷*
- *To explore the possibility of holding **high-level events**, such as a briefing and a **round table with observer organizations**, including high-level representatives of the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders, in line with existing practices, during the high-level segment of the COP and the CMP, subject to the availability of financial resources*

Mandate: the COP agreed to convene a high-level event on climate action.¹⁸

(ii) Driven by Parties and observers: observers engage in conversations with Parties and observers/NPS during various events and receptions that are organized in the hundreds, if not the thousands, throughout the two weeks across the conference venue.

Dialogue in these non-negotiation meetings is becoming a critical component of COP experiences for many participants not only to present their views and share recent findings but also to forge alliances for the intersessional work that follows.

(3) Organizing events and exhibits: Parties recognized that side events and exhibits are an essential part of the UNFCCC process and an important tool for engaging observers in knowledge-sharing, networking and the exploring of actionable options for meeting the climate challenge.¹⁹

In order to safeguard this important observer engagement platform from Parties' applications which were crowding out observers, the secretariat changed in 2012 the eligibility criterion for Parties that they need to partner with at least one observer organization to be eligible to apply for a side event and/or exhibit.²⁰ In order to ensure

¹⁷ FCCC/SBI/2017/7, paragraph 119

¹⁸ FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, paragraph 120

¹⁹ FCCC/SBI/2014/8, paragraph 224

²⁰ [Information Note - Eligibility Criteria \(unfccc.int\)](https://unfccc.int/information-note-eligibility-criteria)



representation of voices, the secretariat has strict selection criteria and prioritizes applications from developing country observers.

Figure 12. Historical number of side event applications, selected organizers, leads

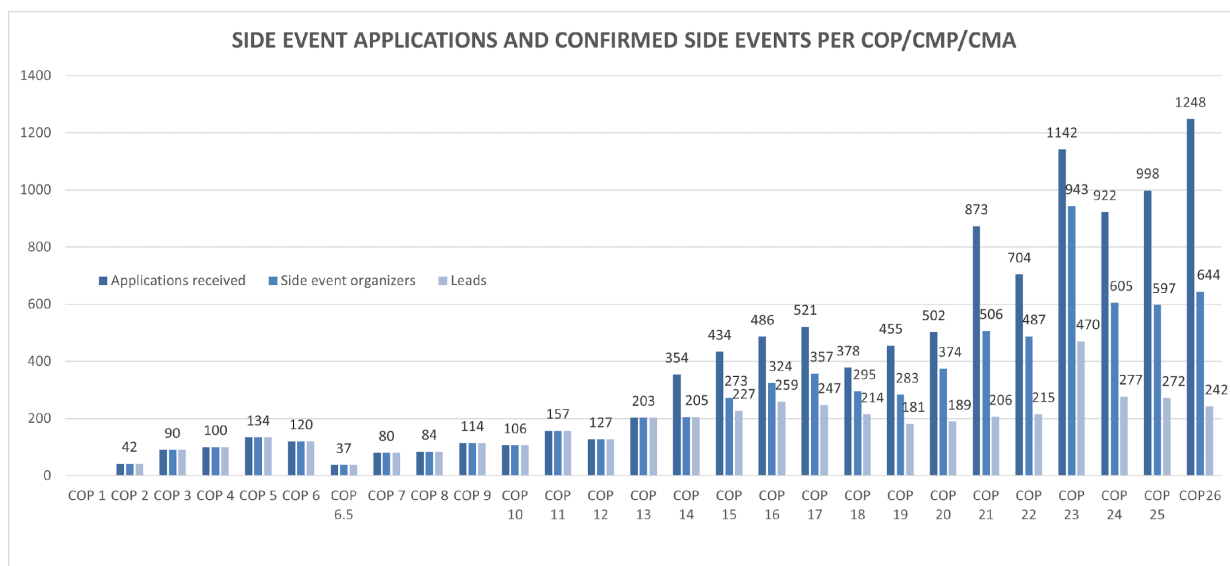
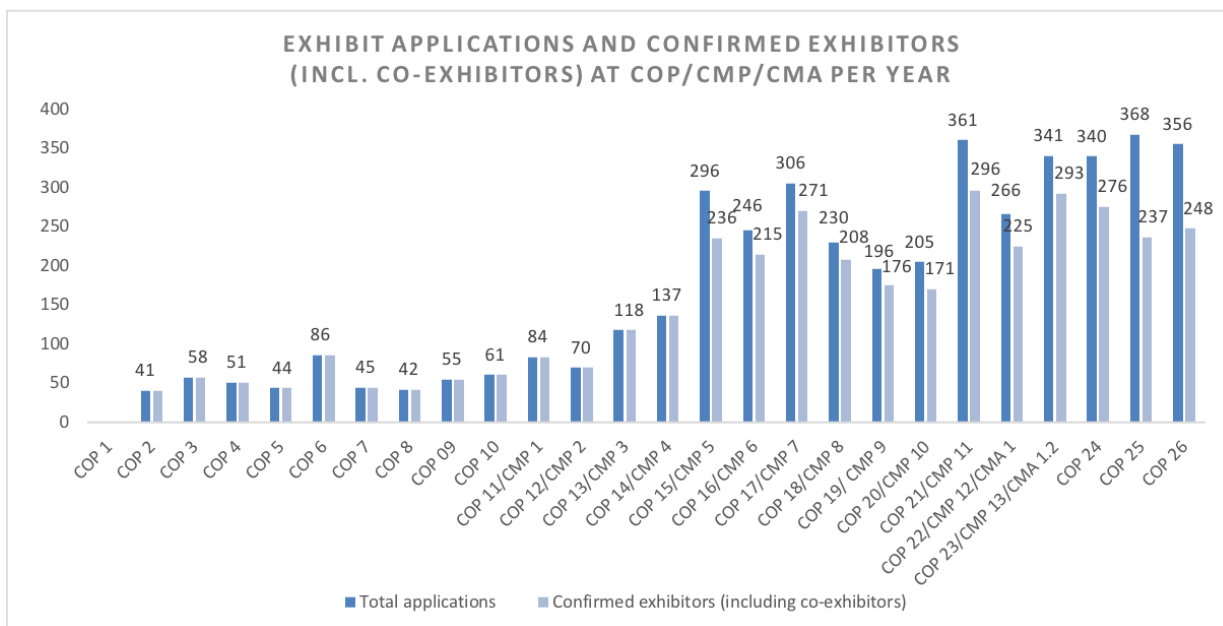


Figure 13. Historical number of exhibit applications and selected exhibitors (incl. co-exhibitors)



Annotation:

As the number of observers increases, so does the demand for holding side events and exhibits (see: Chart 10 and Chart 11). Since COP 21, the number of side event applications per COP has not dropped below 700, as demonstrated by Chart 7. At COP 26, the secretariat received a record number of 1,248 side event applications for 240 side event slots. Given the limited number of side event slots, the secretariat has been encouraging merging side event applications. At COP 26, the average number of applications per joint application was 2.9. The selection of 242 side events facilitated the participation of 644 observer organizations and Parties in total. However, hundreds of observer applications had to be declined due to sheer number of applications.

At the same time, the observers who *were* selected against the odds have been reporting that the need to hold joint side events with several partners hinders effective engagement as it limits the opportunities for individual organizations to contribute.

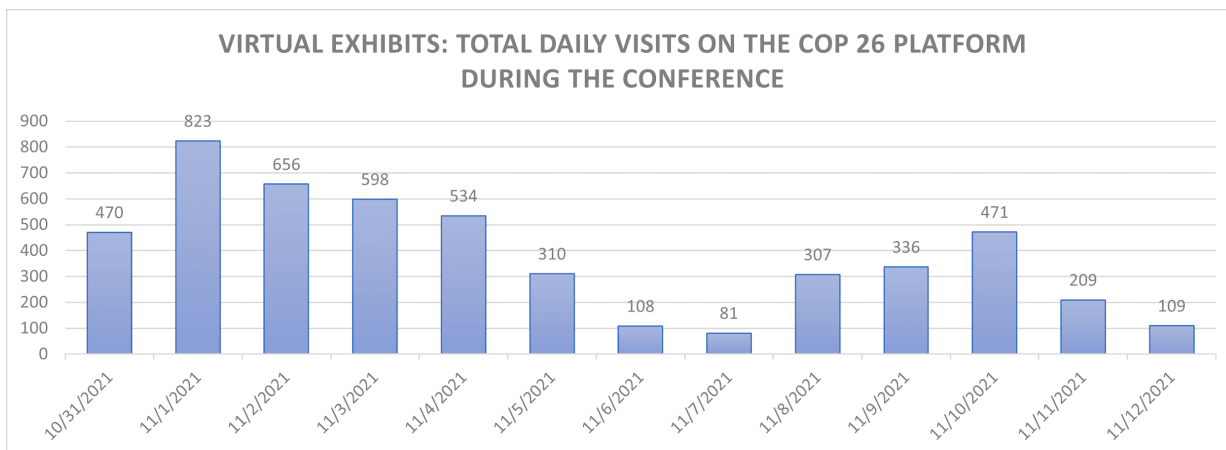
Questions

- Given the growing number of side event applications, as demonstrated by Chart 7, would it be possible to apply a combination of regional rotation approach and a limited quota for applications from the non-host regions? With this approach in place, applicants from the host country's region would be given a priority. The selection of side event proposals from other regions would then be aimed at maintaining the balance among topics as some issue areas may be of higher relevance in certain regions.



- Could constituencies self-organize to allow for more streamlining within the process steps of the side events to align with the key stipulations of side events.
- Which other solutions could be proposed to improve the operation of side events and exhibits?

Figure 14. Daily attendance of virtual exhibits at COP26



Annotation:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, COP 26 exhibits were fully virtual. On average, a virtual exhibit received 39.4 visits. Exhibitors complained about the lack of networking opportunities brought by virtual exhibits as opposed to physical ones.

Questions:

- Can we continue to have physical exhibits?
- In case exhibits remain virtual, would it be possible to add a physical component to virtual exhibits (e.g., to have the exhibitors' digital content displayed on CCTV screens on-site)?
- In case exhibits remain virtual, could we make them more interactive?



Figure 15. Side events attendance on the COP 26 platform

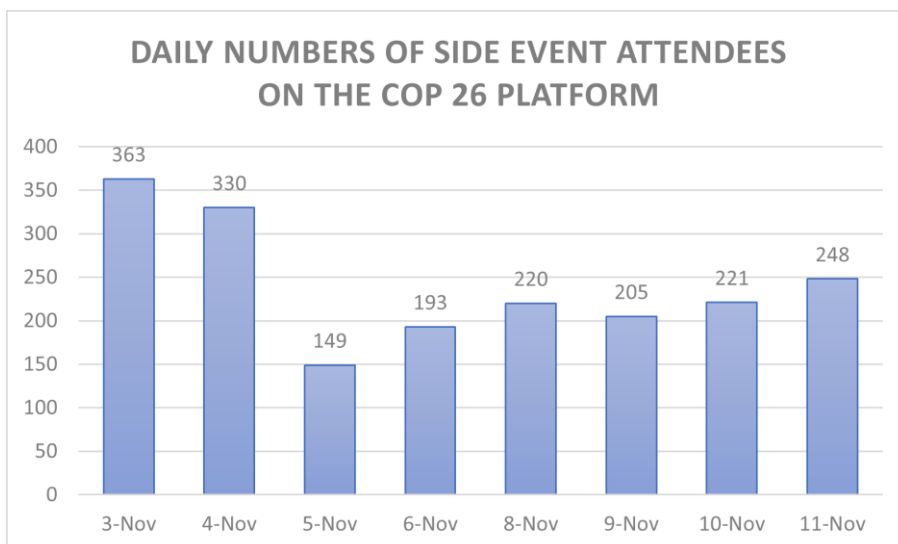
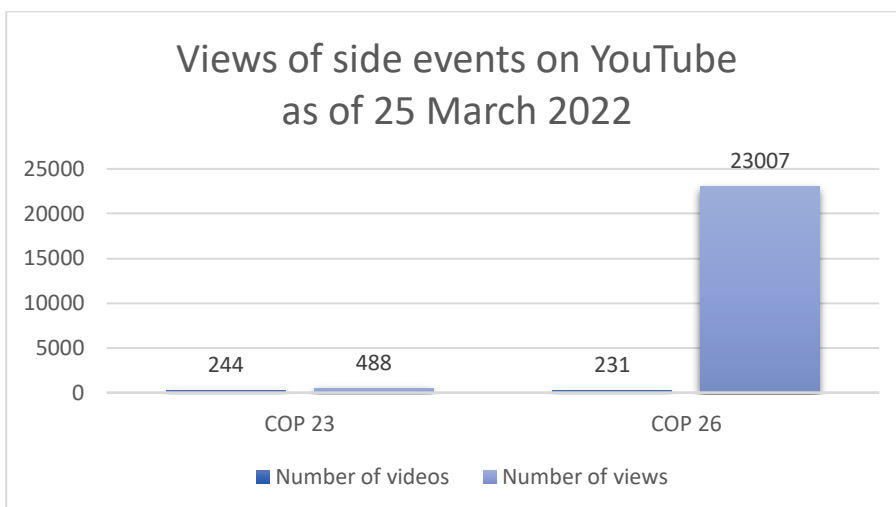


Figure 16. Views of side events on YouTube



Annotation:

As demonstrated by Chart 13, the average number of side event attendees on the COP 26 platform for virtual participation was 240.

In addition, the Side Events and Exhibits coordination team facilitated livestreaming of side events on one of the secretariat-managed YouTube channels. The [“COP 26 Side Events” playlist](#) containing 231 videos has received 23,007 views as of 25 March 2022. This is 47 times more than what the [“Side events COP 23 Bonn” playlist](#) had received (see: Chart 14).



At COP 26, side events held in multimedia side event studios — side event rooms with no physical audience on-site — demonstrated lower levels of audience engagement than in “conventional” side event rooms.

Questions:

- To facilitate the smooth operation of side events and exhibits, creating different room/booth types should be avoided. In this case, how the enforcement of social distancing measures could be enhanced within the operation of side events and exhibits?
- To improve the virtual component of side events, could it be possible to ease virtual participation in side events by allowing observers to register their virtual speakers above their assigned quota?

(4) Organizing other activities:

- (a) **Media briefings:** observer participants are also very active in engaging media to transmit their messages to outside the COP venue to reach the global audience live. There are two media briefing rooms, one for Parties the other for observers.
- (b) **Public demonstrations:** The UN does not allow demonstrations on site in principle. However, UNFCCC has traditionally collaborated closely with UN Department of Safety and Security to enable advocacy NGOs to voice their views through publicity stunts and demonstrations. There is an established practice for the clearance procedure that is designed to ensure safety for all participants, compliance of UN participation guidelines and visibility of the publicity stunts to the media

2.5 Constituted Bodies

- (1) Different constituted bodies have different mandates relating to stakeholder engagement set by Parties. The secretariat and the co-chairs are duty-bound to operate within the mandates. The mapping matrix shows how various Constituted Bodies, Work Programmes and other initiatives and activities are engaging stakeholders.
- (2) Biennium reports to SBI AIM on the status of implementation of mandates:
 - (a) Note by the secretariat [2016](#) (FCCC/SBI/2016/2, from paragraph 36)
 - (b) Note by the secretariat [2018](#) (FCCC/SBI/2018/7 from paragraph 40)
 - (c) Note by the secretariat [2020](#) (FCCC/SBI/2020/19)
 - (d) Note by the secretariat 2022 (FCCC/SBI/2022/x)
- (3) Good practices of observer participation include: early sharing of agenda and background documents, opening them for public comments, live streaming,

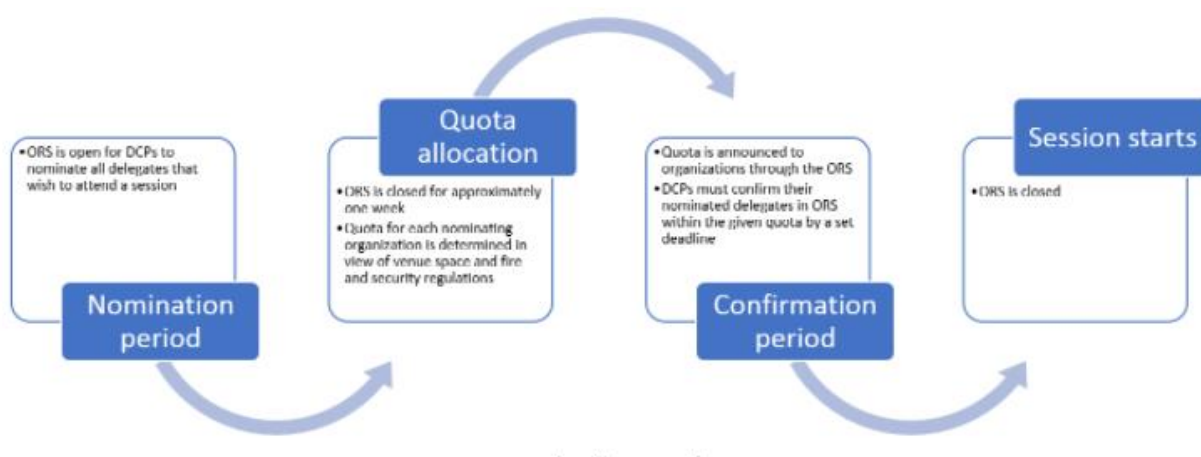


having technical experts representing NGO Constituencies at the table along with Party experts in formal working groups or task forces.

2.6 Technical infrastructure

2.6.1 Registration and accreditation policies

- (1) UNFCCC sessions are not open to the public. Only the presentative duly nominated in the Online Registration System (ORS) are issued conference badges. The registration process for a conference is explained on the UNFCCC website here: [UNFCCC conferences: Participation and registration](#)



- (2) Quota assignment: the ORS sets the quota

The ORS sets the quota automatically with the minimum allocation by the secretariat based on the past records of no-shows. As Chart 2 demonstrates, the requests for quota for COP 26 reached 30,000. Although 10,000 quota was significantly high number compared with other UN annual conferences or historically within UNFCCC COPs, there is still the perception that UNFCCC is not inclusive of civil society participation.

Annotation:

In order to access these 10,000 ‘scarce’ conference badges, the secretariat is aware that individuals not affiliated with admitted observer organizations have been approaching organizations willing to share their quota regardless of these individuals’ affiliation, using the



organizations not as the representation of substantive policies but as a tool through which to gain conference badges. This is another phenomenon that further reinforces the need to revise the COP admission process e, in addition to the Constituencies being the channels for non-affiliated individuals to access UNFCCC COPs without the COP admission process.

2.6.2 Database

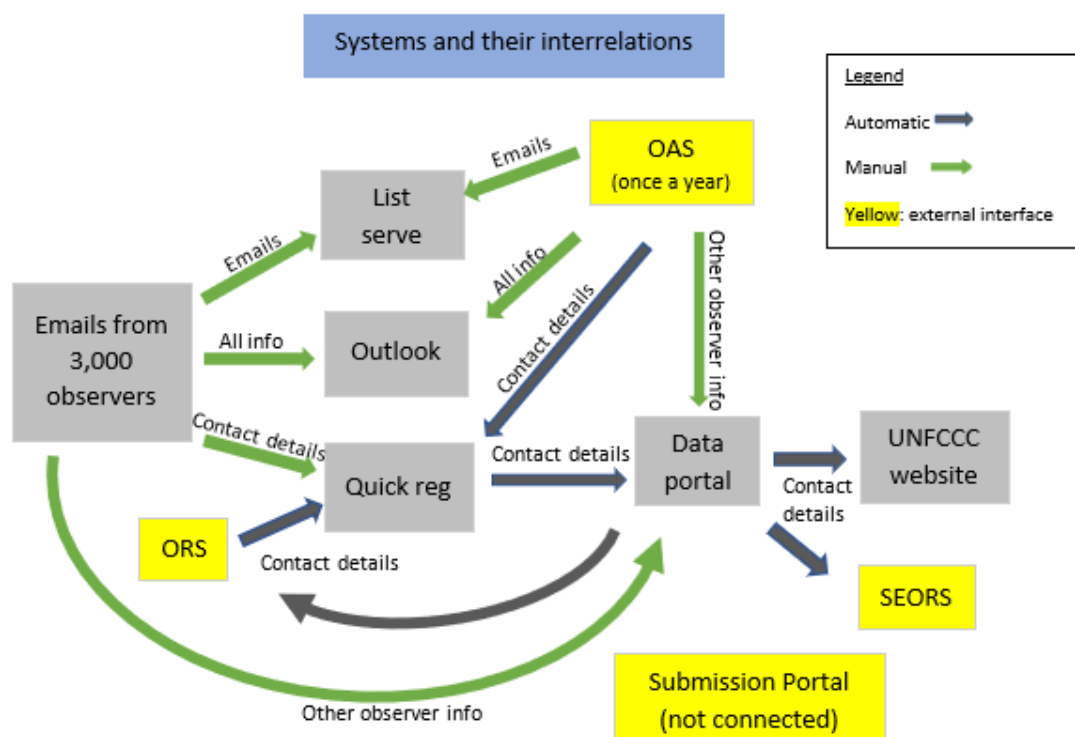
- (1) Official contacts (heads and the designated contact points) of all the admitted observer organizations are stored in a few databases within the secretariat. Upkeep of the contact is archaic in a sense that the observers need to send a signed pdf by email, the secretariat updates a few locations including submission portal. On average ca. 50 contact changes are requested per month.
- (2) Current tagging of the organizations is at the level of IGOs vs. NGOs, and at the level of constituency for the NGO category. Additional tagging including the purposes or goals of their participation, Informal Groups, etc may support tailored engagement and data analysis of diversity in representation.

Question:

- What additional tagging would be helpful and manageable in terms of needs for future updates?

2.6.3 Online systems interfacing observer organizations

- (1) Online systems that gravitate around the central database are shown below. Submission portal is not linked to the central database and requires manual update for each change. The secretariat maintains many other online systems that observers use, which are not connected to the central database.



2.6.4 Human resources

- (1) It is not only the observer relations team that supports observer engagement work but various substantive divisions as well as operational divisions support them. In 2010, an independent reviewer of UNFCCC observer engagement in the aftermath of COP 15 found that the secretariat's staffing compared to the size of observer participation is smaller compared with other UN processes.

After 12 years, the number of observer organizations more than doubled. To deliver on the mandated activities and to support observer organizations, the secretariat engages a few consultants for almost all the range of workstreams, be it admission assessments, coordination and implementation of side events and exhibits, facilitation of submissions and correspondences with observer organizations as well as maintenance of contacts in addition to the coordination and support for UNFCCC sessions and constituted bodies' meetings. Two staff in the professional category on the supplementary funding are expected to be recruited in 2022

2.6.5 Interpretation

- Official meetings
 - (1) Plenary into 6 UN languages supported the UN HQ
 - (2) Informal stocktake plenary meetings into 6 UN languages supported by the UN HQ
 - (3) Bureau meeting room has interpretation room (tbc by CA as well as number of booths)
- Unofficial meetings:



- (4) Each side event room at COPs is equipped with two interpretation booths. These rooms are also used for NGO Constituency Coordination meetings
- (5) While the use is free of charge, organizers of the side events need to mobilize their own interpreters.

2.6.6 Disability inclusion

- COP venues are required to meet the national legal standard and SB venues meet the German national legal standard.
- Host Country Agreement has provisions for meeting UN standard of disability inclusion at conferences.

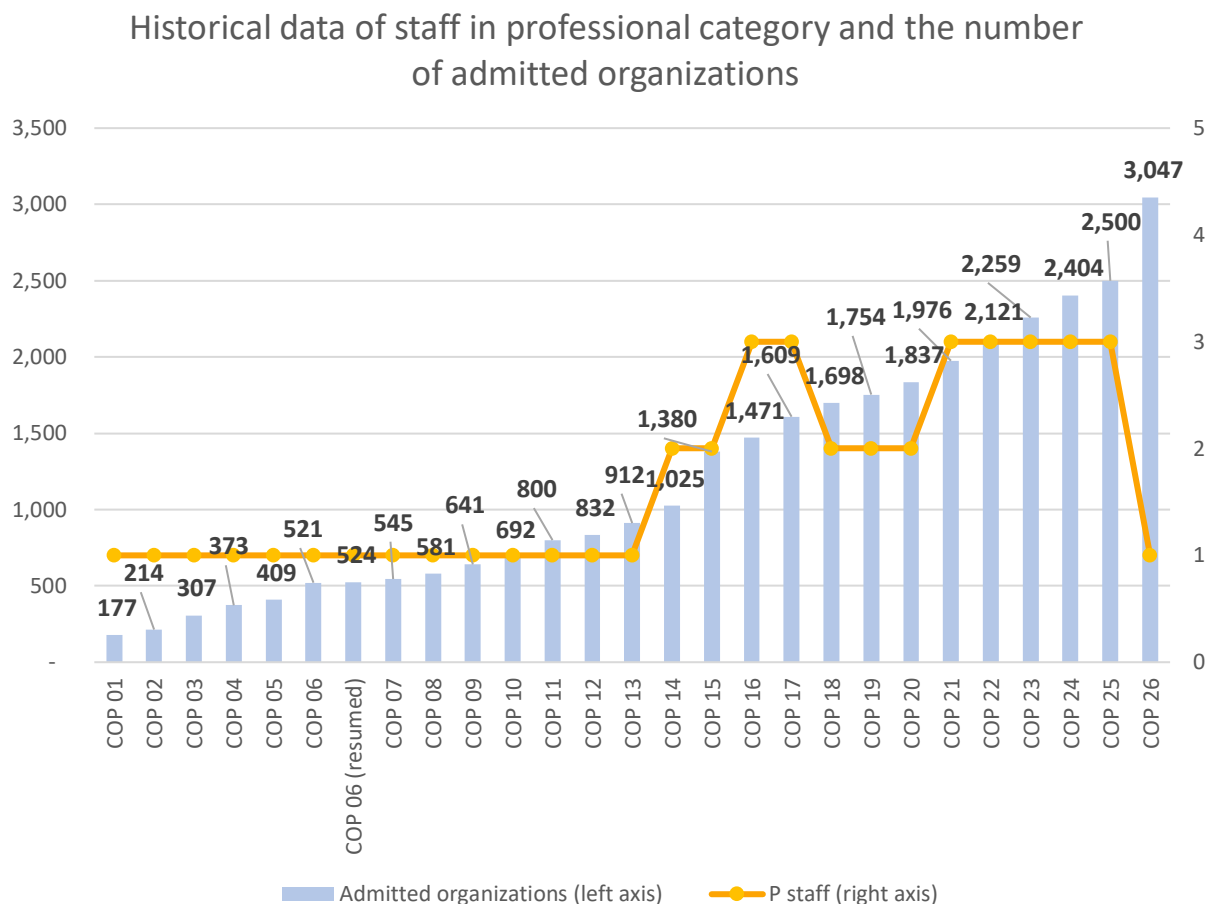
2.6.7 Staff resources

Observer Relations Team

- i. 1 staff on core funding at professional category
- ii. 1 staff on core funding at general service category
- iii. 2 staff on supplementary funding at professional category currently under recruitment as at February 2022.



Figure 17. Historical growth of observer admission and resources on observer support function



2.7 Practices from other intergovernmental processes

Below is a non-exhaustive list of some practices that have been presented at the SBI discussions and other practices raised by constituencies. It is expected that in Phase 2 of the process the IGOs will be invited to supplement additional practices as background information. Some of the practices below require Parties' decision which is outside the scope of this review process, or their enabling contexts are not present in UNFCCC process (mandates, resources levels, etc).

2.7.1 Practices within the UN system

- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD): open dialogue allows observers to choose agenda items and engage in an open dialogue with Parties.

Enabling context:

- i. Number of observer participation:
- ii. Presence of a mandate: Yes. Decision 5/COP.9



- Food and Agriculture Organization's Committee on Food Security: it strongly engages with stakeholders, classifying civil society as participants and not observers, which provides them with greater opportunities for making presentations and interventions.
Enabling context:
 - i. Number of observer participation: 26 Observers (from CFS 49)
 - ii. Presence of a mandate: Yes
 - iii. Scale of meetings including Parties: 220 (from CFS 49)
 - iv. Frequency of meetings: CFS holds an annual plenary session every October in FAO, Rome.
- Sustainable Development Goals were developed with an open process that allows observers to track and report on how those goals are being met. A web platform was launched in September 2012, a repository for both the thematic and the national consultations. It allowed people from all over the world to participate in the global conversation on the issue they wanted to highlight in the post-2015 development debate.
Enabling context:
 - i. Number of observer participation: 27 CSOs
 - ii. Presence of a mandate: Yes
 - iii. Scale of meetings including Parties: 195 and global civil society (?)
- 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.
Enabling context:
 - i. Number of observer participation: Several hundred, belonging to 11 Constituencies.
 - ii. Presence of a mandate: Yes
 - iii. Scale of meetings including Parties:
 - iv. Frequency of meetings: Each year the CSM holds its Annual Forum prior to the CFS Plenary Session and it is open to all interested civil society participants of the CSM.
- United Nations WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC): explicitly recognizes the risks or potential risks imposed by engaging certain private actors with non-public interests.
- WHO Framework of Engagement on Non-State Actors (FENSA)- While recognizing the significant role non-state actors play in policymaking processes, FENSA recognizes that enhancing engagement of non-state actors must include application of a framework to manage the potential or real risks, including conflicts of interest, to truly enhance effectiveness of engagement without undermining a process.



- Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the United Nations Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management: bringing business into a working dialogue.
- Convention on Biological Diversity: the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, provides suggestions to Parties on how to mobilize and coordinate local actions on biodiversity, to bring national strategies and plans into the local context.
- Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters: conducting direct public consultation and sharing information on the impacts of proposed policy.

2.7.2 Practices from IGOs

- International Organisation of Employers and the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Parties established a recognized institutional interface for business and industry

3 Agenda items

3.1 Observer organizations

Observer organizations to the UNFCCC process have formed themselves into loose groups with diverse but broadly clustered interests or perspectives called *constituencies*. The nine NGO Constituencies mirror the nine Major Groups defined in the UN SDG process. Each constituency has its own coordination structures and focal point(s). Observer organizations are highly diverse, as are their reasons for participating in the UNFCCC process. It is imperative to identify the roles, responsibilities and goals of the various observer organizations and facilitate aspects that are fit for purpose to create alignment.

1) Role of Constituencies

1. What are the roles of Constituencies?
2. What the different needs in terms of spaces of Constituencies/ other non-state actors to coordinate, advocate and perform their roles?

2) Status of Constituencies

1. Different Constituencies play different roles. Should there be a differentiation with regards to access and participation based on those roles?
2. Are there ways to elevate the role of Rights Holder Constituencies in the UNFCCC? How?



3. How should the engagement of informal NGO groups be managed? Will new Constituencies have the same access as the original nine NGO Constituencies? If so, how to do so without increasing the overall number of observers during COPs?

3) Quality of participation

1. How do you define quality participation?
2. What are criteria for meaningful participation?

4) Purpose of participation

1. Should coordination of observers happen based on the purpose rather than their affiliation in the process?
2. Whether to, and if yes, how to integrate observers that are not active inter-sessionally into Constituencies so that they can effectively operate during COPs (process to reach out, communication within constituencies)

3.2 Representation and equitable access

Observer participation is currently suffering from a number of representational deficits, most notably the lack of participation from stakeholders from the Global South. The role and representativeness of the NGO Constituency system has been brought into question. An overarching consideration is to ensure that an increased level of representative and equitable access does not result in an overall increased number of observers.

1) Inclusion

1. How can the UNFCCC support a better balance between access to SBs and COPs from representatives from the Global South and the Global North?
2. Are there ways for the UNFCCC to become more bottom-up?

2) Principles of participation

1. Can access be based on representation? How can an increased level of representative and equitable access not result in an overall increased number of observers during COPs?
2. In addition to promoting a quantitatively representative and equitable access, what steps can be taken to promote higher quality access for observers?

3) Rules of Engagement

1. Across all modes of observer engagement, what steps can be taken to help address the potential for or actualization of conflict of interest when engaging with or between observers, the secretariat, COP Presidencies, SB Chairs and the HLCs?
2. How can the UNFCCC serve as a safe place for people to raise their voices in diverse ways? How could rules of engagement help build understanding around the respective roles played by different actors play in the UNFCCC?



3. What should be the rules of engagement for different stakeholders in the UNFCCC and how could they be applied? Should they be formalized, if so, what would that entail?

3.3 Admission

Admission takes up a significant amount of the secretariat's resources, particularly when the number of applications surges. On average 27,000 registration requests have been made by observer organizations alone for each COP in the last 6 years. The daily badge system has been installed for greater flexibility. An average quota of 8,000 for a conference is significantly higher than other UN annual conferences and past UNFCCC conferences. Yet there is still the perception that UNFCCC is not inclusive of civil society participation, particularly those representing marginalized communities. At the same time, the admission process is rendered less meaningful when NGO Constituencies assign badges to non-affiliated individuals not affiliated with COP-admitted observers through the accreditation mechanism.

1) Inclusion

1. Non-structured stakeholders such as 'citizens' and 'movements' without formal status in UNFCCC process (COP admission) have a role to play in respective countries towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement but increasingly wish to attend UNFCCC COPs. UNFCCC COPs are not open to the public. Should there be a way for citizen movements register to participate at the COPs in the future? What is the optimal way to balance the participation needs of admitted organizations and that of non-admitted citizen movements?
2. What measures can ease the burden of both the observer organizations needing more quota for side-event and exhibition access and the secretariat assessing for admission when applicants are not interested in following the negotiation process, while ensuring the representation of the widest possible stakeholders?
3. Given the growing number of admitted organizations, if the majority remains active in the UNFCCC process, it will eventually become difficult to allocate even a quota of 1 per organization at COPs. Could this prompt a revocation process (reapplication and expression of interest every 5 years) for administrative purposes?

2) Purpose of participation

1. Would a differentiated system that assigns badges according to participants' access needs (i.e. to the negotiation process and/or side-event access) hold value? If so, would such a system be workable? How could potential barriers to its implementation be overcome?



3.4 Current modes of observer engagement

What is the role of observers during formal UNFCCC sessions (i.e. COPs, SBs) and how can their goals be achieved? What needs to be understood of an enabling environment for meaningful engagement for observers and what measures can be taken to this end by different actors?

Throughout the year:

1) Quality of engagement

1. How could observers be more meaningfully engaged in the Global Climate Action work of the secretariat (CNN, sectoral work), the Marrakech Partnership and any other work of the High-level Champions?
2. How could observers be more meaningfully engaged in the Global Stocktake?
3. How could observers be more meaningfully engaged in Regional Climate Weeks?
4. How can the mandates of each Constituted Body be more prominently shared and understood? How can interested stakeholders be directed to the relevant Constituted Body that most closely aligns with their area of activity and expertise?

2) Inclusion

1. Non-structured stakeholders such as ‘citizens’ and ‘movements’ without formal status in UNFCCC process have a role to play in respective countries towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Are there concrete measures that can be taken within the scope of this review process and respecting UNFCCC mandates (as explained in the background note) to support individuals to be engaged throughout the year, focusing on NDCs and NAPs, rather than COP attendance?

During the sessions:

3) Quality of engagement

1. Statements made by observers in plenary are made after statements made by Parties. In practice, this often means that observer statements are delivered to an empty room in the middle of the night. Are there concrete measures to enhance the visibility of observer statements within the scope of this review process and respecting UNFCCC mandates (as explained in the background note)?
2. What steps can be taken to enhance current dialogues with the Executive Secretary/COP President/SB Chairs/High-level Champions?
3. What steps can be taken to meaningfully engage observers in COP Presidency events?
4. Side events and exhibits – solutions to further facilitate interaction between Parties, NGOs and other observers for enrichment of discussions?



4) Inclusion

1. Given the growing number of side event applications shown in the background information, could a regional rotation approach be applicable to side event eligibility or selection?
2. Which other solutions could be proposed to improve the selection of side events and exhibits in light of the mandate to enhance participation of observers from developing countries?

3.5 Constituted bodies and support team

The COPs and the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) are the most high-profile and well-attended UNFCCC sessions, yet the work of the UNFCCC is not limited to these bodies. There are fourteen Constituted Bodies that meet throughout the year to work on specific topics such as adaptation, finance, capacity building and loss and damage. Whereas the rules of procedure for observer participation at the COPs and SBs are set out in the Convention, the Constituted Bodies each have their own mandate and operate with different procedures for observer participation, many of which offer different opportunities for engagements on the specific thematic areas.

1) Quality of engagement

1. What are the good practices of modes of engagement from observers' perspective?
2. How can the mandates of each constituted body be more prominently shared and understood?
3. What could be ways to coordinate/communicate not only with the COP Presidencies but also with HL Champions, GCA, UNFCCC Secretariat, SBs, Constituted Bodies?

3.6 Financial Support and logistical arrangements

Many observers have experienced financial and/or logistical obstacles in their participation in the UNFCCC process, including at COP26. The SBI discussed financial support to observer participation and decided against setting up a trust fund but invited Parties in a position to provide support to do so. What else can be done to address the financial and/or logistical barriers that observers face when participating in a COP?

1) Inclusion

1. What financial support can be mobilised to facilitate the participation and capacity building of groups with limited financial resources (especially from the Global South)? How can such support ensure the widest possible representation of observers, without resulting in an overall increase in the number of observers?
2. What measures can be taken by the organizers of UNFCCC sessions to enhance the experience of virtual and/or hybrid participation?

2) Spaces for coordination



1. What other measures can be taken by the organizers of UNFCCC sessions to improve the logistics in and around the event?
2. What could be venue designs and logistical arrangements that could be implemented to help side events and pavilion events obtain more visibility and draw more audience (particularly from Parties)?



○ **Annex 1. Mandates relating to observer engagement**

Throughout the background information, various mandates have been cited per topics. This annex summarises those mandates per owners of the actions.

i) Secretariat:

- (1) Admission Article 7, paragraph 6 of the Climate Change Convention
 - (a) Participation to observe without the right to vote
 - (b) No reference to ‘civil society’ as in other conventions such as UNCCD.
- (2) Admission and participation Rule 6 and Rule 7 of the draft rules of procedure being applied (dRoP)
 - (a) No voting right to observers
- (3) Participation in intersessional workshops and meetings
- (4) Advanced information to observers
- (5) Submissions
- (6) Article 8 of the Convention mandates the secretariat to:
 - (a) Make arrangements for the sessions of UNFCCC
 - (b) Compile and transmit reports submitted
 - (c) Facilitate assistance to the Parties, particularly developing country Parties, on request, in the compilation and communication of information required in accordance with the provisions of the Convention
 - (d) Prepare reports on its activities and present them to the COP
 - (e) Ensure the necessary coordination with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies;
 - (f) Enter, under the overall guidance of the COP, into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions; and
 - (g) Perform the other secretariat functions specified in the Convention and in any of its protocols and such other functions as may be determined by the COP.
- (7) SBI AIM conclusions subject to the availability of funding:
 - (a) Post submissions from observer organizations on the UNFCCC website in a way that makes them accessible to Parties;
 - (b) (ii) Make use of observer inputs, including scientific and technical, for the
 - (c) preparation of background documentation;
 - (d) (e) Requesting the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources and where
 - (e) appropriate, to:
 - (f) (i) Enable the replacement of names of nominated representatives of admitted
 - (g) observer organizations in the online registration system before and during sessions
 - (h) in exceptional circumstances;
 - (i) (ii) Increase the number of meetings that are webcast

ii) COP Presidencies:

- (1) Consider convening intersessional open dialogues virtually in addition to in-person open dialogues during sessions of the COP²¹

²¹ FCCC/SBI/2021/L.17 - paragraph 18 (SBI 52-55)



- (2) Explore ways to increase the participation of observer organizations, including youth organizations and organizations from developing countries²²
- (3) The SBI reaffirmed the value of the open dialogue between Parties and admitted observer organization constituencies and reiterated the invitation to future Presidencies to actively engage with relevant stakeholders, including youth, with the support of the secretariat, as appropriate, in the organization and facilitation of the open dialogue, and welcomed the early dialogue between Parties, NGO constituencies and incoming Presidency.”²³
- (4) The SBI encouraged future Presidencies, supported by the secretariat as appropriate, to continue organizing and facilitating an open dialogue among Parties and observer organizations, while implementing its conclusions from SBI 46.”²⁴
- (5) Encouraging future Presidencies, subject to the availability of resources:
 - (a) To explore ways to enable admitted NGO constituencies to have an open dialogue with Parties, whereby agenda-setting as well as programming of the dialogue are conducted jointly among the admitted NGO constituencies, the Presidency, the Bureau and the secretariat as appropriate, on the understanding that any outcomes of such a dialogue should have persuasive value only, expecting the Party-driven nature of the UNFCCC process;
 - (b) To explore, within the existing processes and draft rules of procedure being applied and under the existing agenda items, ways of exchanging information on best practices and on gaps and challenges to public participation and public access to information with regard to nationally determined contributions and NAPs²⁵;
- (6) The SBI suggested that the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP and the secretariat explore the possibility of holding high-level events, such as a briefing and a round table with observer organizations, including high-level representatives of the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders, in line with existing practices, during the high-level segment of the COP and the CMP, subject to the availability of financial resources²⁶.
- (7) 242. The SBI recalled the conclusions from its thirty-fourth session agreeing that the existing means of **engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness, through various ways** as set out in the conclusions, and requested the presiding officers, the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP, all Parties and the secretariat to bear in mind these conclusions in engaging stakeholders²⁷.
- (8) Encouraging the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP to:
 - (i) **Consider**, in their planning and organization, **the size of the venue, the distance between buildings** and the **need to facilitate the participation of all Parties**

²² FCCC/SBI/2021/L.17 - paragraph 18 (SBI 52-55)

²³ FCCC/SBI/2019/9 - paragraphs 138 (SBI 50)

²⁴ FCCC/SBI/2018/9 - paragraphs 143 (SBI 48)

²⁵ FCCC/SBI/2017/7 - paragraph 119(b)(i)-(ii) (SBI 46)

²⁶ FCCC/SBI/2012/15 – paragraph 241 (SBI 36)

²⁷ FCCC/SBI/2012/15 – paragraph. 242 (SBI 36)



and admitted observer organizations, recalling the conclusions of the SBI at its thirty-second session;

(ii) **Engage stakeholders in the lead up to and during the sessions of the COP and the CMP**;²⁸

iii) Presiding Officers:

- (1) The SBI recalled the conclusions from its thirty-fourth session agreeing that the existing means of **engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness, through various ways** as set out in the conclusions, and requested the presiding officers, the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP, all Parties and the secretariat to bear in mind these conclusions in engaging stakeholders
- (2) The SBI agreed that the existing means of engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of *fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness*, through:
 - (a) Inviting the presiding officers of various bodies, as relevant, subject to the availability of funding, time and space, to:
 - (i) **Seek opportunities for observer organizations to make interventions;**
 - (ii) **Make greater use of observer inputs in workshops and technical meetings** in accordance with the conclusions of the SBI at its seventeenth session in 2002;
 - (iii) Increase **opportunities for regular briefings and debriefings as a means for dialogue for observer organizations** with presiding officers and Parties;²⁹

iv) Parties:

- (1) SBI encourages all Parties to further engage stakeholders at the national level³⁰,
- (2) including information dissemination and consultation;
- (3) Intersecting with Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement
- (4) Party-driven process: repeatedly added by Parties in the SBI conclusions relating to observer engagement.
- (5) The SBI noted that some Parties voluntarily support the participation of admitted NGOs in UNFCCC meetings, and encouraged those Parties to also provide voluntary support, in particular to admitted NGOs from developing countries. The SBI invited Parties to provide information on the voluntary support provided³¹.
- (6) Encouraging all Parties to further engage stakeholders **at the national level**, including information dissemination and consultation³²;

²⁸ FCCC/SBI/2011/7 – paragraph 178(b) (SBI 34)

²⁹ FCCC/SBI/2011/7 – paragraph 178(a) (SBI 34)

³⁰ FCCC/SBI/2011/7 – paragraph 178(c) (SBI 34)

³¹ FCCC/SBI/2019/9 - paragraphs 137

³² FCCC/SBI/2011/7 - paragraph 178 (SBI 34)