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Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Arrangements for intergovernmental meetings

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document provides information on the participation and engagement of observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC intergovernmental process in 2018–2019. Information on the planning and arrangements for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties, the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, other future sessions of the governing bodies and other issues related to the intergovernmental process will be provided in the addendum to this document. Information on the review of the process of admission of observer organizations to the UNFCCC process will be presented in a separate document.



Abbreviations and acronyms

AC	Adaptation Committee
ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment
CDM Executive Board	Executive Board of the clean development mechanism
CMA	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement
CMP	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
COP	Conference of the Parties
FWG	Facilitative Working Group
KCI	Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures
NAP	national adaptation plan
NGO	non-governmental organization
PCCB	Paris Committee on Capacity-building
SB	sessions of the subsidiary bodies
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
SCF	Standing Committee on Finance
TEC	Technology Executive Committee
TT:CLEAR	technology information clearing house
VOICE	Virtual Online and In-person Conference Experience

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. Article 8, paragraph 2, of the Convention, Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Kyoto Protocol and Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement provide that the functions of the secretariat shall be, *inter alia*, to make arrangements for sessions of the COP, the CMP and the CMA and the subsidiary bodies under the Convention and to provide them with services as required. In order to make the necessary arrangements for intergovernmental meetings, the secretariat periodically seeks guidance from the SBI.

2. SBI 40 recalled the conclusions of SBI 34 on various ways to engage observer organizations in the intergovernmental process, and requested the secretariat to provide, subject to the availability of resources, a report every two years on the implementation of those conclusions.¹ The latest report was prepared for consideration at SBI 48.²

3. SBI 50 welcomed the exchange of views by Parties on approaches and initiatives to increase the efficiency of the UNFCCC process towards enhancing ambition and strengthening implementation, and it was agreed to continue consideration of this matter at SBI 52.³

4. COP 25 requested SBI 52 to review the approach to admitting observer organizations and to provide any relevant guidance to the secretariat.⁴

B. Scope

5. This document contains information on the implementation in 2018–2019 of the SBI conclusions since SBI 34 related to the engagement of observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders.

6. At its meeting on 1 April 2020, the Bureau of COP 25, CMP 15 and CMA 2 decided to postpone COP 26, CMP 16 and CMA 3. At its meeting on 28 May 2020, the Bureau accepted the proposal of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the incoming COP Presidency, to convene COP 26, CMP 16 and CMA 3 from 1 to 12 November 2021. An addendum to this document will be issued containing information on the planning and arrangements for those sessions, future sessions of the governing bodies and other issues related to the intergovernmental process for consideration by the SBI.

7. Information on the process of admission of observer organizations will be presented in document FCCC/SBI/2020/INF.8.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

8. The SBI will be invited to consider this biennial update on observer engagement for 2018–2019 and to provide any relevant guidance to the secretariat, including on how to increase and enhance meaningful engagement of observers and non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC process.

¹ FCCC/SBI/2014/8, para. 225.

² FCCC/SBI/2018/7, paras. 38–41.

³ FCCC/SBI/2019/9, para. 134.

⁴ FCCC/CP/2019/13, para. 18.

II. Engagement of observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders in the intergovernmental process

9. Following the in-session workshop at SBI 46 on opportunities to further enhance the effective engagement of non-Party stakeholders,⁵ SBI 48 took stock of progress in implementing the SBI conclusions on non-Party stakeholder engagement⁶ and reiterated the importance of enhancing non-Party stakeholder engagement in the intergovernmental process. It invited Parties and non-Party stakeholders to continue to identify at SBI 50 opportunities and improved practices for further enhancing the openness, transparency, inclusiveness and balance of the effective engagement of non-Party stakeholders in a manner that enhances implementation of the Convention.⁷

10. By COP 25, the number of observer organizations admitted to the UNFCCC process had exceeded 2,500. The large number of admitted organizations has significant resource implications for the secretariat and host countries that may require further consideration. Of the badges issued to delegates from Parties, observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders, 46 per cent were issued to observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders. Overall, about 35 per cent of delegates at COP 25 were representing observers or non-Party stakeholders.

11. In this context, the SBI has on several occasions at past sessions, including at SBI 50, reaffirmed the fundamental value of effective participation by observers and the value of contributions from observer organizations to deliberations on substantive issues.⁸ It has also taken various steps to enhance observer engagement in the intergovernmental process. Substantive input to the process by observer organizations and other non-Party stakeholders through submissions, technical and background papers, workshop presentations, and so forth has been significant (see the table below).

12. Observer participation in the UNFCCC process has been steadily increasing in recent years. For COP 25, 29 per cent more badges were issued to observers than for COP 24. The number of admitted observer organizations exceeded 2,500 in 2019 with organizations continuing to submit applications seeking observer status. Observer involvement in constituted body and technical workshops and use of observer inputs to such workshops also increased in 2018–2019.

13. Observer organizations actively participated in side events at COP 24 and 25, where 263 and 265 side events were held, respectively. The number of UNFCCC-managed side events remained constant at the three most recent COP sessions, but the rate of participation per event increased: the number of attendees per side event was on average 70 per cent higher at COP 25 than at COP 24.

14. Observer participation and engagement in general increased marginally during the reporting period, with more flexibility of participation offered through initiatives such as the daily badge system, which was well received and appreciated by observers. However, some areas for enhancement have been identified, which could help to provide more space for meaningful engagement of observers within the UNFCCC process, such as increasing intervention opportunities for observers during negotiation meetings, increasing the number of meetings open to observers, amending the order of delivery of statements in plenary and making more use of observer inputs and submissions at negotiation meetings. The SBI may wish to consider these matters and provide guidance on them.

15. The table below provides information on the implementation in 2018–2019 of the SBI conclusions since SBI 34 related to the engagement of observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders. The SBI may wish to take note of this information, reflect on the evolution of

⁵ See document FCCC/SBI/2017/7, para. 119.

⁶ Per document FCCC/SBI/2017/7, para. 120.

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2018/9, para. 142.

⁸ FCCC/SBI/2004/10, para. 98; FCCC/SBI/2010/27, para. 140; FCCC/SBI/2011/7, para. 171; FCCC/SBI/2017/7, para. 116; and FCCC/SBI/2019/9, paras. 135–136.

stakeholder engagement in the UNFCCC process and provide guidance on additional ways to enhance the engagement of observers and non-Party stakeholders.

Participation of observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC process in 2018–2019 in relation to the relevant conclusions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation since its thirty-fourth session

<i>SBI conclusion</i>	<i>Implementation</i>
A. Invite the presiding officers of various bodies, as relevant, subject to the availability of funding, time and space:	
1. To increase intervention opportunities for observer organizations and provide regular briefings on the advancement of work	<p>Observers continued to make use of intervention opportunities at formal sessions; there were more than 140 such opportunities at plenary meetings.</p> <p>As a means for observers to engage in dialogue with presiding officers, the secretariat organized more than 12 briefings and more than 25 dialogue and meeting opportunities with high-level officials, including the Secretary-General, the COP Presidencies and the Executive Secretary.</p>
2. To make greater use of inputs by non-Party stakeholders in workshops and technical meetings, as well as through submissions	<p>49 workshops and meetings, including in-session workshops, were reported as open to observers, and more than 2,000 observers and non-Party stakeholders participated. In addition, dialogues such as the Talanoa Dialogue encouraged the participation of non-Party stakeholders and observers. The 11 workshops and events organized on gender included 73 presentations made by observers.</p> <p>Workshops and meetings that involved active participation and input by observers and non-Party stakeholders included those of the FWG of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, the KCI and the SCF. Observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders also participated in NAP Expos and organized and led in-session and regional technical expert meetings on mitigation.</p> <p>In addition, through ACE, Climate Neutral Now, the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, Momentum for Change and other sectoral initiatives, Parties, observers and non-Party stakeholders engaged in approximately 90 in-session and intersessional global climate action events. The Climate Action Hub at COP 24 and 25 featured events focused on non-Party stakeholders, including several high-level events. ACE dialogues included the active participation of NGOs, intergovernmental organizations and Parties.</p> <p>During the Talanoa Dialogue, which featured high-level delegates including high-level champions, several non-Party stakeholders and observer organizations were invited to share experience.</p> <p>The CDM Executive Board made use of inputs from observers and non-Party stakeholders. Eight calls for input^a from observer organizations were initiated when preparing annotated agenda and related annexes. Furthermore, 48 public calls for input were initiated when preparing new regulatory documents or making major revisions.</p> <p>More than 300 submissions were made available on the submission portal^b by observers, other organizations and non-Party stakeholders in response to calls launched.</p>
B. Encourage future Presidencies and hosts of sessions of the governing bodies:	
1. To consider venue size	<p>At COP 24, the Government of Poland continued the practice of past hosts of providing a space for observers, constituency offices and non-Party stakeholder engagement. Considerable space was offered at the venue for side events, exhibits and climate action related activities, and a separate Climate Action Hub was created inside the venue that resembled an amphitheatre.</p> <p>The Government of Chile had arranged for a large venue for COP 25 in Santiago that included a separate area for public and non-Party stakeholder engagement. However, owing to unforeseen circumstances, the location of COP 25 was changed to Madrid. The Government of Spain provided a large venue, comparable to the COP 23 venue, that enabled the secretariat to carry out all the activities for observer and non-Party stakeholder engagement as planned, with relatively minor adjustments. A separate venue for public and non-Party stakeholder engagement known as the green zone was provided adjacent to the main venue.</p> <p>The number of badges issued to observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders was 6,796 at COP 24 and 8,806 at COP 25 (including 592 and 1,014 badges for non-Party stakeholders, respectively), which represented a 44 per cent increase between the two conferences. At COP 25, meetings organized by observers constituted the largest share of meetings and 30 per cent of total meeting room use.</p>

<i>SBI conclusion</i>	<i>Implementation</i>
<p>2. To engage stakeholders in the lead-up to and during sessions</p>	<p>The Governments of Poland and Chile allocated significant resources for the active engagement of observer organizations and other non-Party stakeholders leading up to, during and following COP 24 and 25, respectively.</p> <p>An additional session, SB 48.2, took place in Bangkok in September 2018. The session included the participation of observers, and briefings by the COP Presidency and the Executive Secretary were organized for observer delegates. The Government of Poland organized a non-Party stakeholder day in the lead-up to COP 24 that focused on observer engagement, and it provided funding for some observers to attend.</p> <p>In 2019, stakeholders were invited to provide input in response to a letter from the high-level champions with a view to enhancing the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action. Observer organizations and non-Party stakeholders also participated at the regional climate weeks organized by the secretariat and partners. The secretariat organized and held more than 12 virtual discussions and meetings on various matters relating to observer engagement, including several bilateral meetings with constituency focal points, the secretariat and the COP Presidency.</p>
<p>3. To explore ways to enable admitted NGO constituencies to have an open dialogue with Parties</p>	<p>Following the success of the open dialogue at COP 23, the Polish and Chilean Presidencies held open dialogues at COP 24 and 25, respectively. The open dialogues were well attended by representatives of observer constituencies and organizations, although from COP 23 to 24 there was a noticeable decline in the number of Party representatives who attended. At COP 25, the open dialogue was well attended by representatives of Parties and observer organizations and other stakeholders, and involved an exchange of views among all stakeholders.</p>
<p>C. Suggest that the hosts of future sessions of the governing bodies and the secretariat explore the possibility, subject to the availability of financial resources, of holding high-level events with observer organizations during the high-level segment</p>	<p>The high-level champions held a mandated high-level event at COP 24 and 25 and highlighted climate action by cities and regions, businesses and civil society. In addition, admitted observer constituencies were invited to request the floor.</p> <p>In partnership with the Government of Poland, the secretariat organized the Education Day at COP 24. During Education Day, the United Nations Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness hosted a high-level event that brought together ministers of environment and education to discuss how education can help to accelerate implementation of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. At COP 25, in partnership with the Governments of Chile and Spain, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and members of the Alliance organized a high-level event on ACE. At the event, ministers of environment and education as well as non-Party stakeholders discussed how to raise ambition and support for the implementation of the goals under the Paris Agreement through ACE-related activities. Also, at COP 24 the secretariat supported the Presidency in organizing a third high-level ministerial dialogue on climate finance that included multi-stakeholder panel discussions, followed by an open discussion in plenary where other ministers, State representatives and high-level representatives of observer organizations provided their views on the topics addressed in the different panel discussions.</p>
<p>D. Request the secretariat, where feasible and appropriate:</p>	
<p>1. To further enhance Parties' access to submissions from non-Party stakeholders</p>	<p>Since the launch of the submission portal in 2017, observers and non-Party stakeholders have made more than 300 submissions on various topics. Submissions received are made available on the portal and are accessible to the public.</p>
<p>2. To make use of observer inputs in the preparation of background documentation</p>	<p>The secretariat continued to take into account inputs from observer organizations in the preparation of background documents and, where appropriate, in the design of mandated activities under the AC, ACE, the FWG, the KCI, the SCF, the TEC and the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, among others.</p> <p>The following are some examples of inputs provided by observer organizations:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a) SCF meeting documents were made publicly available prior to the meetings, and observers and non-Party stakeholders could submit written inputs to the SCF in relation to specific agenda items. At the time of preparation of background documents, relevant non-Party stakeholders were contacted by the secretariat, on behalf</p>

*SBI conclusion**Implementation*

of the co-facilitators leading the preparation of the items under this workstream, for specific technical inputs, which were taken into consideration.

b) The AC prepared a draft information paper^c on capacity gaps in accessing adaptation funding and presented the capacity gaps identified in the submissions from observers in the following areas: raising awareness of climate change impacts, making the case for adaptation, navigating and accessing different funding instruments and mechanisms, ensuring capability of the funding seeker, and using and managing funds.

c) Observer submissions were included in the preparation of the workplan of the forum and its KCI by the co-chairs and Parties for COP 25 agenda item 12, “Report of the forum on the impacts of the implementation of response measures”;

d) Inputs from observers on the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts on the basis of the terms of reference was prepared for consideration at SB 51;

e) Representatives of observer constituencies and organizations and entities outside the Convention actively participated in the meetings of the PCCB and in its intersessional work, inter alia, by providing inputs to its publications or by co-organizing activities with the PCCB such as webinars, technical workshops, side events or events at the annual PCCB Capacity-building Hub, including:

(i) An open call for submissions on capacity-building related matters;

(ii) A survey to gather views and perspectives from a broad range of stakeholders, including registered observer organizations, on a technical paper on coherence and coordination of capacity-building activities under the UNFCCC;^d

(iii) A technical paper on capacity-building gaps and needs in implementing nationally determined contributions;^e

f) Stakeholder representatives from business and industry NGOs, environmental NGOs, research and independent NGOs, intergovernmental organizations and youth NGOs are members of the TEC task forces and actively participate in the intersessional work of the TEC. Observer organizations contributed to the preparation of more than 10 publications, including policy briefs, executive summaries, technical papers and compilations of good practices;

g) The CDM Executive Board frequently calls for public input to clean development mechanism methodologies, information notes and concept notes initiated to seek stakeholders’ views on the areas to be covered or revised in the documents and concerns that should be addressed.

E. Request the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources and where appropriate:

1. To allow the replacement of names in the online registration system in exceptional circumstances

The practice of allowing designated contact points of observer organizations to replace names of participants in the online registration system as many times as required before a deadline or when a participant is confirmed continued. This enabled visa applications to be made for the participants. Following the change of location for COP 25, the system was fully reopened to confirm delegations for observer organizations. In addition, the daily badge system was operational and allowed different delegates to attend on each day of the session.

2. To enhance existing practices for the facilitation of non-Party stakeholder participation with a view to promoting the openness, transparency and inclusiveness of the UNFCCC process

A daily badge system was launched at COP 24 that enabled observer organizations to replace their delegates attending the session on the basis of their availability, within the limits of a quota assigned to an organization, which further enhanced opportunities for observer participation. The launch was well received, and the system was used by more than 360 delegates at COP 24 and more than 425 delegates at COP 25.

A new initiative was launched at COP 25, with support from the Government of Chile, to enable non-admitted NGOs from the host country to attend. This initiative was well received, and more than 230 applications were received from organizations in Chile. The secretariat developed a matching system to partner already-admitted observer organizations with Chilean organizations for admission purposes within the constituency structure, and for enhanced engagement by theme. After a short assessment supported by the secretariat, over 180 organizations located in Chile were found to be eligible to attend the session, and arrangements were made with support from constituency focal

<i>SBI conclusion</i>	<i>Implementation</i>
	<p>points for admitted organizations and observers to support the participation of over 300 delegates from these organizations.^f</p> <p>Following the change of location, several delegates from Chile attended COP 25 under this novel initiative. Furthermore, as requested by the Government of Spain, the initiative for non-admitted NGOs was replicated for organizations registered in Spain. Overall, more than 280 delegates attended COP 25 under the initiative.^g</p> <p>The in-session Climate Action Studio concept was streamlined with the introduction of topics and views from internal experts that were shared with the interviewees prior to their interview. This revision encouraged participation from key stakeholders and provided interviewees with more information on the issues being discussed during the negotiations.</p>
3. To increase the number of meetings that are webcast	<p>At the sessions of the subsidiary and governing bodies, all plenary meetings, high-level segments and press briefings were webcast. In addition, all official side events organized by the secretariat (more than 700 in total) were broadcast live.</p> <p>Meetings of the AC, the CDM Executive Board, the Compliance Committee, the FWG, the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee, the KCI, the PCCB, the SCF and the TEC, Momentum for Change events, as well as technical expert meetings on mitigation, facilitative sharing of views workshops and multilateral assessment sessions, were regularly webcast.</p> <p>The secretariat has promoted the transparency of meetings by introducing use of virtual meeting tools such as Skype and WebEx, as resources allow. The secretariat broadcast 795 meetings using Skype for Business, in addition to the webcast services offered during the sessions of the subsidiary and governing bodies.</p>
4. To further encourage participation through enhanced virtual tools	<p>A wide range of virtual participation and social media tools were used to facilitate enhanced non-Party stakeholder participation and interaction in many of the meetings and workshops mentioned above.</p> <p>At COP 24, webcasting via Skype for Business enabled online participants to post questions to side-event panellists. At COP 25, webcasting was further enhanced to enable remote presentation by panellists and to allow online participants to post questions at all official side events organized by the secretariat. Interviews conducted in the Climate Action Studio were uploaded to the UNFCCC social media accounts, including YouTube. The secretariat developed a new tool in 2019 for virtual participation in multilateral meetings (VOICE) that is intended to serve as a robust method for conducting virtual meetings.</p> <p>For meetings of the Consultative Group of Experts, the PCCB, the SCF and the TEC, and Momentum for Change and Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change events, as well as technical expert meetings on mitigation, online tools and platforms were regularly used to encourage active virtual participation. The TT:CLEAR virtual platform was used to broaden the engagement of stakeholders in climate technology activities. TT:CLEAR recorded over 16,000 users each year. Furthermore, as at 15 November 2019, the PCCB had published 230 posts on Facebook, with a reach of over 174,000 followers.</p> <p>Other virtual tools used to encourage remote participation include Facebook (including Facebook Live), RSS feeds, Samepage, Skype, Slido, SurveyMonkey and YouTube.</p>

Note: This table is a non-exhaustive overview of participation by observer organizations in the UNFCCC process during the reporting period.

^a Available at http://cdm.unfccc.int/public_inputs/index.html.

^b <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/submissionsstaging/Pages/Home.aspx>.

^c AC document AC/2019/27. Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/199947>.

^d PCCB. 2019. Coherence and coordination of capacity-building activities of constituted bodies and in other relevant processes under the Convention. Bonn: UNFCCC. Available at <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/paris-committee-on-capacity-building-pccb/documents-paris-committee-on-capacity-building#other-pccb-documents>.

^e PCCB. 2019. National-level pilot exercise on capacity gaps and needs related to the implementation of nationally determined contributions. Bonn: UNFCCC. Available at <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/paris-committee-on-capacity-building-pccb/documents-paris-committee-on-capacity-building#other-pccb-documents>.

^f See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/information-on-the-participation-of-chilean-ngos-at-cop-25>.

^g See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/parties-non-party-stakeholders/non-party-stakeholders/information-on-the-participation-of-spanish-non-profit-civil-society-organizations-at-cop-25>.