



United Nations

**ADVANCE VERSION**

**FCCC/SBI/2021/1**



Framework Convention on  
Climate Change

Distr.: General  
1 March 2021

Original: English

---

**Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

## **The 8<sup>th</sup> Dialogue on Action for Climate Empowerment**

### **Summary report by the secretariat**

#### *Summary*

The 8<sup>th</sup> Dialogue on Action for Climate Empowerment was held virtually from June to December 2020 through two global and four regional events. The Dialogue provided a platform for representatives of Parties and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to advance discussions on recommendations and views on future work to enhance implementation of Action for Climate Empowerment.

## Abbreviations and acronyms

ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment
COP	Conference of the Parties
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
Escazú Agreement	Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean
NDC	nationally determined contribution
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
YOUNGO	youth non-governmental organizations

## I. Introduction

### A. Background and mandate

1. Reaffirming the importance of education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information in relation to climate change and international cooperation on those matters for achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention, COP 18 adopted the Doha work programme on Article 6 of the Convention and decided that it would be reviewed in 2020 to evaluate its effectiveness, identify any emerging gaps and needs, and inform any decisions on improving its effectiveness, as appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

2. COP 18 requested the SBI to enhance the work on Article 6 of the Convention by organizing an annual in-session dialogue with the participation of Parties, representatives of relevant bodies established under the Convention and relevant experts, practitioners and stakeholders to share their experience and exchange ideas, best practices and lessons learned regarding the implementation of the Doha work programme.<sup>2</sup> COP 18 also requested the secretariat to prepare a summary report on each meeting of the dialogue.<sup>3</sup>

3. COP 25 requested the secretariat to organize the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue to advance discussions on recommendations and views on future work to enhance implementation of Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement.<sup>4</sup>

### B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

4. The SBI may wish to consider the information contained in this report with a view to determining appropriate action arising from it.

## II. Proceedings

5. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of SBI 52, the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue took place virtually from June to December 2020.<sup>5</sup> The secretariat organized the following virtual events:

- (a) Global Launch Event: 8 June 2020, 12–1 p.m.;
- (b) Regional dialogue for Europe and Central Asia: 29 July 2020, 1–4 p.m.;
- (c) Regional dialogue for Asia and the Pacific: 26 August 2020, 7–10 a.m.;
- (d) Regional dialogue for North America, Latin America and the Caribbean: 23 September 2020, 5–8 p.m.;
- (e) Regional dialogue for Africa and the Middle East: 28 October 2020, 1–4 p.m.;
- (f) Global Closing Event: 2 December 2020, 3–5 p.m.<sup>6</sup>

6. Participation in the virtual events was higher than at previous annual dialogues. Almost 900 people viewed the live broadcast of the opening and closing events. The four regional dialogues were attended by more than 500 participants, including representatives of Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, youth organizations and academia, as well as other stakeholders. Participants took an active role by

<sup>1</sup> Decision 15/CP.18, preamble and paras. 1–2.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 15/CP.18, para. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 15/CP.18, para. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Decision 15/CP.25, para. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Agendas, recordings and presentations from the Dialogue can all be accessed via the UNFCCC website at <https://unfccc.int/topics/education-youth/events-meetings/ace-dialogues/8th-dialogue-on-action-for-climate-empowerment>.

<sup>6</sup> All times are in Central European Time or Central European Summer Time, where applicable.

submitting questions and their input through a written chat function and via an interactive online tool.

7. The 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue was co-organized with UNESCO and aimed to enhance cross-sectoral coordination among ministries dealing with climate change and ministries of education. UNESCO invited staff from ministries of education responsible for climate education, while the UNFCCC invited ACE national focal points.

8. Simultaneous interpretation into and out of Spanish and French was provided in the regional dialogues for North America, Latin America and the Caribbean and for Africa and the Middle East, respectively.

9. The SBI Chair, Marianne Karlsen (Norway), chaired the Dialogue, supported by the co-facilitators for each regional dialogue, as follows:

(a) Regional dialogue for Europe and Central Asia: Roberta Ianna (Italy) and Salka Sigurdardottir (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);

(b) Regional dialogue for Asia and the Pacific: Margalit Levin (Australia) and Albert Magalang (Philippines);

(c) Regional dialogue for North America, Latin America and the Caribbean: Johanna Arriagada Díaz (Chile) and Thomas Cameron (Canada);

(d) Regional dialogue for Africa and the Middle East: Kamal Djemouai (African Group) and Penda Kante Thiam (Senegal).

10. The presentations, panel discussions and moderated discussions focused on:

(a) Fostering in-country cross-sectoral collaboration on ACE;

(b) Promoting regional knowledge-sharing and highlighting good practice, with a view to following up on and reviewing the implementation of the Doha work programme;

(c) Providing recommendations and views on future work to enhance ACE implementation with an eye towards 2030.

### **III. Summary of presentations and discussions**

11. This chapter provides an overview of the remarks, presentations and discussions from the two global and four regional events, as well as the input of participants. It follows the sequence of Dialogue events (see para. 5 above), with a separate section for each global event and a combined summary of the four regional events, structured in accordance with the event agendas.

#### **A. Global Launch Event (8 June 2020)**

##### **1. Opening of the event**

12. The Global Launch Event was opened by a representative of the secretariat, who welcomed the participants and provided an overview of ACE.

13. In her opening remarks, the SBI Chair stressed that, despite the exceptional circumstances surrounding the pandemic, climate ambition and action remain urgent priorities. Therefore, it is critical for everyone to keep working to ensure that societies are in the best possible position to do the right thing by making choices that lead towards, and not away from, the goals set out in the Paris Agreement. She noted that the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue held special significance as the Doha work programme was due to conclude in 2020 after eight years of operation. The SBI Chair congratulated the Parties and other stakeholders that have all been actively involved in ACE implementation. To conclude, the SBI Chair provided an overview of the structure of the regional dialogues and invited all participants to make the Dialogue a celebration of the progress under the Doha work programme while looking beyond 2020 and considering how much more can be achieved.

14. A representative of UNESCO presented on how to foster intersectoral collaboration to enhance ACE implementation. The representative highlighted that partnership and collaboration are crucial for implementing ACE and explained that target 4.7 under SDG 4 on quality education covers the integration of climate change into education policies, curricula, teacher training and the whole spectrum of non-formal and informal learning. The connection of the two issues in the SDG target provides common objectives for ministries dealing with climate change and those dealing with education. Moreover, dedicated coordination mechanisms are in place for implementing SDG 4 that bring together ministries of education and other education stakeholders. The existing coordination mechanisms could be used more systematically to enhance ACE implementation in the future. The representative concluded by reiterating that partnership is central to the task of empowering everyone in the world to take climate action.

## 2. Panel discussions

15. A multi-stakeholder panel including representatives of government, civil society organizations and youth organizations provided various perspectives on the role of ACE for accelerating climate action.

16. The first YOUNGO constituency representative highlighted the opportunity ACE provides to transform people's mindsets on climate action through information and training and by motivating people to change. ACE ensures that ownership of the transition to low-carbon societies and economies, which must be achieved to prevent catastrophe, rests with all individuals. To amplify efforts on climate action, every inhabitant of this planet needs to be aware, informed, educated, trained and involved, and everyone needs to work together. The second YOUNGO constituency representative highlighted the importance of equal opportunities in education, training and access to information, all of which will enable young people to understand, own and act on the current situation in terms of climate. Youth can empower others when they are empowered, creating a wave of change and driving the transition we need. The representative explained that ACE is the most personal aspect of climate change. Young people want everyone to be empowered and take action on the climate crisis.

17. A representative of the H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma Foundation shared the Foundation's experience in raising awareness and empowering youth and communities to address climate change. To achieve a global impact, it is important to start by influencing at the local level. The representative described the MAMA-LIGHT Initiative for Sustainable Energy, which was recognized by the United Nations at the Global Solutions Summit in 2015 as an example of 'walking the walk'. Under this initiative, the West African Solar Pack will create 1 million jobs in rural areas in each participating country, predominantly for young people and women, using the power of digitalization. There is an urgent need to find innovative solutions, and it is encouraging to see that young people are leading this process. The representative concluded by reiterating the importance of cooperation and confirmed that the West African Solar Pack project is willing to act as a delivery mechanism for ACE.

18. A representative of the Indian Centre for Environment Education stressed the need for ACE to take centre stage with regard to the climate agenda. A broad range of stakeholders need to be involved if we are to successfully transition to a world where people live responsibly from a climate change perspective. The Centre has carried out a global consultation to collect people's views on how ACE can play a more effective role in combating climate change. As climate change awareness grows, it is expected that more people will want to participate in climate action and that civil society will be more willing to come together to take action. Collections of case studies can play a useful role in mobilizing the entire society, including case studies that identify small but impactful actions. The representative suggested that the regional dialogues would need to address how to integrate ACE into NDCs and other climate strategies. Consideration should be given to activities representing all ACE elements, rather than only to formal education or training.

19. A representative of Chile spoke about the importance of integrating ACE into the Party's updated NDC. Following a broad and active public participation process, Chile included a social pillar in its NDC that will enable the ACE elements to guide all of the Party's climate commitments. To meet these commitments, Chile is also developing a

strategy for capacity development and climate empowerment that will consider all six ACE elements, together with governance, gender, research and science. The representative noted that active participation from all actors, including the public sector, the private sector, civil society, academia, scientific communities, young people and individuals, is essential for good decision-making and for meeting Chile's commitments. The representative concluded by emphasizing that the time for action is now, and that ACE will factor into decisions that raise climate ambition and lead to the achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement.

20. A representative of Italy highlighted the fact that young people are increasingly involved in local and international discussions on climate change and stated that their passion and enthusiasm are proving crucial in terms of raising the ambition of countries to address the climate emergency and guarantee young people a safe future. As such, the Italian Minister of the Environment, Land and Sea decided to host Youth4Climate, a global event on climate change dedicated to youth, in Italy in conjunction with the Pre-COP 26 meeting in Milan. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of COP 26, Italy is not reducing its efforts and believes that now is the time for youth to generate momentum and make sure that their priorities are recognized. To amplify young champions' voices, the Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea will host a series of youth-proposed and youth-driven virtual events in 2020 and 2021.

21. A representative of the United Kingdom opened by stressing that the postponement of COP 26 does not mean the postponement of climate action. Given its incoming Presidency of the COP, the United Kingdom is championing a whole-of-society approach, committing to an inclusive Presidency and working with a broad cross-section of civil society to achieve this. The representative provided details on Climate Assembly UK, Green Great Britain and Northern Ireland Week, the Youth Steering Group and the Resilient 40 project as notable examples of initiatives facilitated by the Government of the United Kingdom to amplify ACE themes. The representative concluded by reiterating that ACE remains a key priority for the incoming Presidency of COP 26 and called for all Parties and non-Party stakeholders to engage with ACE and consider how to make the new work programme to be adopted at COP 26 a success.

### **3. Closure of the event**

22. A representative of the secretariat outlined the next steps for ACE up until COP 26, including the timelines for the upcoming regional dialogues.

23. In his closing remarks, the UNFCCC Deputy Executive Secretary thanked all participants for attending the virtual event and highlighted the important role ACE plays in the long transformation ahead in terms of solving the complex challenges presented by climate change. The Deputy Executive Secretary highlighted that in 2018 in Katowice, Parties agreed to integrate ACE into climate change policies, including NDCs, to develop national ACE strategies in accordance with their national circumstances and to continue to nominate ACE focal points. Parties were encouraged to continue their efforts in these matters. The Deputy Executive Secretary concluded by emphasizing the importance of empowering every person to take climate action and encouraged participants to attend the regional dialogues.

## **B. Regional dialogues (July–October 2020)**

### **1. Opening of each regional dialogue**

24. Each regional dialogue was opened by representatives of the UNFCCC, who welcomed the participants and introduced the co-facilitators for that regional dialogue.

25. Co-facilitators also welcomed the participants and introduced the objectives of the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue.

26. In her opening remarks, the SBI Chair stressed that the Dialogue was taking place at a time when climate change is rapidly becoming a defining factor in many people's lives. She highlighted that while the pandemic is currently and rightfully the focus of our attention, climate change ambition and action remain an urgent priority. The 2020 Dialogue holds

special significance, as the Doha work programme is coming to the end of its eight-year operation. Therefore, it is now the time to reflect on and celebrate what has been accomplished, share good practices and lessons learned, and consider what is needed to enhance ACE in the coming years. The SBI Chair concluded by inviting participants to get involved in the discussions and ensure that the Dialogue is a celebration of progress, while looking forward to what can be achieved beyond 2020.

27. In her welcoming remarks, the UNFCCC Executive Secretary congratulated the participants on being part of the Dialogue, which aims to unlock the power of ACE. She highlighted that although we are living through exceptional events, difficult times have provided some of the biggest turning points in history and have led to incredible progress. To address the challenges we face today, we must share a common vision and make it a reality, and we must believe in the possibility of a safer, healthier, cleaner, more sustainable, more equitable and more just world for all. Addressing climate change is difficult but achievable through the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and ACE is an important element. The Executive Secretary concluded by saying that together we can transform possibility into reality.

28. In a video message, a representative of the COP 25 Presidency thanked the secretariat for organizing the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue through a series of virtual regional dialogues. The representative explained the steps the Government of Chile has taken to integrate ACE into its NDC (see para. 19 above), which, as well as improving its NDC, has significantly increased the level of ambition. The representative emphasized that to be able to have an ambitious goal to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts, it is critical to get everyone on board; most importantly, the commitment and action of individuals is needed in order to support the goals of the Convention and the Paris Agreement.

29. Representatives of the UNFCCC presented an overview of ACE and its six elements, explained the international relevance and agendas for ACE and its evolution since the adoption of the Doha work programme in 2012, and outlined the activities undertaken by the secretariat to advance ACE implementation at the local, national and international level. The representatives highlighted that Parties would review the implementation of the Doha work programme in accordance with the terms of reference adopted at COP 25.<sup>7</sup> The representatives directed participants' attention to the synthesis report<sup>8</sup> and information note<sup>9</sup> prepared by the secretariat following the same terms of reference. The representatives concluded by presenting the planned activities relating to ACE up until COP 26, which is scheduled for November 2021.

30. Representatives of UNESCO presented on how to integrate ACE into NDCs. In partnership with the UNFCCC, UNESCO has developed a short, practical guide for countries as an optional tool for considering ACE integration in the NDC review process. The guide points out that priority should be given to developing and implementing a national ACE strategy and provides examples of possible objectives and targets for each of the six ACE elements. The representatives highlighted the importance of the climate and education sectors working together to scale up ACE, even beyond the specific context provided by the current NDC review process. The representatives concluded by stating that UNESCO, the UNFCCC and other United Nations partners remain committed to supporting countries in scaling up their response to climate change through ACE.

## **2. Review of the implementation of the Doha work programme on Article 6 of the Convention**

### **(a) Presentations**

31. The regional dialogues included 26 presentations on examples of good practice in terms of ACE implementation from the point of view of ACE policy, education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information. The presentations

<sup>7</sup> Decision 15/CP.25, annex.

<sup>8</sup> FCCC/SBI/2020/9.

<sup>9</sup> FCCC/SBI/2020/INF.4.

from across the regional dialogues have been grouped into those topics and summarized below.

(i) *ACE policy*

32. A representative of Sweden explained the initial steps taken by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency to develop its national ACE strategy, which includes a stocktake of existing policies and actions taken by government agencies, scientific institutions and non-governmental organizations.

33. A representative of Japan provided a summary of the overarching policies and measures for climate education and public awareness in the country, which are significantly strengthened by their inclusion in the core national climate change plan and the national educational curriculum.

34. A representative of Uruguay explained how ACE is integrated into the Party's National Policy for Climate Change and introduced its plan to develop a national ACE strategy by 2021 with the support of its NDC, which commits to a specific strategy for training and capacity-building.

35. A representative of Benin spoke about the experience of elaborating a national climate change learning strategy and the launch of the School Competition on Climate Change, which was held as a pilot activity in 2019, to complement the strategy.

(ii) *Education*

36. A representative of Italy presented on the efforts of the Ministry of Public Education to reintroduce the discipline of civic education, which includes climate awareness and other environmental issues, to primary and secondary education institutions.

37. A representative of Malaysia explained how climate change, as one of the main topics in the country's national development plans, is integrated into various school subjects, such as science, languages, social studies and religious studies.

38. A representative of the Foundation for Environmental Education in Mongolia shared the experience of implementing project-based experimental learning to explore the issues of desertification and land degradation under the framework of the Eco-Schools programme.

39. A representative of Mexico highlighted measures introduced to promote climate education at the national level, such as making sustainable development a required topic under the national curriculum following the provisions of the Constitution of Mexico and the General Law on Climate Change.

40. A representative of the Fundisa for Change programme in South Africa outlined the steps taken to include environmental learning in teachers' education at the national level, with the aim of addressing their struggle to teach climate change in sufficient depth and with the required level of understanding.

(iii) *Training*

41. A representative of the United Nations Development Programme described the training provided to more than 3,000 teachers and educators from nine countries in Central Europe through the Climate Box education programme.

42. A representative of the Climate Reality Project Indonesia presented a selection of training initiatives currently being run by the organization and targeting civil servants, young professionals and the general public at the national and international level.

43. A representative of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network in Grenada spoke about the Young Professional Climate Finance Program, which provides training for participants with the aim of strengthening efforts to access climate finance and build resilience on the island.

44. A representative of the African Development Bank introduced the internal training activities it has conducted for executive directors, senior management and task managers of

the bank, and the external training activities for officials and experts from the bank's member countries.

(iv) *Public awareness*

45. Two representatives of the YOUNGO constituency from Germany and Indonesia highlighted the constituency's role in raising awareness of climate change among young people by organizing the annual Conference of Youth, the 2018 ACE Youth Forum and other youth-led local initiatives around the world.

46. A representative of the Earth Day Network provided an overview of the organization's initiatives and campaigns aimed at building a global, diverse movement and creating a pathway to global citizenship and shared recommendations on how to reach people and convince them to take action.

47. A representative of the Sudan Youth Organization on Climate Change emphasized that it is important to consider people's culture, history, religion and community when engaging with the public and to consider people who are off-grid in rural areas.

(v) *Public participation*

48. A representative of the Center for International Environmental Law referred to the National Climate Agreement round tables in the Netherlands and a recent just-transition planning workshop in Estonia as examples of good practice that ensured a substantial degree of inclusion for the most vulnerable groups in policymaking.

49. A representative of the Standing Committee on Climate Change of the National Assembly of Pakistan presented on the efforts of the Parliament of Pakistan to foster public participation, transparency and inclusivity in combating climate change through its three roles, namely, legislation, oversight and representation.

50. A representative of Austria introduced the Burgenland Declaration on Action for Climate Empowerment of 2019, which represents a commitment to the implementation of ACE, and spoke about the events, workshops, receptions and concerts organized in the country to connect government officials, the business sector and non-Party stakeholders.

51. A representative of Ghana shared the country's experience of using public participation as a key element in fostering the integration of climate change in school curricula, which involved consistently consulting and engaging with both affected and interested stakeholders.

(vi) *Public access to information*

52. A representative of the city of Tirana, Albania, spoke about various initiatives organized by the municipal government, including the development and launch of the mobile application "MyTirana", which enables residents to acquire and provide climate-related information.

53. A representative of the Republic of Korea introduced an initiative to publish the Handbook for the Paris Rulebook as an information source, translating the technical details of the Paris Agreement and the Katowice climate package into the Korean language.

54. A representative of Costa Rica presented on the development and operation of the National Climate Change Metrics System as part of the country's efforts to improve the provision of climate-related data to citizens, improve transparency and facilitate easy access.

55. A representative of the H.R.H. Princess Abze Djigma Foundation highlighted the role of digitalization in enhancing public access to information and shared the digital solutions currently being used by the MAMA-LIGHT Initiative for Sustainable Energy.

(b) **Moderated discussions**

56. An interactive online tool was used to gather direct input from the participants following the questions and answers on the presentations.

57. For the first question on the ACE good practices that participants are involved in or had observed, 138 responses were recorded across the regions, with more than 85 specific initiatives and projects identified at the local, national, regional, and international level.

58. For the second question on the remaining gaps and needs for ACE implementation, responses were grouped into the following categories:

(a) There is a lack of financial resources for ACE. Participants called for more domestic and international financing mechanisms to support ACE implementation, especially for local initiatives. ACE could also be mainstreamed into existing national institutional and financing frameworks, including national budgets;

(b) There is a lack of commitment to ACE. Participants recommended acquiring buy-in from high-level political players and stressed the need for increased public pressure for a more robust ACE framework at the national and international level. Participants also highlighted the need for multilevel, multisectoral coordination mechanisms at the national level, especially between ministries of environment and ministries of education. Furthermore, ACE needs to be integrated into NDCs and national adaptation plans, while robust targets and metrics for ACE are needed to boost commitment;

(c) There is a lack of engagement on ACE. Participants stressed the need to strengthen engagement with all stakeholders, especially youth, the private sector and the scientific community, and highlighted the importance of empowering all members of society and mainstreaming gender;

(d) There is a lack of awareness of ACE. Changing the perception of ACE is important, which requires more training, awareness and information. Enhanced communication is required to improve the visibility of ACE, especially from the perspective of indigenous communities. In this sense, participants emphasized the need to link policy, science and indigenous knowledge;

(e) There is a lack of capacity for ACE. Many responses highlighted the need to provide training to teachers in training and those already in service and to understand and address the capacity-building needs of policymakers. Participants stressed that solutions must be tailored to the needs of the countries and regions involved;

(f) There is a persistent gap in climate education. Participants stated that Parties must continue their efforts to integrate climate change into curricula and emphasized the need to translate education into consistent action and mobilization. Participants in Latin America and the Caribbean highlighted the importance of decolonizing climate education and providing continuous training for individuals;

(g) There is a need for stronger international cooperation between local and international partners.

### **3. Recommendations and views on future work to enhance implementation of Action for Climate Empowerment**

#### **(a) Panel discussions**

59. A total of 24 panellists from governments, United Nations agencies, civil society organizations, academia and youth organizations provided recommendations and views on future work to enhance ACE implementation. The panellists discussed what they would like to see achieved as we move towards 2030 and what is needed to meet those aims. The remarks from across the regions are summarized below and grouped by topic.

##### *(i) Policy coherence*

60. A representative of Spain emphasized that the six elements of ACE should not be considered as an add-on but must instead become an integral part of all climate policies, plans and programmes.

61. A representative of Thailand described how ACE receives support as a cross-cutting issue from the country's national development strategies and plans, which are overseen by

an interministerial committee and cover over 400 ACE-related projects and activities from at least 10 ministries.

62. A representative of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Climate Change stressed the role of parliamentarians in promoting transparency and public participation in all their work, while guaranteeing that national ACE initiatives and programmes are effective and leave no one behind.

63. A representative of Uganda explained how the National Climate Change Learning Strategy has been instrumental in developing individuals' skills and institutional capacities to enable the fostering of green, low-emission and climate-resilient development.

(ii) *Tools and support*

64. A representative of the International Association of Universities emphasized that universities are key actors and partners for climate empowerment in society and stressed the urgent need to acquire support for higher education from national governments and society.

65. A representative of the Indian Centre for Environment Education highlighted the importance of the ACE Dialogues in bringing together ministries of environment and ministries of education, in addition to their role of documenting and sharing good ACE practices.

66. A representative of the Alliance of Ibero-American University Networks for Sustainability and the Environment provided recommendations for promoting greater cooperation with universities that are playing a crucial role in carrying out scientific research on climate change, in collaboration with local communities.

67. A representative of the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection introduced a digital tool developed to enhance ACE implementation in Morocco, namely, a virtual awareness campaign platform for promoting eco-responsible behaviour and enhancing the engagement of major stakeholders.

(iii) *Monitoring and reporting*

68. A representative of Climate Outreach highlighted the importance of grounding performance monitoring in principles and explained that at the recent high-level round table on principles and processes for progress tracking, it was agreed that monitoring must be accessible, empowering, credible, relevant, inclusive and understandable.

69. A representative of New Zealand described monitoring and reporting as the most important elements for ACE implementation in terms of determining whether the Government is successfully making a difference; these elements are also key for holding the Government to account, celebrating successes and encouraging peer-to-peer learning.

70. A representative of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States of America emphasized the key role of ACE-related networks in the monitoring and reporting of ACE, as they provide greater visibility on the range of ACE activities and facilitate wider coordination and communication.

71. A representative of Egypt explained that effective monitoring requires adequate and precise definitions in terms of how objectives can be met and that national communications submitted under the UNFCCC are an excellent way to present good practices and relevant information, including general policies and specific activities for ACE.

(iv) *Role of non-Party stakeholders*

72. A representative of the Climate Education, Communication and Outreach Stakeholders Community provided recommendations on the way forward based on its submission to the UNFCCC, which include mainstreaming ACE across the UNFCCC workstreams, creating an ACE action plan with annual targets and reviews and closing the gap in financial resources.

73. A representative of Monash University in Australia emphasized that a just transition and recovery must be underpinned by ACE perspectives through inclusive and participatory

processes that enable communities to articulate comprehensive, culturally sensitive policy frameworks.

74. A representative of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform underlined that ACE has a role to play in terms of coordinating and collaborating with indigenous people and local communities, including by identifying and sharing indigenous knowledge in formal and informal education.

75. A representative of the Global Youth Development Initiative spoke on the submissions made by the YOUNGO constituency, outlining recommendations for the new ACE work programme and underscoring the urgent need to treat ACE as a priority, especially for the sake of young people around the world.

76. A representative of the Climate Route of Costa Rica stressed that ACE is a fundamental tool for achieving public participation and people-driven climate policymaking, and the new ACE work programme has the potential to increase participation and enable communities to take part in climate action.

77. A representative of the youth branch of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, explained that the six elements of ACE provide a framework and a platform for empowering young people and enabling them to take effective, just and equitable climate action and called for an enhanced ACE work programme.

78. Another representative of the Climate Education, Communication and Outreach Stakeholders Community pointed out that ACE needs to promote the green economy and capacity-building at the grass-roots and household level and bridge the gap between policy, indigenous knowledge and community participation.

(v) *International cooperation*

79. A representative of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research stressed that international organizations that are heavily involved in the ACE agenda should demonstrate results in terms of what they have achieved so far and, more importantly, show what they could achieve if this area received greater investment.

80. A representative of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability presented on the Regional Centres of Expertise, an initiative involving networks of educational organizations that connect people at the local level to work together internationally.

81. A representative of EUROCLIMA+ explained that the programme is working with 18 countries in Latin America and that ACE elements are being integrated into educational processes and climate policies, including NDCs and national adaptation plans.

82. A representative of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean talked about the link between the Escazú Agreement and the Convention, highlighting that the former is fostering international cooperation within the region to help empower residents.

83. A representative of the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security gave an overview of the work on fostering collaboration between the University and African institutions in relation to higher education, research and policy with a view to addressing the challenges involved in implementing Agenda 2063 of the African Union and meeting the SDGs.

(b) **Moderated discussions**

84. An interactive online tool was used to gather direct input from the participants following the questions and answers on the remarks.

85. For the first question on what participants want to achieve as we move towards 2030, a range of observations were made:

(a) Overarching long-term visions and goals included achieving carbon neutrality, strengthening resilience, delivering societal transformation, empowering people around the world and ensuring that no one is left behind. It was generally acknowledged that Parties and

non-Party stakeholders need to rapidly strengthen their commitment to ACE to achieve these visions and goals;

(b) In general, participants perceived ACE as a driver of climate action, a tool for achieving climate targets, a hub for multilevel, multi-stakeholder collaboration and a source of innovation and new ideas for climate action;

(c) Across the regions, participants listed establishing stronger networks, mainstreaming and integrating ACE, raising public awareness and enhancing public engagement as goals oriented towards 2030. More specifically, participants are seeking multi-stakeholder collaboration at all levels to strengthen capacities and implement solutions that are tailored to context and called for integrating ACE into national climate policies and strategies, such as NDCs, mainstreaming ACE across the workstreams of the Convention, raising awareness to achieve behavioural and cultural change that can lead to action and increasing multisectoral engagement, including with the private sector, in the development and implementation of climate policies;

(d) Some participants also indicated the need for continued support for solution-focused climate education that reflects local cultures and values, calling for youth empowerment in Africa and the Middle East to facilitate and encourage the participation of young people in climate action.

86. For the second question on what is needed to achieve the vision and goal specified in the first question, responses fell within the following broad categories:

(a) Political will and greater awareness among decision makers and public support for setting and achieving more ambitious commitments on ACE while ensuring that each ACE element receives balanced attention;

(b) The provision of dedicated and continuous financial resources to support ACE activities;

(c) Cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration supported by systematic, flexible and participatory ACE frameworks and strategies at the national and international level;

(d) Proactive community engagement in climate policies, especially involving youth;

(e) More human capital and networks to deliver ACE activities, especially for ACE focal points and teachers, along with stronger collaboration at all levels;

(f) Sufficient institutional and technical capacities, including for reporting progress and sharing experience, for all Parties;

(g) Achievable and measurable targets with clear metrics to enable progress tracking and reporting of ACE activities at all levels;

(h) A clear, ambitious action plan for ACE under the new work programme;

(i) A committee or platform established to foster the sharing of expertise and knowledge, which could also serve to monitor the implementation of the action plan;

(j) Climate justice and human rights placed at the core of climate policies, with participants in Latin America and the Caribbean calling for the ratification of the Escazú Agreement to facilitate this.

#### 4. Closure of the regional dialogues

87. A representative of the secretariat outlined the next steps for ACE.

88. In his closing remarks, the Italian Minister of the Environment, Land and Sea highlighted the role of the ACE Dialogues, which is to unite, enrich and connect ideas, thoughts, people and initiatives. Italy has actively fostered the central role of young people ever since the Party provided substantial support for the organization of the Youth Climate Summit in 2019. The Minister introduced Italy's plan to organize the Youth4Climate event in September 2021, which will be dedicated to youth on the occasion of the Pre-COP. The

event will host two young people from each country, who will have the opportunity to share knowledge, develop ideas and present proposals to the policymakers and negotiators participating in the Pre-COP. The Minister concluded by sharing a promotional video for the Youth4Climate Live Series, where young people will take a leading role in guiding ambition, broadening participation and creating space for young people to engage more directly with governments, international organizations and other stakeholders.

## **C. Global Closing Event (2 December 2020)**

### **1. Opening of the event**

89. The Global Closing Event was opened by a representative of the secretariat, who welcomed participants and again provided a general overview of the concept of ACE and the processes involved.

90. In her opening remarks, the Executive Secretary highlighted that there is an unprecedented opportunity to build forward from COVID-19 and enable nations to shape the twenty-first century economy in ways that are clean, green, healthy, safe and just for all, especially for those in the most remote parts of the world and in places that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. ACE provides the framework to teach everyone that addressing climate change can also help to meet other significant challenges facing humanity. The Executive Secretary further emphasized that in addition to education and training, public awareness, access to information and participation in climate action need to extend to all age groups and all nations. She concluded by thanking the participants for continuing with the ACE Dialogue, rising to the challenge of this difficult year and being such strong, collaborative partners in the work of ACE.

91. In her welcoming remarks, the President of COP 25 expressed her gratitude to all participants for ensuring the continuity of climate action since COP 25. ACE is integral to climate action, and the six elements of ACE are vital in building ambition and establishing effective climate goals and plans for the benefit of all. The pandemic has provided an unexpected opportunity to explore new approaches to enhancing climate empowerment and related activities. The events of 2020 have demonstrated that actors need to be creative and bold in extending public participation through different platforms and methodologies. The 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue enabled participants to identify common needs, challenges and opportunities in relation to moving forward with ACE implementation. With diversity comes strength, and taking ambitious action to reduce emissions and increase resilience requires everyone to be on board.

92. A representative of UNESCO shared some considerations on cross-sectoral collaboration to enhance ACE implementation. UNESCO was pleased to have mobilized stakeholders from the formal and non-formal education sector for the four regional dialogues. The six elements of ACE require cooperation among ministries of education, training institutions, school networks, universities, businesses, civil society organizations, youth groups and traditional and social media. The need for collaboration was also highlighted through the many examples of good practice and recommendations presented at the regional dialogues. In terms of the way forward, many synergies can be created between the post-2020 ACE work programme and the new UNESCO framework on education for sustainable development, whose five action areas are directly related to ACE. The representative concluded by saying that 2021 would provide opportunities to enhance partnership between the climate and education sectors and jointly build momentum.

### **2. Moderated discussion**

93. Prior to the moderated discussion, the co-facilitators of the regional dialogues provided a high-level summary of the proceedings, presentations and discussions from each of the four regional dialogues.

94. Moderated by the representatives of the YOUNGO constituency, the co-facilitators shared their key takeaways from the regional dialogues, highlighting their recommendations and views on future work to enhance ACE implementation:

(a) The co-facilitator from the United Kingdom said that ACE is a great tool for sharing best practices between countries and non-State actors and enables us to see how the work of governments can complement that of civil society, and vice versa. It was inspiring to hear about each country's activities and explore the possibility of applying similar solutions in the United Kingdom. Learning from one another enables us to capitalize on all the great solutions that have been implemented. The co-facilitator encouraged all participants to continue thinking about the new ACE work programme and consider what outcomes could look like at COP 26;

(b) The co-facilitator from Italy highlighted the rich discussion and the useful and interesting feedback from participants. It was noted that people are becoming increasingly aware of climate issues. The public awareness and multisectoral engagement components of climate policies need to become more effective, including by involving the private sector and paying particular attention to young people. It is clear that only by building stronger multi-stakeholder networks will we be able to mainstream ACE not only across the Convention and the Paris Agreement, but in the everyday lives of all individuals;

(c) The co-facilitator from Australia emphasized the wide range and diversity in ACE work across countries, the stakeholders involved and the issues covered. It is important to consider how to gather and consolidate knowledge gained through the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue to trigger exponential growth of ACE work and accelerate implementation of the Paris Agreement. Even though all programmes and activities are unique to their local contexts, the significant convening power associated with ACE can be better used in terms of sharing ideas to inspire actors from other sectors, countries or regions;

(d) The co-facilitator from the Philippines pointed out that the regional dialogues successfully achieved their main objectives of fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, promoting regional knowledge-sharing and providing recommendations and views on future work on ACE. The outcome of this Dialogue will significantly enhance the road map for operationalizing the ACE elements for the next decade;

(e) The co-facilitator from Chile expressed satisfaction with the results of the Dialogue, which enabled participants to discover different ways of empowering people to take climate action. There was active stakeholder participation, and all attendees were convinced that the commitment and actions of individuals are necessary to support the Paris Agreement and its goals. The co-facilitator invited participants to promote ACE in their countries, so that more people are engaged in climate action;

(f) The co-facilitator from Canada underlined the potential of ACE in unlocking climate ambition and supporting the goals of the Paris Agreement. It was encouraging to hear how ACE practices are being adopted to strengthen local climate action. While the elements of ACE can be very specific according to local contexts, some common threads were evident, such as the opportunities posed by technology for strengthening ACE implementation and the need to put human rights at the core of climate policies and the role of ACE in supporting this;

(g) The co-facilitator who is the adviser to the Chair of the African Group noted that there had been a high level of engagement from a wide variety of stakeholders, including women and youth, which demonstrated the need to create spaces for sharing views and good practices in relation to climate awareness, climate information and access to the support needed to implement more ambitious climate actions. These regional dialogues created a new kind of climate momentum towards more ambitious actions that must be translated from the virtual to the physical world.

95. An interactive online tool was used to gather direct input from the participants on their key takeaways from the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue. In general, participants stated that:

(a) The ACE Dialogues are a great opportunity to share knowledge and learn from one another. Learning about examples of good practice from around the world inspired many participants to continue to take action. The Dialogue's regional events proved to be a valuable format that underlines the range of regional efforts in ACE implementation;

(b) ACE is instrumental in accelerating climate action and can support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. However, ACE is still underleveraged, and there are

many opportunities for tapping into it further and a number of remaining needs and gaps to address. Participants highlighted the lack of financial and human resources for supporting the work of ACE at all levels, including for the secretariat to support ACE implementation;

(c) An enhanced work programme for ACE implementation should be adopted at COP 26 to prioritize ACE in climate action. This future work should pay special attention to ensuring balanced implementation of all six ACE elements. There were also calls to establish a workplan and a constituted body under the Convention and the Paris Agreement to allow Parties and non-Party stakeholders to work together as partners;

(d) More collaboration is needed to bring everyone together for climate action. All stakeholders need to be engaged, preferably at the early stages of decision-making. In this regard, youth hold a special position.

### **3. Closure of the event**

96. In a video message, a representative of the incoming COP 26 Presidency highlighted that maintaining momentum is essential to enhancing all elements of ACE and delivering on the ambition of the Convention and the Paris Agreement. In response to the urgency of the climate crisis, we must innovate, adapt and use new forms of engagement to ensure that individuals have the skills and information they need to make the right choices. The 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue gathered participants' expectations for the next chapter in the ACE story. The review of the Doha work programme will provide the opportunity to make a statement about the integral role of ACE action in meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and the Convention. The representative welcomed participants' reflections and views as they work through 2021 to COP 26 and beyond.

97. In her closing remarks, the SBI Chair thanked all those who had joined the Global Closing Event and the preceding regional dialogues. Participants had shown their willingness to continue generating momentum for climate action and ACE during this challenging time. The SBI Chair applauded the leadership and contributions of the eight co-facilitators of the regional dialogues, who had led the efforts to explore ACE practices and visions in different regions. Moving forward, Parties will carry out the review of the Doha work programme and identify recommendations for future work to enhance ACE implementation. Informal consultations will be organized to explore effective ways of enabling the process to be initiated at SBI 52, where the regional dialogue discussions will be an important building block. The SBI Chair closed the 8<sup>th</sup> ACE Dialogue by congratulating the Parties and all stakeholders who have been actively involved in ACE implementation.

## **IV. Next steps**

98. Parties and other stakeholders may wish to use the information contained in this report when planning, designing and implementing ACE activities.

---