

Environmental Integrity Group (Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco, Republic of Korea and Switzerland)

Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings

Proposal by the Environmental Integrity Group
on enhancing engagement of non-state actors

(v 20 Sep 2013)

The Environmental Integrity Group (EIG) is pleased to submit its views on “arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings“, with a particular focus on enhancing engagement of non-state actors.

Situation

In the framework of the discussion on Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings, the Subsidiary Body of Implementation (SBI) invited Parties to submit to the Secretariat views on the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Intergovernmental Process (FCCC/SBI/2012/15, paragraph 238). This submission is presented by the Environmental Integrity Group in accordance with that invitation.

In recent years, the UNFCCC process has benefited significantly from the enhancement of the participation of non-state actors. Thanks to the active engagement of Parties, presiding officers, the Secretariat and the different stakeholders, the debates over increased and more effective participation have turned into actual positive actions.

These include a more frequent, deeper interaction among presiding officers – and Parties in general – with stakeholders both in and between sessions; the integration of stakeholders in Parties’ delegations; greater use of observer inputs in workshops, technical meetings, and for the preparation of background documentation; as well as a better use of technological resources for the encouragement of online interaction and transparency in general.

We congratulate ourselves on these actions and their results. However, our process, as well as the challenges we need to tackle, have become more complex and therefore require even further collaboration and input from all sectors of society. The path towards a new legally binding instrument, as well as the implementation of all COP and CMP decisions to reach the global goal, i.e. to keep global warming below 2° C (with respect to preindustrial levels), requires the full participation, commitment and exchange of knowledge and ideas among Parties and stakeholders at various levels.

Stakeholders have a unique practical experience to share with Parties in relevant areas including innovation, technology development and dissemination, finance and investment, emissions mitigation, energy access and efficiency, adaptation and effective, efficient means for measurement, reporting and verification. National governments routinely benefit from this expertise in the development and implementation of climate change policies.

Competent, recognized channels for interactions already exist in a variety of international fora, for example the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), World Intellectual

Property Organization (WIPO), United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), as well as the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), and the OECD's Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC), among others.

Proposal

It is in this spirit that we would like to encourage Parties to work towards the search and implementation of the best practices for a mechanism of dialogue among governments and observer groups, which could be organized by the Secretariat, following the guidance already provided by COP 16 in terms of its decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 7, as well as by SBI 33 (FCCC/SBI/2010/27, paragraphs 141 – 152), SBI 34 (FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 178), and SBI 36 (FCCC/SBI/2012/15).

Such search and implementation of best practices could include the following strategies:

- The formalization of periodic meetings between presiding officers and stakeholders, before and during the formal and informal negotiation sessions.
- Flexibility to invite stakeholders to participate in informal meetings on an *ad hoc* basis, which could be organized by the Secretariat.
- Participation in interactive dialogues in a COP/CMP plenary setting, where views can be officially presented to State Parties.
- Encouragement and support to COP/CMP Presidencies to conduct separate consultations with all constituencies in the lead up to the Conferences, as a means to fully understand specific concerns and proposals.

These four strategies have all been implemented on an *ad hoc* basis by former COP/CMP Presidencies as well as by other presiding officers. The special events of the Co-chairs of the ADP held in Bonn during both the April and June 2013 sessions are a very good example of how positive this type of interaction can be. It allowed a real exchange of ideas and the submission of concrete proposals to the process by observers. It is however important to formalize these meetings, allocating appropriate time and resources so that both stakeholders and national delegations actually engage and benefit from the dialogue.

It is the EIG's firm belief that our process can greatly benefit from improved transparency, participation, dialogue and exchange. Stakeholders are a valuable source of knowledge and ideas and we can definitely benefit from a more open, both formal and informal, interaction amongst all of us.