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# Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings

Responding to FCCC/SBI/2021/L.17 Para. 9

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*Parties and observer organizations to submit views on approaches and initiatives for increasing the efficiency of the UNFCCC process towards enhancing ambition and strengthening implementation*

## **ENHANCED, REGULAR ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS AND OBSERVERS, TO ALIGN SCIENCE INSIGHTS AND PUBLIC POLICY, AND ACCELERATE EVERYDAY CLIMATE ACTION.**

Citizens' Climate<sup>1</sup> educates, coordinates, and represents citizen stakeholders wishing to engage in climate-related policy processes. We believe everyone's chances of success, including governments and industry, are enhanced when the design of our world is shaped by the needs and aspirations of all people. Inclusive civics allows for participatory design, where outcomes are attuned to human need and sustainable wellbeing.

We recognize the practical value of citizen-led, locally rooted climate resilient development policy, to drive climate ambition and action at scale. Nations that can draw on the leadership of local climate action strategies to share knowledge and spread best practices are better positioned to achieve high ambition and real-world climate action as nations.

In 2022, we find ourselves as a global community, facing multiple converging crises. Not only are climate impacts now pervasive, worsening, and compounding; major economic and logistical disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the invasion of Ukraine have rapidly expanded the vulnerability of people around the world to food scarcity, price shocks, and the risks of displacement and destabilization.<sup>2</sup>

The IPCC has made clear<sup>3</sup> that we have no time to lose; we can no longer afford to delay comprehensive climate action. Our emergency measures must align with long-term climate resilience and sustainable inclusive human development, or we will inevitably face crises worse than we know now and which will come faster.

The United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>4</sup> finds we will be experiencing 1.5 disasters per day by 2030. Vulnerability is spreading, getting worse, and

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<sup>1</sup> This submission is prepared by [Citizens' Climate International](https://citizensclimateintl.org) for the Citizens' Climate Education observer delegation. To follow up, please contact the CCI core team at [team@citizensclimateintl.org](mailto:team@citizensclimateintl.org)

<sup>2</sup> These context notes are important, from our standpoint, as framing for the kinds of targeted innovations, and broader outreach and engagement needed to accelerate progress in the UNFCCC process and in the mobilization of nationally determined contributions and related climate action.

<sup>3</sup> We include here our overview of the stark moment of choice we now face, with additional context on the findings of the three IPCC reports released between August 2021 and April 2022: <https://www.citizensclimateintl.news/p/this-is-our-moment-of-choice>

<sup>4</sup> The 2022 United Nations Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction is online at: <https://www.undrr.org/gar2022-our-world-risk>

creating destabilizing ripple effects. The converging crises of climate, COVID, and conflict, and their related and intersecting disruptions,<sup>5</sup> are exacerbating that dangerous trend.

Intergovernmental meetings need to drive climate resilient development solutions that are:

1. actionable now;
2. locally rooted and relevant;
3. inclusive and conducive to improved and sustainable human development.

We recognize the right to inclusive, sustainable human development, and that the Paris Agreement calls for climate action measures to support sustainable development. We also recognize the interconnectedness of many areas of human experience and international processes intended to address specific challenges.

Negotiations need to move from discussions about *whether* action will be taken and in what form to supporting the success of smart, science-based, outcome-oriented climate resilient development strategies.<sup>6</sup> Given the interconnectedness of major challenges and their cascading and compounding effects, sustainable human development needs to be based on high ambition that is coherent across all of those interacting areas of concern.<sup>7</sup>

A practical way to enhance the likelihood of achieving this kind of dynamic is to include stakeholders, not only through major groups and constituencies, but also through local and regional engagement processes and showing clear and replicable examples of locally led climate resilient development.

We developed the Engage4Climate Toolkit<sup>8</sup> to make room for ad hoc, spontaneous or ongoing stakeholder engagement, including through stakeholder-convened climate policy working meetings and experiential education initiatives.

- The Toolkit is one example of the kind of guidance and support that can allow robust, detailed, solutions-oriented stakeholder participation in climate-related decision-making.
- The aim is to foster solutions that are grounded in community-level needs, priorities, and capacities, and can succeed by having built-in public support and resonance in

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<sup>5</sup> The Secretary-General has formed a Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy, and Finance (GCRG) to make sure we address multiple compounding emergencies, in ways that successfully set us up for success in achieving sustainable, resilience-building transformations over the long term. We explore the importance and potential of the GCRG effort here: <https://www.citizensclimateintl.news/p/united-nations-creates-global-crisis>

<sup>6</sup> In 2019, we published a report on the state of play of global climate negotiations, between the SB50 and the COP25, under the heading "Science is not negotiable". The focus of the report was to identify areas of work where nations could rapidly begin to improve their performance against long-term climate commitments, while developing sustainably: <https://resilienceintel.org/2019/07/03/science-is-not-negotiable/>

<sup>7</sup> In 2020, our global network of stakeholders contributed to the development of a list of Principles for Reinventing Prosperity, to map these operational complexities and point to our best chance at achieving an inclusive, sustainable future. We reported on global progress in November 2021: <https://resilienceintel.org/2021/11/03/reinvent-prosperity-include-everyone-secure-the-future/>

<sup>8</sup> The Engage4Climate Toolkit is available online at: <https://ctzn.earth/toolkit>

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the everyday future economy that will define the experience of the contributing stakeholders.

- Such efforts can lead to the creation of community-level cooperative networks and innovation initiatives that expand the potential for alignment of high climate ambition, locally led development, and partnerships at various scales, as outlined under Sustainable Development Goal 17.
- Locally coordinated efforts to advance climate resilient development functionally enhance the overall ability of nations to act with high ambition on an accelerated timeline toward Paris-compliant goals aligned with 1.5°C.

Alongside the participation of stakeholders, the process should prioritize the delivery of actionable science insights into negotiations around both nationally determined and globally shared commitments. Actionable science insights can move discussions past the question of time-frames and toward a closer study of which methods can achieve the most good for people and planet in the compressed window of opportunity in which we now must act.

We recommend treating consideration of agriculture and food systems, for instance, not only in light of carbon emissions from agriculture and land use, but also in terms of their impact on marine ecosystems and ocean resilience, which is an irreplaceable anchor of climate stability.

This requires building into the process of negotiation specific points of entry for science insights, and an agreement that all nations should work toward the highest possible collective ambition.

We need deep just transformations across society to achieve climate action, this is only possible through participatory policy and decision making. The UNFCCC provides a critical space that should enable the necessary shifts inside and outside the negotiation process. The structure and substance of intergovernmental meetings should:

- *Guarantee* people-centered climate action by taking into consideration the protection of human rights;
- *Strengthen* political integrity of the negotiations by preventing private interests to undermine international policy making;
- *Ensure* civic participation in all of the processes by reducing or eliminating closed meetings, including informal-informal, and supporting representation from disadvantaged groups.

Some possible innovations or adjustments that could enhance motivational inclusion of stakeholders and/or accelerate national and international climate-related planning and implementation, include:

1. **Open Dialogues** feeding information from communities around the world into each area of the official process Agenda;
2. An invitation to virtual online and local and regional dialogues including diverse stakeholders, **contributing ideas year-round**, to support higher ambition and successful and sustainable implementation;

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3. A robust and detailed Action for Climate Empowerment process inside the SBs and the COP, to include opening and closing **ACE Plenary sessions with multiple facilitated dialogues** featuring leading examples of successful engagement for higher ambition, wider inclusion, and accelerated implementation;
  4. **ACE Contact Group**<sup>9</sup> meetings to connect stakeholder inputs with distinct areas<sup>10</sup> of the process, including but not limited to Capacity Building, Finance, Agriculture, Ecosystems, Cooperative Implementation, and Transparency;

We cannot afford to treat escalating climate disruption as an issue we can choose whether or not to address. We need to let the voices, insights, ideas, and collaborative strategies that can reduce future threats and build resilience become our shared mission.

To follow up on this submission, or to request further information about any of the recommendations included here, please contact the CCI core team at [team@citizensclimateintl.org](mailto:team@citizensclimateintl.org)

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<sup>9</sup> An ACE Contact Group would be comprised of select Party delegates and Observers, as well as stakeholder representatives not present in the venue but engaging with people in their community setting. Such a Contact Group would serve as a specialized facilitation committee, with the responsibility for keeping open flows of information moving into the process to spread best practices, empower human-scale climate resilient development, and support overall implementation.

<sup>10</sup> We treat these areas of work as broad, cross-cutting areas of human concern, beyond the specific UNFCCC processes.