



Climate Action Network

Submission on the Dialogue on Action for Climate Empowerment scheduled in conjunction with SB 48

February 2018

Climate Action Network (CAN) is the world's largest network of civil society organizations working together to promote government action to address the climate crisis, with more than 1100 members in over 120 countries.

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CAN recommends that the Dialogue on Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) focuses specifically on lessons learned, including needs, gaps and barriers, in relation to the promotion of public awareness, public participation and access to information in the context of specific areas of climate action: adaptation, loss and damage, mitigation, finance, transparency, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building. Additionally, CAN suggests that the following themes be addressed through the programme of the ACE Dialogue: rights-based approaches to ACE, role of the national focal points in relation to public awareness, public participation and access to information, international cooperation and financial support, reporting on ACE activities.

CAN welcomes the opportunity to provide its views on the role of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and topics for the dialogue to be held during SBI 48 regarding the enhancement of the implementation of ACE under the Paris Agreement. As its member organizations are involved in activities related to the six thematic areas of ACE at the local, national and international levels on a day-to-day basis, CAN reiterates its commitment to support ACE implementation and to work with parties to secure the better integration of ACE into climate action.

CAN recalls that Parties stressed the importance for the Dialogue to “take into account needs, gaps and barriers with respect to progress made in implementing the Doha Work Programme”. Parties also directed the Secretariat to ensure that the Dialogues “focus on good practices and lessons learned on integrating the six elements of Article 6 in relation to adaptation, mitigation, finance, transparency, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building” and stressed the importance of the participation of multilateral and bilateral institutions and organizations.¹ CAN believes that this clear mandate should result in a more focused Dialogue at the SB48, addressing the specific issues highlighted by the Parties during the mid-term review of the Doha Work Programme.

Format: The dialogue itself should be organized based on a participatory, gender-responsive and multi-stakeholder approach, ensuring that a great number of participants can intervene and contribute to the discussions. The facilitation of the dialogue should aim to avoid the delivery of statements but focus instead on promoting a truly interactive dialogue, including through the use of multi stakeholder working groups.

Participants: As stressed in previous decisions adopted by Parties, CAN believes that the dialogue would be most successful if the effective participation of the following groups is ensured: youth, civil society experts, governmental delegates and representatives from intergovernmental organizations,

¹ Review of the Doha Work Programme on Article 6 of the Convention: FCCC/SBI/2016/L.15, para 4-6.

such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, multilateral and bilateral institutions and organizations and UN Economic Commissions. CAN also recalls the objective for all UNFCCC events to guarantee gender balance among the participants.

Rights-based approaches as a cross-cutting theme: The Dialogue should address right-based approaches to ACE activities, in particular in relation to the right of access to information and public participation in environmental decision-making. The Dialogue should not only consider good practices related to individual projects and policies but also the experiences and lessons learned with frameworks guaranteeing the systematic implementation of these principles in climate policy, thereby contributing to scaling up ACE implementation. The expertise of intergovernmental experts could provide great insights regarding international frameworks seeking to promote public participation and access to information in climate-related policy-making. Representatives from governments could emphasize their experience with processes and policies aimed at ensuring the guarantee of public participation and access to information at all stages of climate-policy making.

Role of the Focal Points: The nomination of National Focal Points to promote the implementation of ACE at the national level remains one of the most practical outcomes of the Doha Work Programme and CAN welcomes the nomination by many Parties of National Focal Points. The Dialogue should offer an opportunity to discuss the role of the National Focal Points, in relation to public awareness, public participation and access to information, with a focus on needs, gaps and barriers. CAN welcomes the publication of “Guidelines for accelerating solutions through education, training and public awareness,” by the Secretariat and UNESCO, aimed at supporting the work of the National Focal Points for Action for Climate Empowerment. As the guidelines focus primarily on education, training and awareness, a focus on the role National Focal Points in relation to public participation and access to information could help identify tools and support needed to enhance their work on these issues.

International cooperation and financial support for ACE: International cooperation must continue to be addressed as a cross-cutting issue in all activities organised in the context of the Doha Work Programme. The upcoming dialogue could include a specific focus on South-South cooperation in relation to public awareness, public participation, access to information. Capacity Building and financial support have been identified by Parties as keys to ensure the effective implementation and scaling up of the implementation of ACE. International Financial Institutions and climate funds should participate to the dialogue to report on opportunities that these mechanisms offer to support ACE as well as on their experience with the integration of public awareness, public participation and access to information as key inputs.

Reporting: Reporting is a critical tool to promote the review and assessment of policies and the sharing of good practices among parties. CAN believes that the Dialogue should also address experiences and lessons learned in relation to reporting on public awareness, public participation and access to information, for instance building on the experience of parties that reported on these activities in their most recent National Communications.

We thank the secretariat and the Parties invested in ACE-related activities for their commitment to this important workstream and for the inclusive approach through which ACE has been addressed in past years. We look forward to the ACE Dialogue in conjunction with SB 48, and hope that our suggestions can contribute to the development of a good agenda for this Dialogue.

For further information on this submission, please contact:
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