



# Climate Action Network

## Submission on the Workshop 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.*

[www.climatenetwork.org](http://www.climatenetwork.org)

CAN recommends that the workshop on Action for Climate Empowerment during SB 48 focuses specifically on opportunities for ACE activities to strengthen the implementation of the Paris Agreement, thereby avoiding duplication with events held under the Doha Work Programme. CAN calls for the workshop to consider rights-based approaches to ACE in particular, as well as the role of women, youth and indigenous peoples. Building on good practices applied during UNFCCC events, the workshop should be organized in a participatory manner including through multi-stakeholder working groups discussing actions to enhance the implementation of the Paris Agreement through ACE-related activities. The workshop should result both in a consolidated list of actions discussed by the working groups and a report prepared by the Secretariat prior to the next session of the Subsidiary Bodies.

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

CAN believes that the implementation of the Paris Agreement could be strengthened substantially by ensuring that training, public awareness, public participation and access to information are effectively promoted through all stages of the design and the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions. ACE-related processes and activities provide an additional leverage to increase ambition by improving the effectiveness of, and public support for, climate policies and enables stakeholders to develop new climate solutions.

The integration of these elements in the implementation guidelines under the Paris Agreement could ensure that these important levers for climate actions are more systematically exploited to empower and mobilize stakeholders for domestic climate action according to national processes.

### Introduction

Under article 12 of the Paris Agreement, Parties committed to “cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information, recognizing the importance of these steps with respect to enhancing actions under this Agreement.”

The decision adopted by the COP-21 to lay out the work plan enabling the operationalization of the Paris Agreement provided a mandate for the CMA to “explore ways of enhancing the

implementation of training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information so as to enhance actions under the Paris Agreement” (Decision 1/CP.21, para. 83). At COP 23, Parties mandated the organization of a workshop in April/May 2018 to “develop a list of actions to enhance the implementation of the Paris Agreement through ACE-related activities”.

***To ensure that this workshop can best serve its purposes, CAN recommends that the workshop be organized as follows:***

**Purpose of the Workshop:** CAN believes that the workshop will deliver on the mandate provided in para. 83, decision 1/CP.21 if it focuses on how ACE-related activities and processes can strengthen the implementation of the Paris Agreement, such as by exploring the relevance of ACE to the design and implementation of NDCs and of Adaptation Communications. Such an explicit focus on the interlinkages between ACE and the Paris Agreement would also avoid risks that the workshop duplicates conversations taking place under the Doha Work Programme, including during the ACE Dialogues and the Education Days.

**Scope:** CAN believes that all six elements of ACE (climate education, training, awareness raising, public access to information, public participation, and, as a crosscutting theme, international cooperation) are equally essential to support ambitious and effective climate actions. Parties have recognized the importance of ensuring that activities under Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement enhance the implementation of each of the six elements. Consequently, CAN calls on the UNFCCC Secretariat to ensure that the organization of the workshop guarantees that none of these thematic areas become overshadowed by other issues.

**Cross-cutting issues:** The program of the workshop should be designed in a manner allowing it to address the following two cross-cutting issues in order to strengthen and benefit from the linkages between ACE and other international frameworks. Such an integration would promote policy coherence so as to reduce duplication of efforts for Parties. The two cross-cutting issues are:

1. **ACE in the context of the principles reaffirmed in the Paris Agreement:** The Paris Agreement and decision 1/CP.21 explicitly mention the importance of guaranteeing the rights and facilitating the participation of specific groups, including local communities, women, indigenous peoples, children, migrants, persons with disabilities and persons in vulnerable situations. The workshop should address right-based approaches to ACE activities, including in relation to the right of access to information and public participation in environmental decision-making and the right of every child to education on matters related to their environment.
2. **Relation and synergies with other intergovernmental processes:** ACE is linked with and supports other international processes focused on education for sustainable development, including: the World Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); UNESCO's Global Action Programme on ESD; and SDG 4.7, awareness of the public on environmental issues and the promotion of public participation in environmental policy (including, among others, SDG 16.7 and regional processes under the UN Economic Commissions). These synergies could be best considered by inviting experts involved in these processes and frameworks.

**Format:** The workshop should draw on good practices applied in the context of other mandated events held previously under the UNFCCC, such as the ACE Dialogue, the Gender Workshops and the Multi-Stakeholders Workshop related to the Local Community and Indigenous Peoples Platform, including co-facilitation by a member of civil society. To enable the greater exchange of good practices among participants, CAN believes that the workshop should include short plenary sessions

highlighting lessons learned and good practices, followed by interactive conversations among parties and stakeholders around targeted guided questions.

**Participants:** CAN welcomes the decision of Parties at COP 23 for the workshop to include Parties, representatives of relevant bodies established under the Convention, relevant experts, youth, practitioners and stakeholders. The participation of the multilateral and bilateral institutions and organizations, including operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, should also be encouraged.

**Outcomes:** Rapporteurs should be designated for each of the participatory working groups in order to facilitate the identification of “actions to enhance the implementation of the Paris Agreement through ACE-related activities”. Immediately after the workshop, the UNFCCC Secretariat should make available in an INF document the list of activities identified during the workshop clustered around the six elements of the Doha Work Programme. A report from the entire workshop should be prepared by the Secretariat prior to the next session of the Subsidiary Bodies (ie. prior to the August/September session if parties decides that such a session is required).

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 workshop in conjunction with SB 48, and hope that our suggestions could contribute to a good agenda for this workshop.

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