

***Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation special event on observer organizations***

**Options for new channels for observer organizations to provide formal inputs into the high-level segments of Conference of the Parties and Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties sessions  
Monday, 5 December 2011**

**Summary of the event**

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1. A special event was held in Durban, South Africa, on 5 December 2001, on behalf of the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), to develop options for new channels which would allow observer organizations to provide formal inputs into the high-level segments of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (CMP) sessions. The special event was attended by approximately 100 participants and included presentations from a Party and several observer constituencies. It also included a ‘poetry slam’, a term used to indicate an open forum for discussion. Participants discussed a range of ideas and options with a view to facilitating consideration of the matter by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its thirty-sixth session (SBI 36).

**Background**

2. At SBI 33, Parties adopted conclusions on ways to enhance the existing means of engagement for observer organizations, particularly ways to increase opportunities for interventions and other substantive inputs. It also recognized the need to take into account best practices from other processes within the United Nations system and requested the secretariat to keep such practices under review. The SBI also agreed to convene an in-session workshop at SBI 34 to further develop ways to enhance the engagement of admitted observer organizations.<sup>1</sup>

3. The in-session workshop, held in Bonn, Germany, on 8 June 2011, produced a report for consideration by the SBI at its thirty-fourth session.<sup>2</sup> Parties subsequently adopted conclusions based on the range of proposals contained in this report.<sup>3</sup> The SBI also agreed to continue, at its thirty-sixth session, its discussion on a proposal regarding new channels for observers to provide formal inputs into the COP and CMP joint high-level segments.<sup>4</sup> Upon the adoption of the conclusions, the Chair announced that a special event to elaborate ideas under this proposal would be held at COP 17/CMP 7.

**Report on the special event**

4. The SBI Chair, Mr. Robert Owen-Jones (Australia), recalled the discussions at SBI 33 and SBI 34 and expressed hope that the SBI conclusions from these sessions would genuinely enhance the substantive engagement of observer organizations. He also recalled that, at those sessions, Parties and observers had already discussed a range of proposals on observer participation. The special event would therefore focus specifically on exploring possible ways to

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<sup>1</sup> FCCC/SBI/2010/27, paragraph 152.

<sup>2</sup> FCCC/SBI/2011/INF.7.

<sup>3</sup> FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraphs 168–179.

<sup>4</sup> FCCC/SBI/2011/7, paragraph 179.

improve the formal inputs from observer organizations into the high-level segments of the COP and CMP sessions.

5. In their presentations, participants highlighted the guiding principles for implementing any new approaches or channels for enhancing observer inputs, including the following:

- (a) Keeping inclusivity and openness as an overarching goal;
- (b) Recognizing that different constituencies need different approaches to maximize their inputs;
- (c) Coordinating any new channels for formal inputs with existing means for informal inputs;
- (d) Allowing sufficient space for observer inputs to reach a level of sophistication appropriate for ministers, rather than limiting their inputs to brief plenary statements.

Some participants highlighted proposals that would enhance inputs into the overall UNFCCC process, which could in turn improve inputs into the COP/CMP high-level segments and ultimately help to facilitate proposal implementation. For example, an observer forum could create a platform for enhancing overall substantive engagement, while a new pilot mechanism for observer participation could help to provide observer inputs on the key issues of finance and technology.

6. Participants also discussed the possibility of improving high-level segment inputs through annual ministerial round tables on specific issues. The Chair noted that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference)<sup>5</sup> would hold round table discussions that could provide examples of good practice. It was noted that high-level round tables between ministers and mayors to discuss proposal implementation could create a sense of progress. One speaker welcomed any new channel that allows observers to interact with ministers on the role of research, science and the implication of the policy choices. Interspersing observer statements throughout the high-level segment, rather than grouping them at the end, was also proposed. The Chair recalled that this approach had been successfully used by the SBI. Other suggestions included increased observer participation in ministerial luncheons and dinners, as well as workshops and special events.

7. The discussion also included a number of new and creative ideas, such as: youth constituency ‘shadows’ for negotiators; ‘paper Twitters’, a daily printed collection of short messages from observers; ‘speed dating’ with negotiators, which would consist of short, rapid interviews between observers and delegates; a ‘hot seat’ interview session for each delegation to answer questions on their actions; and ‘flash mob’ plenary events to energize the traditional plenary discussions. Other proposals called for an improved Negotiator “smart phone app”, which should provide the ability to scroll quickly through negotiating text, as well as increased virtual participation, crowd sourcing and online games as means of sharing best practices. Some participants also called for the increased use of on-screen editing of text under negotiation.

8. The ‘poetry slam’ provided a number of proposals, including: publishing a joint constituency report that would capture ideas from all groups and indicate to ministers the level of support on a range of issues and statements; developing ways to provide immediate feedback during the high-level segment; and developing a common statement agreed by all observer

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<sup>5</sup> The conference, to be held from 20–22 June 2012, will mark the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the tenth anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa.

constituencies for presentation during the high-level segment, which could provide a positive signal to ministers.

9. A number of participants called for a round table or forum that would allow observers to engage with ministers as equal partners and build relationships, such as those used at the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council. The process of presenting ideas and responding to questions helps to build relationships with ministers and consensus around ideas. It was noted that a round table or forum would possibly lead to a joint declaration or agreed statement. Approaches from other intergovernmental processes were also highlighted, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. These processes have held open dialogue sessions where observers made presentations and then engaged in dialogue with ministers. The sessions were organized around different thematic areas chosen by civil society and were considered to have been successful by most participants. It was also noted that any new formal interactions should be adequately reflected in the official reports of the COP and CMP sessions.

10. Some participants noted that new social media should serve as a template for all communications with observers. Messages should be delivered as succinctly as possible, as lengthy formal statements and complicated texts were not helpful. Some noted that, unlike the national level, observer organizations at UNFCCC sessions were not currently treated as serious partners. However, establishing an international forum for interaction with ministers could help. Some speakers also encouraged Parties to include observers in their delegations, while simultaneously acknowledging that this can hinder the ability of Parties to fully represent their constituencies.

11. Participants also recalled their proposals from earlier discussions and expressed hope that they would be adopted by Parties as soon as possible. These proposals included increasing the number of open sessions, and the time allowed for interventions in contact groups and informal consultations. Other ideas included a voluntary trust fund to help finance participation by observers and a review of commitments by Parties for observer action.

## **Attachment 1**

### **Submission from LGMA**

Durban, 5 December 2011,

#### **SBI Chair Special Event on Observer Organisations**

LGMA input on ways for observer organizations to provide formal inputs into the COP/CMP high-level segment

- For the first time in the UNFCCC history, Parties recognized local and subnational governments as “governmental stakeholders” in Para.7 of Cancun Agreements
- As one of the 3 oldest UNFCCC observer constituencies, local governments and municipal welcome this decision and would like to take it forward.
- In Durban, we are seeking for appropriate ways for implementation of para.7 so that governmental stakeholders are engaged in both decision making and implementation of climate regime
- We feel that introducing formal ways to COP/CMP high level segment can provide a significant contribution full implementation of the concept of “governmental stakeholders” and therefore welcome the discussions that have been organised by the current SBI Chair

On behalf of LGMA, we see the following options

- 1) During each High Level Segment of the COP, the organization of a High Level Special Session organized by the COP Presidency with the other lines of government such as Mayors, Governors and Parliamentarians (Governmental Stakeholders) as was done at COP16 under the Mexican Presidency
- 2) At each COP, the organization of a Ministerial/Mayoral-Governor Roundtables during COP/CMP

Finally, in relation to the notion of improved international governance for sustainable development as part of the Rio +20 process (input to Zero draft)

- 3) The introduction of the concept of “obligatory consultation”, similar to the existing practice at multilateral level, such as in the Committee of the Regions of the EU

Gino Van Begin, Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI for LGMA

## **Attachment 2**

### **Submissions from BINGOs (Special Event presentation and SBI Plenary statement)**

#### **The Right Place and Time for Enhancing Engagement of Business and Industry**

##### **—Responsive to SBI consideration of enhancing the engagement of observer organizations**

##### **—Recognizing the UNFCCC is not just meetings**

- A U.N. Agency with ongoing work and secretariat

##### ☐ **Evolving with the UNFCCC Process**

- Operationalizing new architecture

##### ☐ **Business references in BAP and relevant to implementation- and market-related agenda items**

##### ☐ **Multiple Forms of enhancing the Engagement of Business and Industry**

- at meetings and in between meetings
- formal and informal
- working and high level

##### ☐ **Continuity and efficiency**

- Avoiding anecdotal “one off” inputs without staying power
- Allowing business to self-organize removes burden from Secretariat

##### **—Ensure transparency and good governance**

Established consultative networks like BIAC or IOE operate through national affiliates and networks that promote targeted contribution and communication in both directions

#### **Proposal to Strengthen Business Engagement**

##### **—Business Consultative Channel**

- Recognized/utilized by UNFCCC, governments, Secretariat
- A multi-window structure across issues and institutions
- Business organized and funded
- Coordinating/reinforcing
- Next Step: Pilot or Demonstration phase for the GCF and/or Technology Mechanism**

##### ☐ **High-level sessions:**

- Roundtable format – a discussion that informs the ministers’ consideration
- Substantive dialogue – continuity vs. anecdotal one-off

◦Building “the house” from the bottom up – based on ongoing and consistent interactions at “working level”

UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies Meeting – COP17  
SBI Plenary/BINGO STATEMENT, 29 November 2011

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Thank you Mr. Chair. My name is Norine Kennedy and I am speaking for business groups attending COP17.

SBI is taking up several issues important to business and industry, including how to pursue better understanding of economic and social consequences and enhancing technology dissemination and financing.

But in the short time here today we will concentrate on one issue, that of observer organization engagement where we believe that the private sector can provide a valuable resource to the UNFCCC, through the Secretariat and to Parties and groups, in a wide range of topical areas such as finance and technology for mitigation and adaptation, markets, MRV and REDD+.

Business welcomes the discussions and workshop under the SBI on enhanced stakeholder engagement. They highlighted the important role of stakeholders, and we thank you Mr. Chair, Parties and the Secretariat for your willingness to discuss enhancing existing practices.

The private sector will continue to provide input through existing modes, ongoing informal exchanges, public-private sector dialogues and workshops. We appreciate the possibility of attending some informal meetings and the high level sessions here in Durban. We continue to believe that new channels for input from observer organizations are warranted, as the Convention moves into implementation and creates new structures which will depend on connections and partnerships with business and others to be effective.

For business, participation is more than short statements in sessions. We participate in the implementation of Parties’ decisions, but we can also add value by taking part in the design of new institutional architecture and by being able to utilize it.

We are willing to go further to provide more structured, consolidated input and expertise wherever Parties believe it can provide a resource. Business and industry encourages the UNFCCC to be open to practical, effective, and substantive ways of drawing on business expertise and information throughout the process to support and inform implementation – and particularly in dedicated new structures such as the Technology Mechanism and Climate Fund.

Going forward, we will continue to seek your views and will make every effort to enhance engagement of business responsive to your needs and recommendations. One way to do this collaboratively could be for the SBI to invite submissions from governments and others

on how to frame a demonstration or pilot phase for a recognized business channel for such enhanced engagement for business, for example with respect to the Technology Mechanism.

We look forward to hearing your ideas as we continue this dialogue.

I thank You, Mr. Chair.

### Attachment 3

#### Submission from YOUNGOs

#### **SBI Chair special event: Options for new channels for observer organizations to provide formal inputs into the high-level segments of COP and CMP sessions**

The event will seek to exchange constructive ideas on new channels for enhancing formal inputs into the COP/CMP high-level segments.

We are grateful for this opportunity to discuss channels to provide input in the high level segments of negotiations at COP17. Tonight we will share a few of our ideas and are looking forward to building a constructive dialogue with the SBI. However, there are other channels of input to which we would give higher priority to for improvement. The issues we will raise here are meant more as suggestions for access in general, rather than specifically to the high-level segment:

To begin,

we request that all processes for stakeholder input must follow basic standards. They should be:

- inclusive: everybody in the process should be empowered to contribute in the same way and at the same level,
- representative: all affected and vulnerable groups should have a constituency,

many of these basic standards are already fulfilled, and we are grateful for the pro-active stance taken by the Secretariat to ensure and encourage the access of Youth. However, to improve this further, we urge you to start removing barriers against stakeholder input and participation through:

- Allowing for more opportunities and time for interventions to be made available as standard practise. The youth have a lot to say, but not enough of a platform from which we can be heard. We want to be able to provide our input in the consultation process, particularly during contact groups and informals - the moments when decisions are being made and negotiations are really taking place. Even if not as a formal negotiator, we would love the opportunity to make an opening intervention and then let negotiators take the floor.

Also, in regards to closed meetings, we really appreciate how much you yourself encourage openness in meetings, but we were thinking that it would be great if standard practice for all chairs could ask meetings

Also, in regards to actions:

While we fully recognize that there needs to be security framework in place concerning what we can and cannot do in actions within the COP, we disagree with the current degree of restriction. For instance, the number of participants to an action is currently restricted to an upper limit of 15 people. Fifteen, in the eyes of the youth, is seen as far too small to give the youth voice acceptable visibility. We ask that a restriction not be revoked, but alleviated, to allow an increased number of youth participants alongside.



### **Suggestions, especially related to technological solutions:**

- There should be integration of on-screen edited text and webcasts at meetings with the negotiator app
- We would appreciate the dissemination of NGO and party contributions to the high level plenary in the same manner, ideally electronically and in a very timely manner
- Web/audio cast open informals and contact groups
- How about even having interventions delivered by webcast or meetings inclusive of external online external stakeholders, which would allow greater access for young people to contribute to the process

And finally, a few more creative ideas that would really liven up things around here:

How about: 'YOUNGO shadows', and 'Paper Twitter'. 'YOUNGO Shadows' could be an arrangement that would permit YOUNGO delegates to follow and 'shadow' negotiators during the high level segment—especially during the latter half of the negotiations when a stronger sense of urgency sets in and more prominent members of delegations arrive to participate. The 'Paper Twitter' venture, whereby each constituency would be quoted 50 words a day to deliver sound bites of ideas and proposals, would be gathered into a single publication and distributed to all delegations promoting a new, accessible, level platform for the communication of ideas for all. 'Paper Twitter,' in addition to 'YOUNGO Shadows' would provide more integration, education, and access between the youth and negotiators.

- And how about Speed-dating sessions - youth given the chance to meet negotiators for 2 mins max one on one during COPs etc.
- Maybe even A YOUNGO hot seat - where we could pick one country each day to have a YOUNGO meeting with to ask them what they have been doing in the negotiations and why they are not doing what we want...
- Or even Truth or dare for negotiators - we have meetings with negotiators, and we can ask them to tell us the "truth" or force them to do a "dare".
- And finally, we were inspired by SBI's closing plenary and would love to see more Flash Mob plenaries! We're here to energize these negotiations and we'd be happy to have more from hereon in.

We find it imperative that victims of climate change are given access to level a platform to share their personal insight and experiences to those in the high plenary, and also note that any new channels created should not take away from pre-existing ones—we urge improvement, but not replacement.

#### **Attachment 4**

### **RINGOs Submission to the SBI Special Event on Observer Engagement**

The Research and Independent NGOs, the RINGO constituency, includes researchers from academia, think tanks, and NGOs who are involved in studying virtually any aspect of climate change, from physical impacts to human behavioral responses. We seek to inform the policy process, to assist in evaluating the implications of various policy alternatives, and to provide sound and relevant science and social science for use by negotiators.

The RINGOs present a statement each year at the end of the High Level Statement (HLS). Our purpose is to remind those on the political side of climate change of the importance grounding the climate debate in science, and to offer assistance in conducting, understanding, and applying research to climate policy decisions.

We appreciate the annual opportunity to speak to the HLS. Even more, we appreciate efforts by the SBI Chair to make constituency statements more visible to the political representatives to the HLS. We are interested in pursuing other approaches to constituency involvement, both in the HLS and elsewhere. To that end, we offer the following suggestions.

- Different constituencies have different goals, skills. Different channels of communication may need to be devised for different constituencies.
- Constituency statements are scheduled at times when they are unlikely to be heard (at the end of the plenary, at 2:00 a.m., etc.) They might get more attention if they were interspersed throughout the HLS.
- SBSTA has held technical workshops with observer input that have been quite successful. We support the scheduling of similar workshops in the future, with participation by civil society.
- The constituencies often have an opportunity to interact with ministers through a limited number of tickets to ministerial events such as lunches and dinners. We appreciate these opportunities to interact with ministers, and hope to receive similar invitations in the future.

## Attachment 5

### **Comments by Naghmeh Nasiritousi (Linköping University) at the Special Event on Observer Organizations on the topic of Observer Inputs into the COP/CMP High--Level Segments, 5 December 2011.**

In order for the expertise and diversity of views from observers to be channeled into the COP and CMP joint high-level segment, formal mechanisms in the form of *focused roundtables* and a *joint constituency report* presented at the high-level segment is proposed.

The aim of these formal mechanisms would be to encourage joint problem-solving and create an infrastructure of networks of cooperation between the public and the private (for-profit and non-profit) sectors.

The roundtables would be inclusive and focused on thematic dialogue, the outcome of which would be entered into the official record of the meetings. Here the multi-stakeholder dialogues in the Commission on Sustainable Development could be a model to look at. Roundtables may for instance be held at the pre-COP Ministerial Meetings in order to foster deliberation at an early stage.

The joint constituency report would include 1-2 pages of clear and concise messages written jointly by all constituencies. Level of agreement and importance of each statement could be indicated using the model of IPCC reports (high, moderate, low agreement etc). In addition, each constituency would forward their own concerns and proposals in 1-2 pages per constituency. The joint constituency report would be presented to Ministers at the opening of the high-level segment. As the RINGO constituency is an independent organization, they may consider working as facilitators for such a report. Such a report could provide direction by highlighting areas where agreement is high amongst constituencies and also foster greater understanding for the different positions held in the negotiations.

In conclusion, in addition to the informal mechanisms employed by observers, it is important to also make available formal mechanisms in order for all constituencies to have a mechanism for channeling their ideas into the process effectively.

**Attachment 6**

**Haiku from the ENGOs for the Special Event Poetry Slam**

More open sessions  
Speak one-on-one with leaders  
Listen to us more

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