



*Citizen participation and
transnational advocacy
networks:*

*Raising the voice of marginalized
groups in UN processes.*



**CITIZENS'
GLOBAL
PLATFORM**

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United Nations Headquarters in New York City. Photo: UN Photo.

Citizens' Global Platform

This leaflet illustrates the key results of Citizens' Global Platform's (GCP) project "Making marginalized voices heard in the UN processes". During the period 2009-2012 the work of Citizens' Global Platform concentrated on three themes: citizen participation, marginalized groups and climate change. CGP has got national platforms in four countries, namely Brazil, Finland, India and Tanzania.

Marginalized groups' contexts vary from one country to another, but most often they include people, whose livelihoods are the first to be affected by the negative impacts of climate change, such as changes in weather patterns (e.g. unpredictability of rainy and dry seasons), and the increase of extreme weather events. At the same time these communities, e.g. indigenous people, fisher communities and small-scale farmers, most of whom are rural women in the Global South, have little to do with the causes of the problem.

In order to identify and implement sustainable solutions to the climate crisis, it is vital to take these voices seriously in the core circles of decision-making. It has been documented time after time that the rights of marginalized groups have been overrun by states' or companies' interest to exploit natural resources in unsustainable manner. In principle the UN processes, and the international treaties negotiated within them, provide the best safeguard mechanisms for these groups. These channels, however, have not always been used in the best possible ways. The purpose of this leaflet is to provide a tool for civil society actors to take better advantage of them.

The material presented here is based on national studies conducted in the four countries. It focuses on the effectiveness of participation in climate policy-making processes and on literature review on international experiences of participating in the UN processes, as well as on the influence mechanisms of transnational advocacy networks. The ideas have been discussed in various seminars and lecture series. The educational and dialogue workshops have brought together more than a thousand community members, grassroots activists, NGO representatives, trade union leaders, politicians, civil servants and researchers. The outcome of these discussions is clear: in order to find sustainable solutions, the highly material and energy intensive Western economic and technological model of development needs to be altered and the currently marginalized voices listened to.

The CGP project has also produced material about Northern indigenous peoples' observations on weather changes (poster series and booklets together with Snow-change Cooperative), information kit on climate change and climate policy processes, a DVD about the impacts of climate change in India, Brazil and Tanzania, booklet for civil society capacity-building in Tanzania, book on the effects of dams to indigenous Sámi in Finland, and a report compiling together the messages from CGP India's various events. More information is available at <http://www.globalplatform.fi>.

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Introduction

International negotiations, especially the climate negotiations, are highly complex processes that involve a huge variety of actors, sub-processes and related processes. In order to be effective, the actors must first crystallize where and how do they optimally come in.

Agenda-setting often starts months, if not years before the forthcoming meeting. After the initial draft, it is difficult for civil society actors to insert new issues on the negotiation table. Bringing in new issues at a late stage of negotiation process often risks opening up items that have already been agreed upon. If a full package is opened, then other items within that package may become a subject to renegotiations as well. This may result in endless negotiations process and should therefore be avoided. Sometimes this comes as a disappointment for grassroots activ-

ists, who get interested in the process closer to the actual negotiations and wait until the key meeting in order to bring their message out.

In order to facilitate the identification of possible entry points for civil society actors, we first look briefly at the main questions and structures of citizen participation in the UN processes. After that we have divided the UN process participation into three sections. First, we take a look at the three stages of UN negotiations, namely agenda-setting, negotiations and implementation. Secondly we look at the roles states and state coalitions generally take in these stages. Thirdly, we present the possibilities of influencing these processes through transnational advocacy networks.

It is essential to keep in mind that in practice we are dealing with dy-

Photo: UN Photo.



dynamic processes, not stable structures. However, simplifying them in this way we hopefully help to illustrate the big picture of the negotiations and assist new civil society actors join in, and old ones to consider new partnerships. In this leaflet we have mostly used the case of climate negotiations, but many

of the aspects as applicable to other UN processes too. In the last section of the leaflet, we give some practical examples of raising the voice of the indigenous people through international advocacy networks and on the importance of the UN in the defense of the rights of indigenous people.

Stakeholder participation in the UN

Information Box 1. Major Groups

There are nine Major Groups:

- Women
- Children and Youth
- Indigenous People
- NGOs
- Farmers
- Local Authorities
- Workers and Trade Unions
- Business and Industry
- Scientific and Technological Community

The 1990's witnessed a rise in the level of international activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations and the Rio de Janeiro Summit on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 played a major role in the formalization of the role of the non-state actors in international processes.

The Major Groups were identified in Agenda 21 and they form the basis of stakeholder participation. Agenda 21 and the principle 10 of the Rio Declaration set the guidelines for participation at the UN meetings.

Participation is also enshrined in different UN Conventions, such as Article 6 of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which calls for Parties to promote and facilitate 'public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses', and Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which is the most advanced in terms of the inclusion of indigenous people.

More information on the CBD Working Group on Article 8(j) and the outcomes is available at: <http://www.cbd.int/traditional/outcomes.shtml>.

Different actors do well by asking what can I use this process for? The question might seem too simple at first, but in situation where tens of thousands civil society actors take part in the same processes, it is self-evident that

actors have different backgrounds, goals, and therefore different expectations from the process. The first step is to assess whether your current resources and skills suit best mobilizing the process from inside, e.g. through



Rally to convey message on climate change in Durban 2011. Photo courtesy of CGP Tanzania.

participating in national and international preparatory processes, or from outside. In the latter case, raising your priorities to the general discussion is done through symbolic actions, such as media and showcasing examples how the implementation can be conducted in line with your priorities (either exposing bad or illustrating good examples). The 'inside' and 'outside' approaches are of course compatible, but making a clear distinction helps to crystallize, who to work with, and how to find the best channels to proceed with your priorities.

For actors with limited resources, the best solution to avoid double work is to identify existing, relevant networks, and promote your positions among those, if possible. Transnational advocacy networks have proven effective tools, when the actors, who constitute the network, manage to agree on a clear common goal, and do

well the division of tasks. The Center on Law and Globalization summarize the work of Keck and Sikkink (1998) eloquently: "The fact that advocacy networks are networks does not make them unique. What makes transnational advocacy networks so important is their advocacy. They campaign on behalf of principled causes, sets of values and ideas, vulnerable constituencies or environments." It is good to keep in mind that there are many other networks and organizations with possible contradicting interests and more coherent positions to influence on international law and policy. Many actors may have significantly more resources for lobbying. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to find the right entry points and to be able to differentiate between things that can be dealt with within certain UN process and things that fall outside of that arena and have to be addressed through other means.

Sources: Center on Law and Globalization:

http://clg.portalxm.com/library/keytext.cfm?keytext_id=113

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

The three stages of the UN negotiation process

1) Agenda-setting

- Gathering of information, framing the problem.
- Election of officers for the meeting, agreement on organizational issues.
- National preparatory processes start; inputs for the draft text, inter-ministerial preparation committees and Major Groups' input. Sometimes in addition to inter-ministerial committees there are wider national consultative committees with Major Groups representatives included.
- Note that European Union member states participate simultaneously in national position forming and EU position forming processes. Try to find out, which countries are either leading or blocking certain EU positions, and contact networks in those countries for national lobbying support.

2) Negotiations

- Preparation of initial draft outcome text by the Secretariat or Chair.
- > See Annex 1 on page 28: The

Climate Change Secretariat and Convention Bodies of the United Nations' Framework Convention for Climate Change, UNFCCC, and figures 1 and 2 on page 30–31.

- Integration of agreed changes and proposals by the Secretariat, the Chair or a facilitator.
- Proposals for deletions of existing text or additions of new text are marked with square brackets (or equivalent) and a revised text is distributed.
- Additional rounds of negotiation. Square brackets are removed from the text as delegates reach agreement. The issues that don't reach consensus are left for the Ministers to decide at the final days of the meeting. For example in climate negotiation this takes usually place in early December at the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/CMP).
- The final text, adopted by consensus. Note: the consensus principle was highly debated in the case of the Cancún meeting in 2011, UNFCCC COP16.

*The Crane conference.
Photo: Eero Murtomäki.*



3) Implementation/regime strengthening or weakening

- For legally binding instruments; ratification so that the international agreement and the national laws are in harmony.
- Reporting, monitoring, reviewing

of implementation and adequacy, and financing of the actions.

- New protocols to strengthen the regime (new round from agenda-setting), or withdrawal of a Party from the regime (e.g. Canada's withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol).

→ Action points:

- Get familiar with the terminology. UN processes demand familiarity with the language used. A good starting point is the UN Multilingual Terminology Database <http://unterm.un.org/>. It provides not only the glossary of terms and acronyms, but also references to their origins of term in the UN system and cross-references between forums, where it is used.
- Remember that the devil is in the details. Look for possible loopholes in implementation already at the negotiation stage. Knowledge of the assumptions behind calculations, the implications of chosen baseline years etc. helps to assess the potential implications of the agreement.
- Critical questions to be asked: Is there action identified? Who should do it? Are there timetables? Where do the resources come from? What are the monitoring mechanisms?

More information:

- Intergovernmental Negotiations and Decision Making at the United Nations: A Guide. 2007 Second Edition. UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) with Gretchen Sidhu. <http://www.un-ngls.org>
- UN Stakeholder Forum organizes courses on lobbying and has produced excellent material: www.stakeholderforum.org

Information Box 2. The power of verbs

“Thriving in the UN requires not just political skill, but also a finely tuned understanding of the nuances and balance of language. Not all negotiated UN documents are legally binding, but delegates are schooled in containing anything that might later prove politically problematic.

They look at language from several perspectives. One is the position of a word or sentence within the document as a whole. Text appearing in an operative paragraph, which requires action, has a different weight than text in a preambular paragraph, which is meant to provide mainly background information.

A common point of contention is over the choice of a verb—one of the most powerful parts of speech. Verbs determine different levels of commitment to an issue or action, and when delegates disagree with a proposal but sense they won't be able to eliminate it, they often counter by watering down the verbs. Such verbs include: endorse, decide, welcome, call upon, invite, encourage, recognize, acknowledge, reaffirm, express concern, take note with appreciation, and take note.

Perhaps almost as important as verbs are adverbs. The use of 'as appropriate' can strip a sentence or clause of any meaning or importance.”

Source: UNCTAD/NGLS/280 Intergovernmental Negotiations and Decision Making at the United Nations: A Guide. 2007, p. 75.

The full book is available online at:

http://www.un-ngls.org/IMG/pdf/DMUN_Book_PAO_WEB.pdf

Roles that states and state coalitions take in the negotiation process

1) Progressive states or state coalitions that take the lead

- Lead by example: take unilateral actions and demonstrate the benefits of early action.
- Use their diplomatic clout to get an international organization to identify the issues as priority (at the agenda-setting stage) and encourage action on the ground in other countries to support the progress in negotiation and implementation stage.
- Make a diplomatic demarche to a

state that is threatening to a veto. This is most effective when the state has real power in the realm of international policy. In other cases coalition building can help to make the point. For example countries that have high moral ground to demand action e.g. the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) have been active in climate policy and good at coalition building.

- Produce and call attention to research that defines the problem and demonstrates its urgency.
- Rely on the worldwide network of

NGOs to support its position in other countries and at international conferences.

- Seek to educate public about its targets.
- Pledge to commit financial or technical resources to the solution of the problem.

2) Supporting states

- Passive supporters: can support progressive proposals, but are unlikely to initiate them.

3) Swing states

- Countries, who have relatively big role in causing the problem or finding the solutions to it, but for whom the negotiation agenda is not a national priority. However, they can bargain to get national concessions in order to become supporting states. A classical example is Russia's road to the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol where

it coupled the process with concessions concerning e.g. the forest carbon sinks and also to other international processes such as support for its WTO membership.

- The other group of swing states is those, who need the multilateral agreement in long term, but have strong reservations to some aspects to it.

- Many countries use the swing state position as a bargaining position during some or many aspects of the process. They become supporting states when they get the price for going along with an agreement and do not insist on a concession that would significantly weaken the regime.

4) Veto or blocking state

- Either opposes a proposed environmental regime outright for domestic or ideological reasons (USA being the classical example), or tries to weaken it to the point that it cannot be effective.

Source: The categorization is adapted from the one used by Gareth Porter, Janet Welsh Brown & Pamela Chasek in “Global Environmental Politics”. 2000. Westview Press: Colorado and Oxford. 3rd Edition.

Mechanisms that transnational advocacy networks can use to influence the state positions

1) Information politics

Provision of reliable information in timely and attractive manner is the key to the success of transnational advocacy networks.

In the agenda-setting stage civil society plays an important role in “building the case” for issues to be taken

to the international agenda. Transnational advocacy networks work best, if they have reliable access to the grassroots and channels to provide that information into the international level. In addition to raising the information from within their own networks, civil society actors can catalyze the process by e.g. commissioning research in order

to popularize scientific information and use that to highlight the potential dangers of not acting.

In the negotiation stage those civil society actors, who effectively use the “insider participant” position, work e.g. via briefing key negotiators, providing text drafts, briefing the media and catalyzing coalition building.

Insiders add value to the process, and increase their own role, by being able to tell, for example, why certain issues are being blocked, where are the leverage points and possible bargaining grounds etc. They need to have good personal connections, and credibility, which grows, if they are part of an effective transnational network.

Another key channel for providing information is the “translation” of the negotiations to the other actors and general public. Good examples of this kind of work are the daily ECO magazines (<http://www.climate-network.org/eco-blog>) published by the Climate Action Network and the Earth Negotiation Bulletin published by IISD (<http://www.iisd.ca/enbvol/enb-background.htm>).

“Translation” can and should take place also within your network. People from different countries can help to make each other understand why certain issues are bracketed (national political situation, cultural background that can help to understand the way negotiators act, historical background of the positions taken in the negotiations etc.).



The booklet produced by CGP Tanzania 2011. Photo: courtesy of CGP Tanzania.



Participants in Civil Society Pre-COP17 meeting in 2011. Photo: courtesy of CGP Tanzania.



Community member reading CGP Tanzania's information leaflet, which tells about climate change and climate policies in Swahili. Photo: courtesy of CGP Tanzania.

Action points

- ➔ Early actions prior to the meetings e.g. commissioning research, seminars with potential key people to support your viewpoints, debates in the national Parliaments prior to UN meetings, media coverage highlighting your cases (best practices & worst cases that need to be changed).
- ➔ Access to national preparatory processes, connections with the Bureau and the Secretariat of the Meeting help you to raise your points in the right venues at the right time. Coordinate your actions with other relevant actors when taking part in these processes.
- ➔ The biggest advantage of being present in the meeting is the opportunity to use the informal communication channels. Know the people, who to contact, take part in informal opportunities for discussing with them (receptions, side events, coffee bars etc.) CHECK: can you justify your participation for yourself and for your network?
- ➔ Ensure NGO places in the delegation and attendance in the inter-departmental meetings before the meeting.
- ➔ Get accredited to the conference in time (the deadline is often months before the conference).
- ➔ Hold regular meetings (daily when necessary) with the actors at home via Skype or telephone conference, if possible. It also increases the interest and commitment of NGOs at home to follow and support your points as well as to make their points known to you.
- ➔ Take part in the international coalitions' meetings.
- ➔ Since your network is not the only one engaged in lobbying and other interest groups have more vested agendas, work in the long run on the transparency of the lobbying rules e.g. for a system requiring politicians to report openly about their meetings with interest groups.

2) Symbolic politics

Using media to raise also the general public's interest is vital in order to "build a case" for action at all stages. In order to make the complexity of issues accessible to the general public, the message has to be narrowed down.

→ Framing the issues in innovative ways so that the message reaches to the target audience. Well planned actions in national capitals can really drive the point home to the negotiators, if those can illustrate, what are the countries doing in the international field, or what are they not doing when they are supposed to act.

→ Effective campaigns motivate and mobilise people, do not educate them in general. Useful information about campaign strategies can be found at: <http://www.campaignstrategy.org/>.

3) Leverage politics

Leverage politics is often the most efficient way of protection the rights for the marginalized communities, when everything else has failed. It means calling on a stronger actor, e.g. a foreign state, a donor, UN or other actor, that holds leverage power to the state violating the rights, and who can intervene when the affected group is not able to defend itself through the national mechanisms.

More generally, leverage politics can refer to any action, where the leverage of a person or a group is used to promote a cause

4) Accountability politics

Accountability politics means simply being a watch-dog and holding politicians and enterprises accountable for what they have promised to do. International agreements and national legislation form the backbone for this action. Therefore it is important that they should be as good as possible, and implemented and monitored properly

Voluntary measures for reporting are a start, because without any publicly available and reliable data, it is impossible to see, what is taking place.

However, it needs to be ensured that the environmental and social justice issues are fully integrated to the core functions of the actor, not just something reported separately for PR purposes.

In addition to elections and direct contact with politicians, citizens of democratic countries can raise their priority issues through addresses, demonstrations and media stories. Especially the increased access to and use of social media has made it easier for people all over the world to participate in on-line activism e.g. in international petitions by Avaaz.

Source: Categorization adapted from the one used by Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. in "Activists beyond borders: advocacy networks in international politics". 1998. Cornell University Press: New York.

Action points:

- Consider if there are others who could deliver your message more effectively to the target audience e.g. if you hear an interesting point made in a side event, try to get your negotiator working on the issue to meet with the person, who originally proposed the idea you support.
- Be creative in finding people/ groups, who can support the point you want to make e.g. celebrities, top researchers, and progressive business people. They can reach larger audiences than your traditional base of support.
- Especially in cases of human rights violations, use the channels of the existing UN system.



Photo courtesy of CGP Tanzania.

BOX 3: Examples of analyzing the pros and cons of an action during UN meeting

| | Pros | Cons | Resulting Actions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Official UN Program Event | Inclusion in official UN Program of Work; Increased visibility, Greater opportunity for support and participation from government delegations and UN agencies; On-Site and well-known location: A side event that influences the formal debate and potential outcomes, is no different from a planned multi-stakeholder dialogue or round-table in the formal agenda. | Restricted choice of location; Restricted choice of schedule; Competition with other side events and official negotiating agenda; Media support challenges; Schedule conflicts. | Innovative and strategic methods for overcoming scheduling conflicts and event space challenges Timing of the event is important: ideally 1-2 days at most before and not after governments are debating the issue of the event. Making the side event to work as a round-table, you need to get the key government delegates to speak/attend. |
| Outside UN Meeting Related Event | Ability to select venue based on event needs such as media space, schedule etc.; Accessible to non-accredited public. | Lack of promotion; Decreased visibility; Lesser known or unfamiliar location; Not official UN Program of Work; More difficult to attract official delegates. | Heavy campaigning to build event awareness and use of high profile supporters to build event profile. |
| Outside activity on the spot e.g. Fossil of the Day Award Ceremony for countries trying to block negotiations; Silent group protests e.g. through wearing clothes with a message; Target key decision-makers personally through symbolic actions; | Messages from the youth e.g. through art. Can be strong symbolic politics. Media likes anything that "makes a picture" in the negotiations that otherwise don't provide interesting image material. Cheap to organize. "Soft" action such as emotional petitions from certain affected groups or giving "face" to the victims can be very appealing. | Can make the target politicians or civil servants resentful and unwilling to cooperate with you in the future. If not carefully planned, giving "face" to the victims can lead to negative connotations, the groups feel disempowered, or highlighting e.g. the consequences of climate change on certain species can make people to feel that animals are more important than them, if that happens in the national context where this is an acute debate. | Ensure media attention, also social media can be effective. Consider carefully, who do you target (both as the central figure of the blame-game and as your target audience for wanted action). Do not overuse symbolic actions, they are most effective with an element of surprise. |
| Activity in a capital Demonstrations in capital cities or in front of Embassies. | Can be strong symbolic politics. A good way to engage with masses, if well organized. | If an action doesn't succeed in mobilizing the masses, it might be counterproductive to the original idea and "prove" that the cause doesn't interest people. | Ensure media attention, also social media can be effective. Pay attention to mobilization techniques and timing. |

Source: Adapted from Alas De Rio. 2011. "Hosting an Event at a UN Meeting". <http://alaserio.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Event-Hosting-Tool-Kit.pdf>.

Raising the voice of marginalized groups

Participation in international negotiation processes demands both human and financial resources. If the goals and impacts of participation are not clear, this leads to frustration of participants. It is especially important to remember this when working with marginalized communities, who often have their hands full with many other pressing issues such as immediate threats facing their land or livelihoods. Therefore, other actors in the international advocacy networks, and others, such as the government officials, who want to give the marginalized groups a possibility to participate, must remember that participatory process with tight schedules and the need to be present in the capital are often out of reach for marginalized groups unless special attention is paid to these issues.

Marginalized groups have so far been given mostly the role of victims in the discussions concerning climate change. However, they are in many cases pioneers of adaptation and low-consumption lifestyles, and have often detailed knowledge about their environments, which, together with science, provides keys to understanding the changes. However, it is also essential to remember, that as much as people in the rest of the society, also indigenous people vary in the way they weigh the different aspects of sustainable development, be it social, environmental or economic.

It is important that the focus of the participation, both nationally and internationally, is shifted to the beginning of the processes, to the agenda-setting stage. If there is political will to open up the processes and allow the so far silent voices to be heard, the focus

turns into moral and ethical questions to which people can relate to:

What kind of world are we aspiring towards to? How do we measure success in achieving that goal? Is it with money, happiness, health, education level, and equity, cooperation between people and communities, or with something else? Where do we place nature in this equation? The UN Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, provides one great opportunity for the analysis of the gaps between existing goals and achievements, and a chance to involve meaningfully people in the agenda-setting for the future.

Indigenous people and the UN

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the principal normative framework for the three UN mechanisms with specific mandate regarding indigenous peoples' rights: the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council), the



Skolt Sámi school children engaged in discussion about climate change with international guest in Sevettijärvi. Photo: Jenni Kauppila.

Information **Box 4**: Source: UNRIC Fact Box on Indigenous People. 2011. <http://www.unric.org/en/indigenous-people/27309-individual-vs-collective-rights>

- Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples, an official definition of “indigenous” has not been adopted by any UN-system body. Instead the system has developed a modern understanding of this term based on the following:
 - Self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member.
 - Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies
 - Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources
 - Distinct social, economic or political systems
 - Distinct language, culture and beliefs
 - Form non-dominant groups of society
 - Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.
- It is estimated that there are more than 370 million indigenous people spread across 70 countries worldwide. Practicing unique traditions, they retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live.
- Most indicators of well-being show that indigenous peoples suffer disproportionately compared to non-indigenous peoples. Poverty rates are significantly higher among indigenous peoples compared to other groups. While they constitute 5 per cent of the world’s population, they are 15 per cent of the world’s poor.
- Of the some 7,000 languages today, it is estimated that more than 4,000 are spoken by indigenous peoples. Language specialists predict that up to 90 per cent of the world’s languages are likely to become extinct or threatened with extinction by the end of the century.
- There are three UN bodies which are mandated to deal specifically with indigenous peoples’ issues: The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council), the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous Peoples.

Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedom of Indigenous Peoples. Article 42 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples requires the three mechanisms to apply the Declaration universally, irrespective of the positions individual states have on the Declaration.

When looking at the resources of these mechanisms, it is clear that they are under-resourced in relation to the work challenges of dealing with the issues of more than 4000 indigenous people spread over 70 countries. While the Permanent Forum enjoys the support of a secretariat composed of nine staff members working full-time, the Expert Mechanism has no specific secretariat and only one staff member from the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit of the OHCHR who provides it with part time assistance.

As mentioned in the section deal-

ing with leverage politics, on page 14, UN often provides the best backbone for indigenous groups, who are facing immediate threats. One recent example of the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous People, is the imposition of two moratoriums in Nellim, Finland, which are also mentioned in the Information Box 6 on the next page. This is a good example of leverage politics, where the UN intervention on behalf of the indigenous people was needed since all the national channels were exhausted up to the High Court. Nevertheless, national processes must continue so that a permanent solution to the problem can be found.

The two Information boxes on the next page illustrate some of the results of the Indigenous Peoples Biocultural Climate Change Assessment Initiative’s (IPPCA) workshop, which was held in Sevetijärvi, Finland in October 2011.



A herd of reindeer in July. Photo: Eero Murtomäki.

Information Box 5. Extract from Sevettijärvi Declaration 2011: Recommendations for better inclusion of indigenous peoples contribution to climate policies

We affirm that indigenous people continue to make major contributions to the understanding of climate change. The IPCC is an example of how we are undertaking assessments on our own terms. Intercultural methodologies that bridge traditional knowledge and Western science provide essential local information to assess climatic conditions and trends. We emphasize that these efforts must be led by indigenous peoples and local communities and then mainstreamed into international and national climate change assessments and policy processes.

Emerging trends of biocultural resilience, resurgence and re-diversification of our ecosystems give us hope that we can develop creative solutions for our communities and ultimately for the continuing existence of all life on Earth. Our indigenous efforts must be matched with concrete steps by nations around the world to reduce consumption patterns and change the paradigm of development based on economic growth, the drivers of human induced climate change.

We alert that recent treaties such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) establishes international minimum standards for the respect, protection and fulfilment of indigenous peoples' rights. Indigenous knowledge systems are recognized as based on the distinctive spiritual relationship that indigenous peoples have with their territories, and should be respected and considered in climate change assessments and development of adaptation and mitigation responses. This UN Declaration obliges all UN scientific and technical bodies, such as the IPCC, to appropriately include

indigenous knowledge in assessment reports of climate change, such as the upcoming Fifth Assessment Report.

We therefore:

- **Call** upon the IPCC to include an independent chapter on indigenous knowledge written and developed by indigenous peoples. The chapter should provide an assessment of how climate change affects indigenous livelihoods and rights, in view of developing adaptive strategies based on indigenous people's spiritual, cultural and ecological values.

- **Request** the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) to formally request the IPCC to include a specific chapter on indigenous peoples. The UNPFII should also establish a Traditional Knowledge and Practice body involving indigenous leaders, educational institutions, experts and scholars, to guide its work and that of other UN processes.

- **Request** national governments to provide full support to indigenous peoples' own assessments and to invest in education and research institutes that empower indigenous voices in climate change science and policy.

- **Alert** indigenous peoples of the deepening inequities between Western science and traditional knowledge in climate change science and policy. We call upon indigenous peoples' organisations to communicate the inequities to the general public and powerful institutions such as the IPCC and to make all efforts to redress the balance of power.

Information Box 6. Sevettijärvi Declaration as an example of indigenous peoples' input to redefine the priorities in the changing geopolitical situation of the Arctic

We salute the UN Commission on Human Rights Moratorium on the slaughter of reindeer of the Inari Sámi of Nellim issued on September 23, 2011. In addition to the 2005 Moratorium on logging in the same area, this is a historical turn of events in the development of Sámi rights in Finland. We wish to recognize this significant victory and urge the government of Finland to recognise the land and water rights of the Sámi as enshrined in international law. This process should be based on a full-scale land use and occupancy study of international standards.

We are deeply concerned by several disturbing processes which threaten the existence of the language, culture and lands of Eastern Sámi peoples. The Eastern Sámi have demonstrated a remarkable ability to survive past genocidal trends both in Finland and Russia. Now their homeland is becoming a geopolitical hotspot due to the opening of the Northeastern

Passage. Extensive mining plans and construction of a pipeline on the Kola Peninsula of Russia as well as development of offshore oil and gas exploration in the Barents Sea constitute direct threats to the ecosystems and the people of the area.

Now the very survival of the Eastern Sámi Nations and their homelands is under threat. We urge the world community and especially the UNPFII to investigate the situation of the human and Indigenous rights of the Eastern Sámi peoples in Russia and Finland. On the basis of this we demand that the governments of Russia and Finland commit to redressing centuries of injustice through jointly implementing the UNDDRIP with the Eastern Sámi peoples.

Extract from Sevettijärvi Declaration 2011. The full Declaration is available e.g. at <http://www.globalplatform.fi/climate-change/sevettijarvi-declaration>



Old forest in Sevettijärvi, Finland. Photo: Eero Murtomäki.



Industrial workers' community in Raipur, India. Although the income is often higher than in the rural areas, the polluted environment has a negative impact on people's health. Below some of the plants from five industrial sites that together cover an area with a radius of 200 km. The treatment of the waste is mostly uncontrollable.



Typical terraced fields in the Himalayan hills. Photo: from Uttarkhand, India.



Tehri Dam project in Uttarkhand, India, led to a big public protest, but it was completed in 2006 and the reservoir submerged the homes of more than 100 000 people. There are several new projects on-going in the region. This photo is from a construction site of a dam on Alaknada river near Srinagar.

Proposal for guidelines for working with marginalized groups

These proposals have been developed in the CGP project, and derive especially from the context of climate change and indigenous people. We warmly welcome further comments and elaboration on these, and naturally on any other section of the leaflet, too. Contact details can be found at the end of the leaflet.

Marginalized communities, especially indigenous people, struggle often with direct threats to their cultures and livelihoods. These threats can be related to land ownership, land use, the use of natural resources e.g. forests and minerals leading to destruction of the environment and sometimes health of the local communities, assimilation politics and so forth. Therefore participation in different policy-processes just for the sake of legitimizing the process (so called quasi-participation) is highly frustrating especially for the communities that have limited resources, are few in numbers, are located in remote places and do not see the benefits of repeating the same information without anyone acting on it. In order to alleviate the legitimate frustration of "it has all been said and nothing changes", cooperation within international advocacy networks should be based on the principle of least trouble. This means



Reindeer herders in February. Photo: Eero Murtomäki.

other actors commit to keep the key contact persons at the local level informed of all relevant events and processes, and facilitate their participation in the most important ones.

People working with the communities must adjust to the challenges of different time scales. Communal decision-making cycles are different from the needs of many processes demanding urgent action. Good preparatory work can help a long way. Preparing common positions in time helps to deliver the message, when the need arises. It also supports the above mentioned principle of least trouble. Through widely agreed position papers, the messages from the community level can be spread with the least amount of efforts. In some cases communities can also assign trusted members of their networks to represent them (without the right to speak on behalf of them without first consulting). After the meeting the representatives must report back to community.

Working with marginalized communities must be based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. It is good to write down the terms of cooperation and have the document signed by all parties. The document should include at least the two following issues: 1) Cooperation must be based on the recognition that if the communities themselves wish, the cooperation can be cancelled at any time. After all, it is them who will live with the possible negative outcomes.

2) The community must remain with full ownership of the information given by them and with full intellectual property rights, and reports of how their information has been used.

Action points

- ➔ Before starting anything, do the background work well. Find out, which CSOs, NGO, indigenous peoples' organizations, researchers, and perhaps companies or state entities work in the field you want to explore. List at least the main themes they work with and include updated list of contact details so you help others, who are interested in the same themes.
- ➔ Record community voices using participatory methods. Concentrate on issues and concerns that the communities themselves identify as priorities.
- ➔ All communities are heterogeneous, allow space for multiple viewpoints and facilitate dialogue processes to find common ground, if the community members wish.
- ➔ Facilitate peer-to-peer information sharing and networking sessions for the community representatives both nationally and internationally.
- ➔ Agree on the terms of cooperation, make sure information flows both ways and the basis of cooperation are confirmed regularly. This helps to develop common positions of CSOs and communities in order to give timely input to the international processes.
- ➔ Pay attention to the images and representations used in campaigning. Some communities that have been able to adapt for centuries in difficult circumstances, might feel deprived of their identity if climate policy positions are legitimized on the bases that they cannot adapt anymore. Pay special attention avoiding symbols that are locally associated with livelihood struggles (such as the "cute animals" that in many places are associated with Westerners caring more about animals than people).

More information:

→ United Nations' Regional Information Centre for Western Europe has a portal on indigenous people with the access to the UN database on documents concerning indigenous people: <http://www.unric.org/en/indigenous-people/27309-individual-vs-collective-rights>

→ International expert seminar on the role of UN mechanisms with specific mandate regarding the rights of indigenous people. Madrid, 4-6 February 2009. Report available online at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/SR/ReportExpertSeminarMadrid.pdf>



Engaging with community women in Baishket village, Almora, India.
Photo: Jenni Kauppila.



Photo: courtesy of CGP Tanzania.

Annex 1. The Climate Change Secretariat and Convention Bodies of the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol are serviced by the secretariat, also known as the Climate Change Secretariat, whose mandate is laid out in general terms in Article 8 of the Convention.

The main functions of the secretariat are to:

- make practical arrangements for sessions of the Convention and Protocol bodies
- monitor implementation of the commitments under the Convention and the Protocol through collection, analysis and review of information and data provided by Parties
- assist Parties in implementing their commitments
- support negotiations, including through the provision of substantive analysis
- maintain registries for the issuance of emission credits and for the assigned amounts of emissions of Parties that are traded under emission trading schemes
- provide support to the compliance regime of the Kyoto Protocol
- coordinate with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies, notably the [Global Environment Facility](#) (GEF) and its implementing agencies (UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank), the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC), and other relevant conventions.

Specific tasks include:

- the preparation of official documents for the COP and subsidiary bodies
- the coordination of [In-Depth Reviews](#) of Annex I Party national communications
- the compilation of greenhouse gas [inventory data](#).

The growth in technical work needed since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol (e.g. on reporting guidelines and the LULUCF sector) is leading to a trend of increased technical expertise within the secretariat.

The secretariat is institutionally linked to the United Nations without being integrated in any programme, and administered under United Nations Rules and Regulations. It now employs some 470 staff, including staff on temporary appointments, from all over the world. Its head, the Executive Secretary, is appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in consultation with the COP through its Bureau, and currently holds the rank of Assistant-Secretary-General. The Executive Secretary reports to the Secretary-General through the Under-Secretary-General heading the Department of Management on administrative and financial matters, and through the Under-Secretary-General heading the [Department for Economic and Social Affairs](#) on other matters.

As an impartial body of international civil servants, the secretariat is accountable, through the Executive Secretary, to the COP, CMP and subsidiary bodies and carries out those tasks that fall under its mandate in the Convention and programme budget. The COP, CMP and subsidiary bodies will often request a specific assignment from the secretariat within this mandate, for example, to prepare a background study on a particular issue. The secretariat is guided in its work by the Bureau of the COP.

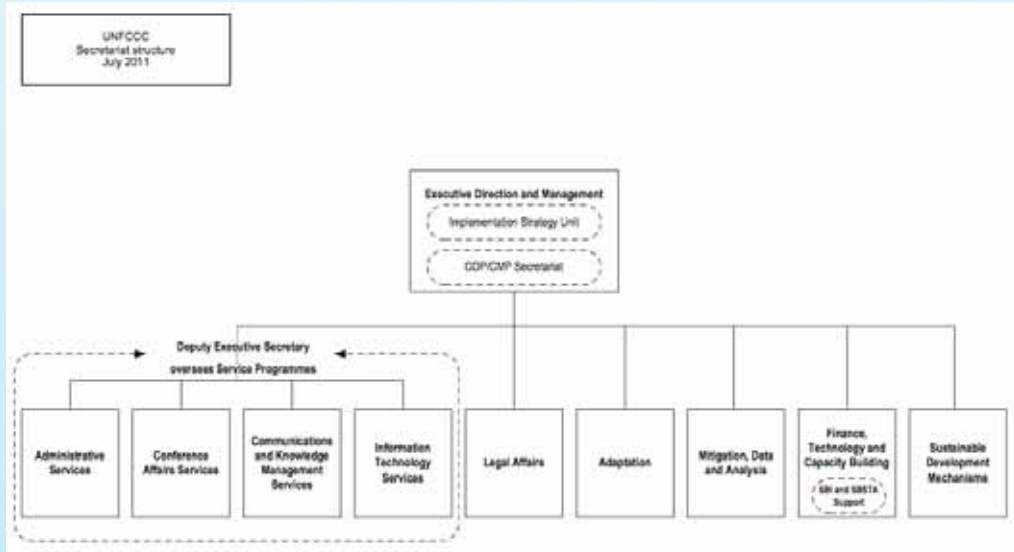
Since August 1996, the secretariat has been located in [Bonn, Germany](#). It moved from its previous location in Geneva, Switzerland, following an offer from Germany to host the secretariat, an offer accepted by COP 1.

Every two years, the Executive Secretary proposes a programme budget, setting out the main tasks to be performed by the secretariat in the coming biennium and the funding needed to carry out this work. This proposal is considered in the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), which then recommends a programme budget for approval by the COP. The Programme Budget is funded by contributions from Parties, their shares being based on the UN scale of assessment.

Source:

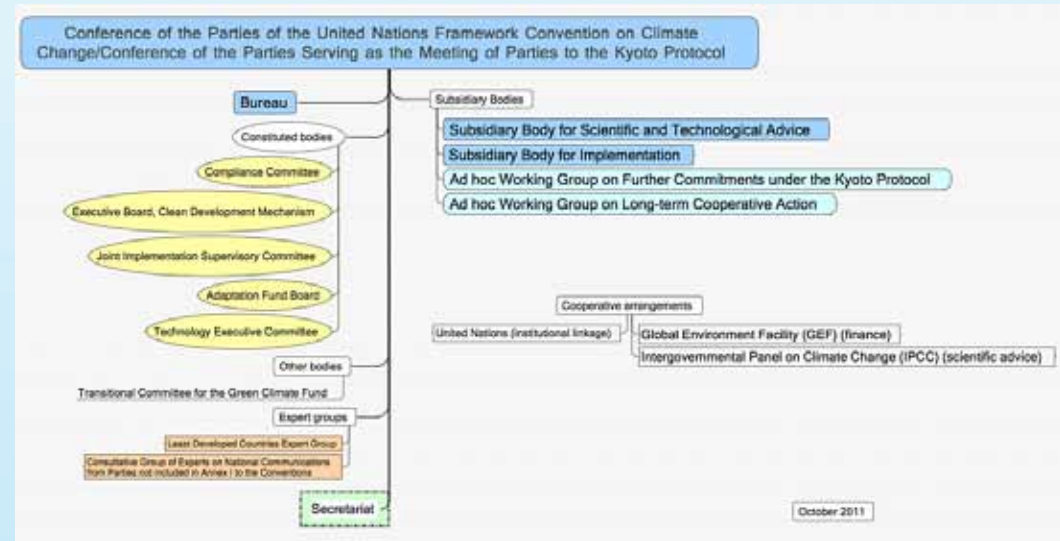
http://unfccc.int/secretariat/history_of_the_secretariat/items/1218.php

Figure 1. UNFCCC Secretariat Structure



Source: <http://unfccc.int/secretariat/programmes/items/2098.php>.

Figure 2. UNFCCC Convention Bodies



Source: <http://unfccc.int/bodies/items/6241.php>

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