



Climate Action Network - International
Intervention: SBI, Agenda item 13
2 June 2009

Madame Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today on behalf of the Climate Action Network, a network of over 460 nongovernmental organizations in countries around the world.

We wish to also thank the UNFCCC Secretariat staff for their tireless efforts in support of NGOs in these negotiations. Their facilitation of our input and participation in these negotiations is critical, and they should be commended especially for being responsive to our many questions and requests.

We believe that observers play a critical role in these negotiations. We represent millions of citizens in countries around the world. Our goals are simple: to listen to the people we represent and advocate for what they see as important. In this case, it is the urgent need for a fair and ambitious climate agreement in Copenhagen that avoids catastrophic impacts of warming approaching 2 degrees, and puts us on a path towards a sustainable future.

NGO access is a part of a broader issue, which we find to be critical to the Convention's success. Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and Chapter 27 of Agenda 21 state that the best environmental decisions are made when the public is included and civil society participates. It is clear that NGO participation is fundamental to the spirit of Rio and the success of the Convention.

Historically, we observers have seen that as the stakes are raised, the doors are more often closed to our input. We demand that parties recognize transparency is a key aspect to achieving a successful outcome. We note specifically the need for NGO access to be maintained in upcoming sessions as the stakes get higher in the lead up to Copenhagen. This should include preserving and enhancing opportunities and support for routine civil society input through official interventions, submissions and consultations. Most Vulnerable Countries and Indigenous Peoples should also be provided all the support they need to effectively participate in the process.

COP15 will be like no other COP we have seen. The stakes are higher than ever before and public attention to the conference will be unprecedented. But political leadership is still missing. We call upon Heads of State to travel to Copenhagen, to take personal ownership of the task at hand. We fully expect the UNFCCC to ensure this is possible and arrange the sessions to take full advantage of such an event.

Thank you, Madame Chair.