



Better Climate Governance

BETTER CLIMATE GOVERNANCE MATTERS 2022

*Learning in the implementation
of the Paris Agreement*

**CONFERENCE REPORT
JULY 18, 2022**

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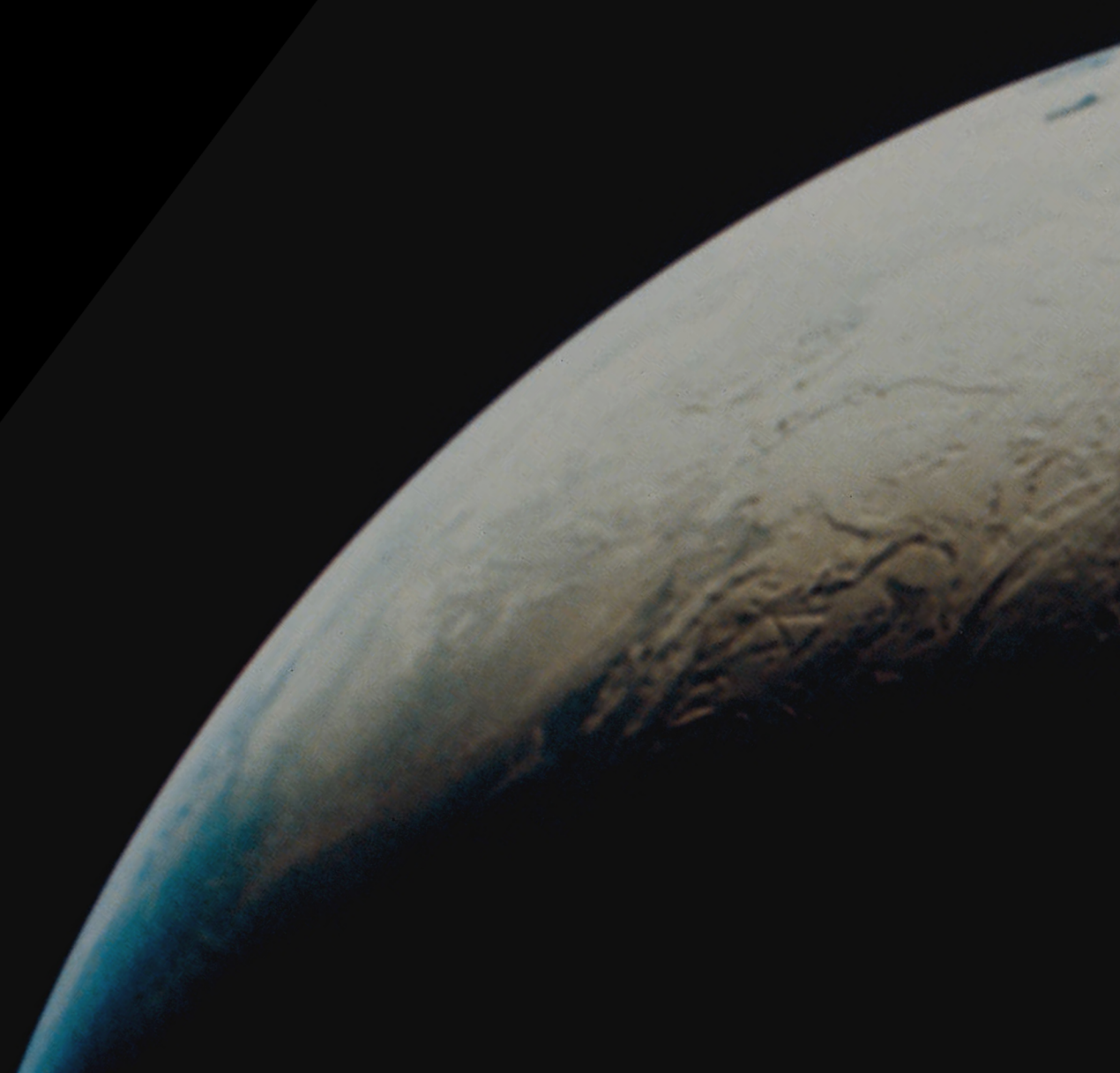
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Better Climate Governance Matters 2022 conference, on 'Learning in the implementation of the Paris Agreement' was held online on 18 July 2022. A panel of experts shared their insights regarding learning and climate action, and the conference provided a forum for different stakeholders from the Global North and the Global South to exchange their knowledge and experiences on learning in transnational climate action and within the UNFCCC.

There were two key ideas that were the driving force behind the conference and the way it was organised:

- Constructivist learning that changes an individual's beliefs can enable them to become an agent of change for others and ultimately lead to more ambitious climate action. The climate crisis is too urgent and existentially dangerous to waste time re-inventing the wheel: we must learn from each other's experiences. We must use what is already available but currently not being put into practice.
- The UNFCCC should move beyond its current processes and experiment with new approaches to allow the sharing of knowledge more quickly and effectively.

Key messages that emerged from the conference were:

- The importance of listening to diverse voices, especially including Indigenous peoples and other communities who are on the front line of climate change, and to recognise and learn from their knowledge and experience of climate action.
- The need to decolonise research.
- Not to rely on the big actors (such as the US, China, India, the EU) to take a lead on climate action; small actors acting together can be more powerful than the big actors and can also pressure the big actors to act.
- The need to support peer-to-peer learning and share good practices.
- The need to incorporate a human rights perspective within climate change action.
- The issue of Loss and Damage: this is an existential issue in the Global South, and has been exacerbated by the lack of progress on reducing emissions.
- The need to communicate to people that climate change is neither a theoretical nor a technical issue, but a here-and-now issue that impacts every aspect of life and that actions we take to address climate change can bring tangible other benefits. One barrier is the absence of a common understanding of a desirable alternative to 'business as usual', so there is a need to create one and show that it is feasible, affordable and attractive.
- Recognition of the need to engage young people, and the potential for them to drive change.
- The need to provide funding for models that address climate change effectively.
- Support for grassroots and civil society input to the UNFCCC processes.

The overall message that emerged is that to lose hope is to surrender, and that we need (in Christiana Figueres' phrase) both outrage and optimism.

INTRODUCTION

Effective climate governance and the implementation of the Paris Agreement across all levels of governance has never been more urgent. We do not have the luxury of trial-and-error approaches as the devastating consequences of the climate crisis are felt everywhere. Instead, we need to learn from each other's experiences with climate policies, and share innovative climate action as well as lessons learned. The 2nd annual Better Climate Governance Matters! Conference brought together committed state and non-state actors from across all sectors and levels of governance to share experiences, lessons learned and discuss the way forward in an open non-negotiation space to encourage the innovative dissemination of ideas. This report provides an overview of the conference.

The Better Climate Governance Matters! Conference is a central activity of the Better Climate Governance Project that brings together current, new and potential Fellows of the Better Climate Governance Network. Its mission is to engage in open conversations and discussions about improving climate change governance within the UNFCCC negotiations and also, as we are moving towards a concluding phase for negotiating in the UNFCCC and into the deep end of implementing the Paris Agreement, to explore avenues for mutual learning and capacity building between national governments and non-national actors for the effective implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions and stepping up climate action. We are a growing and diverse network of individuals from a multitude of organizations – governments, the UNFCCC and other UN organization secretariats, facilitation, mediation and environmental NGOs and other civil society organizations and academics, all of whom are united in the desire and passion to improve climate change negotiations and the global co-ordination of implementing the Paris Agreement within and linked to the UNFCCC as central forum for exchanging experiences, sharing best practices and capacity building. The Better Climate Governance Network is free and welcomes anyone as Fellow in a personal capacity who is committed to improving climate governance.

KEYNOTE PANEL

Moderator: Dr Katharine Rietig

Panellists: Dr. Tara Shine, Dr Tony La Viña

Question: How can we build capacity to meet the Paris Agreement targets across all levels of governance?

Tara Shine

Dr Shine told the conference that climate legislation is a useful hook for many areas and that parliamentary committees are a really good way to embed this aspect within the system. She gave an example from Ireland, where joint parliamentary committees on climate issues were created, so that experts were brought in. The elected officials explained to Tara that this was the first time that they really understood climate change: the magnitude of the problem, and how it links to their areas of responsibility. This was completely transformative in terms of the role that the elected officials played in supporting and promoting ambitious climate policies.

Dr Shine talked about bringing scientists and experts together with citizens in a safe space where citizens can ask questions and also inform policy. She clarified that when she refers to experts, she includes experts about solutions, i.e. the people that are going to help us solve the problem. She talked about how citizens assemblies in Ireland, focused on how the country can be a leader on climate action, have been really informative in shaping Ireland's climate policies and climate laws, and also helped to create a more positive and progressive conversation around climate action in the public.

She argued that governments have a responsibility to promote public discourse and drive public information campaigns about climate. She pointed out that she was addressing the conference from Ireland, where despite being at the cooler end of Europe there was at the time a weather warning for a dangerous heatwave. She argued that having public information campaigns that make the links between what is happening and in the news with climate change is really important. She added that we haven't done enough over the years to target the different audiences with the right message via the right platform; for example, under 30s do not watch the news on TV, so we need to consider how they are getting access to the best information with the best journalistic standards. And she said that finding the right messenger, so that people don't feel preached at or judged, is also important for building capacity and knowledge about climate.

She also argued that it was important as part of this capacity building, to unpack for people, that climate change is neither a theoretical nor a technical issue, it's actually a here-and-now issue that informs every aspect of business, of education, of schooling. And being able to show people that climate action (for example, making our air and our water cleaner, reducing carbon emissions, restoring sand dunes) is also protecting us as human beings. And it's important to address the fear around climate action – it's either very technical or very doom and gloom – and showing that what we need to do is a good thing, which will give tangible benefit to us all, is another citizen-level exercise that can build capacity.

Tony La Viña:

Dr La Vina agreed with everything that Dr Shine said. He said that it's important to have the right messengers that come across as credible, people who have had experiences and have acted.

He asserted that an inclusive universal approach to climate action is critical if you want to build capacity at all levels. But he emphasised the importance of involving those that are in the front lines of climate change and the front years also of climate change actions - front lines in terms of already living the worst of the impacts, and those in the frontiers of action, of new initiatives, new approaches to dealing with climate change.

He talked about having been involved, first as a negotiator and later as an academic and activist, since 1990, and he reflected that in those processes over the years the approach was to focus exclusively on the big actors, like the US and the EU in the North, or China and India. Dr La Vita argued that this approach was a mistake, firstly because the dynamics of domestic and international politics means that the outcomes remain unpredictable; and secondly because a focus only on the big actors excludes most of the world, and in particular most of the world that's already facing those impacts. He talked about how he prided himself that right from the beginning he always emphasised the smaller actors, especially communities that are at the front lines of climate change and climate action, for example, Indigenous peoples. He is proud of helping amplify their voice, because they should have their own voice in the process and this voice did become stronger over the years.

KEYNOTE PANEL

Dr La Vina described a new resource facility that he is establishing in Mindanao in the Philippines, where he is doing work around Indigenous education as a way of understanding climate and of responding to climate. He explained that this has an immediate link to human rights, because Indigenous schools have been targeted for anti-communist and anti-terrorist action. The reason for this is that these schools give Indigenous communities and peoples an awareness that their problems are not just from the carbon makers, but are actually from those that try to grab ancestral lands which will also exacerbate the climate problem. So when you build the capacity of your most marginalised actors, then you are building capacity for everyone to achieve the Paris Agreement objectives.

Question: Could you share success stories of learning from others, where the global South learned from the global South or the global South transferred lessons learned to the global North?

Dr Tony La Vina:

Dr La Vina referred to his earlier example of the involvement of Indigenous peoples in the global process, which started as a very small caucus and is now is a very big caucus that includes very diverse Indigenous peoples – from the Global North as well as from the South – and which has been very successful in terms of their ability to influence the process.

He said that another very important area is human rights. He explained that the REDD+ process, which he facilitated, amplified the voice of the Indigenous peoples' caucus and that by 2014 in Lima, Peru they were very strong, and in Paris [in 2015], they got some concessions. He said that now, even the UN General Assembly has come out with very clear human rights and climate links, way beyond what the Human Rights Council has done, and that this is a very good example of North-South cooperation and exchange.

A third area Dr La Vina talked about is loss and damage (which he noted is currently more a South-South cooperation, but he would like to get more North colleagues involved). He explained that for those in the South, this is the most important issue, and it's an existential issue. He gave the example of the Philippines that has had two recent typhoons, and the realisation that once you're hit by a climate event, you can't really talk anymore about resilience, adaptation, mitigation, because you lose power and water, and you lose your ability to adapt and to mitigate because these are not about survival. So loss and damage means some kind of restitution to bring you back quickly to at least where you were, that then allows you to think once again about mitigation and adaptation. He added that there is also some North-South cooperation on this issue. For example, his Manila Observatory is part of the consortium ACT2025 [Agreement for Climate Transformation] – which is a more recent version of ACT2015 – where the World Resources Institute based in the North in Washington DC is leading the effort. He emphasised that many in the South are very passionate about getting a loss and damage facility in place as quickly as possible.

Question: Could you share success stories of learning: what the Global North learned from the Global South, or between the Global North countries?

Tara Shine

Dr Shine explained that she spent over a decade working in the climate negotiations, working on issues of adaptation and vulnerability, and understanding the issues facing developing countries; at that time she also worked in international development cooperation. She was working on the ground with colleagues in Africa and in Mongolia on how they were adapting to climate impacts. She saw some adaptation planning best practice emerging from the least developed countries and small island developing states. In 2010 she undertook a research fellowship to work in Ireland on the country's very first steps in adapting to climate change, and so she used all the learning she had from those least developed countries and small island states to help inform an adaptive capacity assessment for Ireland. It actually used a tool that the World Resources Institute had developed for developing countries, but she adapted it and applied it in the Irish context, because they were right at the beginning of their adaptation journey. She brought learnings from countries like Bangladesh and Mozambique to inform what was then the very start of adaptation planning. Ireland now has a national adaptation framework, and adaptation plans produced by every sector and every local authority, and is implementing those, but it was very important at the beginning to learn from what was happening in the Global South where action and adaptation was at least a decade ahead. This is because, unfortunately, of the unfair impacts of climate change on the people in countries most vulnerable but least responsible. She added that she thinks now there is a real opportunity for the North to learn from the South particularly in terms of disaster risk reduction. She pointed out that Dr La Vina had just run into his house [during the conference] in the Philippines because of a typhoon early warning. In the Philippines, everybody is used to doing this, whereas in Germany last year when intense rainfall led to flooding, people didn't have the same experience of watching out for early warnings and knowing what to do. She said that we have to build that capacity now that climate change impacts are also being as severely felt in the Northern hemisphere and in Western developed countries. Those areas need to learn how to do that from developing countries and to have the humility to ask and realise that they can learn from Indigenous communities, local communities and other parts of the world.

KEYNOTE PANEL

She agreed with Dr La Vina on the issue of loss and damage: that again because we have taken far too long to start to reduce our emissions (and in many cases are not yet doing so), the imperative of loss and damage has now risen to the top of the agenda. She argued that it is important that the world learns from those who have experience of what it is: who know what losses are to a country, what it means in terms of GDP, and what it means in terms of trying to recover both from economic and non-economic losses (e.g., culture and heritage). There are lessons on how to get back on track, while increasing the focus on mitigation which is the most important thing to do to keep us all safe. She feels there are massive opportunities to continue learning in the North from the South, but it requires a different mindset and more humility.

Another example Dr Shine used is how we design research partnerships that have equitable relationships between North and South researchers. In the past, they have been completely lopsided: all the power has generally been held by the Northern partner, in the country where the money is coming from, so that they dictate the research plan, they write the publications, and the partners in the Global South do the field work, and quite often are not even recognised adequately in the final publication. She argued that we need partnerships that recognise the different types of learning, whether that's Indigenous knowledge, local knowledge, traditional knowledge or conventional science, and that these things are stronger when they come together. And she agreed with Dr La Vina, that for a long time, climate change people didn't talk to human rights people, and she has seen for example, where social protection people don't talk to people working on sustainable energy solutions. We need to bring those different disciplines together and then reshape and redefine what it is to put a good research partnership together, North and South. She thinks that there are great opportunities for two-way learning, but that up until now the constructs have been wrong.

Question: What resources are necessary to facilitate learning and what barriers to learning and improving things need to be moved to facilitate and speed up implementation?

Tara Shine

Dr Shine said that a big barrier that is top of mind for anyone working in the area of research or development cooperation is the need to decolonise how we do research and how we cooperate as countries in our pursuit collectively of sustainable development. She thinks there are many hard conversations to be had around what it looks like to decolonise research and how we can give voice to those who haven't shaped the research agendas up until now so that they lead that conversation. Dr Shine reflected that this means that many who are traditionally seen as the leaders in the world of research and learning need to come with a new humility to the table and a real willingness to listen and to be open to new ideas, because we've learned that the way we've done things up until now has not yielded the result that we need; we need to be wide open to doing things completely differently if we're actually going to create the type of learning required to change behaviour and to change political decision making.

Another barrier that Dr Shine identified is that we haven't created a desirable alternative to business as usual. At the moment, business as usual is the easiest case to argue, whether you are writing a research paper or leading a country or leading a business. What is the desirable alternative and how would it be better than what we have now, which is a world of inequality, raging wildfires, homelessness and food insecurity? We have to really paint a picture of what the alternative is, and show it to be feasible, affordable, and attractive, most of all, to our younger people. And then in terms of resources, we need sustained support, so we can't just fund things for three years and stop, things have to be funded on a longer time scale and we need a longer planning cycle and longer term relationships between the different actors to actually deliver results.

Dr Shine also identified that we're going to have to get much more appetite for trying new things and taking risks. Same old, same old is not changing anything, and same old same old with a little bit of green around the edges is not going to change anything. We're going to have to be prepared to try new things and take new risks, informed, of course, by science and good practice and human rights, but she emphasised that we're going to have to take some risks if we're going to move at the speed and the scale needed.

She added that we're going to have to invest in people, hearing different voices, and really understanding that everybody has so much to give: whether this is about getting 50% women at boardroom tables, whether it's about having more diversity and inclusion in where we make decisions, or getting more frontline voices of Indigenous peoples, local communities, small islands at the decision making tables. She thinks it is the shared lived experiences that will move the dial at the end of the day, so our job going forwards is to think about how we share what works and what doesn't work, and how we make the alternatives both desirable and achievable.

KEYNOTE PANEL

Tony La Viña

Dr La Vina agreed with everything Dr Shine said. He added that decolonisation applies not only to Northern institutions and development actors but also to those in the South, such as policymakers, or in his case an academic and national activist based in Manila. They also need to decolonise the way they understand things that are happening in the islands and in the mountains. He explained that he did his masters and doctorate at Yale University, so he needs to do decolonisation himself. He teaches in many universities across the Philippines and is a strong believer in old-fashioned field trips to engage with people that are working in the field and undertake immersion with communities. These are not one-way: there are also field exchange visits that allow, for example, community leaders and Indigenous peoples to come to the Manila Observatory to see the instruments and see why the instruments – the telescopes, the pollution monitoring equipment, the computers doing climate modelling – are important for them. He thinks that finding ways to work together to address issues is the best way of learning and also decolonisation, as long as people are humble enough to understand that someone who doesn't have a PhD but has observed climate and rain patterns for 50 years probably has more to say than someone who has been studying this for 5 or 10 years even with a PhD. He added that it is important to address the issues of climate, human rights, development and aggression together, and this is a very good way of facilitating learning and removing the obstacles of both colonisation and lack of information.

Question: Is there any suggestion within the UNFCCC meetings, deliberations, mechanisms, that either gives you hope or ideas that you think could be implemented, in relation to the idea of us needing to do things differently in order for things to change?

Tara Shine

Dr Shine said that unfortunately UN processes are often the most conservative, slowest-moving processes so if you want to show change, she thinks you should look for it in the real world in real time. She said that obviously the UN Climate Convention does address capacity building and learning – there's a whole agenda item on capacity building, there is the Paris Committee on Capacity Building and there is ACE (Action for Climate Empowerment), which is all about public engagement and awareness-raising around climate, its impacts and some of the action that we need to take. These mechanisms tend to learn from the real world and bring that in to inform the negotiating world. Dr Shine shared that for her, hope is born out of determination and in the past she was hopeful because she was an optimist, but now that isn't enough so that now her hope is driven by an absolute determination not to pass this future on to her children without having done everything that she and her generation can to make sure that they have a liveable future. So she thinks of Christiana Figueres' 'Outrage and Optimism' and now there's more outrage in her optimism than there was a few years ago. And she's impatient, since we have all the evidence we need, and we are feeling the impact.

Tony La Viña

Dr La Vina said he never loses hope because to do that is to surrender, so he just recognises that in the process – and it is a tortuous process – there are good moments, and quite a lot of bad moments. The question is in that process where do you find hope? He argued that you can find hope everywhere in the process, because everywhere in the process, you have things you want to achieve.

He added that you have to build capacity at all levels, but this is not enough. From their point of view as educators, what they do is never enough to actually change the situation, because education, consciousness changing, new skills, are not enough; there needs to be political change, and he argued that the hope there is not going to come from them as educators, but from the young people they work with. He believes in the ability of young people to push us. Dr La Vina highlighted two particular areas. One is human rights, where there is so much possibility and we can find ways to advance the preamble language of the Convention, this is an area where there's still a lot to do. And, as he said before, loss and damage; he considers this the third rail in climate, distinct from adaptation and resilience, which is one rail, and mitigation and reduction of emissions which is another. These latter two are both equally important, but loss and damage is also as important as the first two. If we crack that nut, then we are in place for the three big things that have to be done to deal with the climate. But he reminded us of what he said at the beginning, if you're going to reduce climate action to the big actors – the Americans, Russians, Chinese, Indians – what they will or will not do, there's no hope.

KEYNOTE PANEL

Question: John Kerry recently said that 20 countries are responsible for 80% of the world's emissions. Dr La Vina, you talked about not focussing our energy, or our hope, on those nations, so how would you respond to that point? And what can we do as activists, as Indigenous people, as local communities?

Tony La Viña

Dr La Vina explained that he wasn't saying these big actors should not act or lead, but that we should not leave action to these big actors, because all actors are necessary. When the small actors, the actors in the periphery of global power, all act together, they are actually more powerful than the big actors and can pressure those big actors to act. He said that there is a problem, and especially in the Convention, that whenever any of these big actors changes their mind because of domestic politics, then everyone gets paralysed and stymied, so this is very important.

He argued that the point about Indigenous peoples is also very important. He explained that he has been an Indigenous peoples' rights lawyer for 40 years, even longer than his 30 years as a climate change lawyer, and the biggest mistake is to assume that you can speak for Indigenous people and that you will teach them. He referred back to his point about inviting communities to come to his laboratories and to universities to engage and to problem solve together. He explained that is why the Manila Observatory is called a resource facility, so that it's very clear that it would be available to the people of the island to provide them assistance and support so they can make their own decisions about how they respond to the climate challenge.

Tara Shine

Dr Shine added that we have to engage and empower citizens so that they vote in brave leaders and they vote for change. She argued that at the moment a big barrier to political leaders doing the right thing is that they say that they don't have the support of the voters. For example, now in Europe should we stop thinking about climate change, because we have to think about the war in Ukraine and the food and the cost of living crisis and food security? No, they're interconnected and citizens need leaders to hear them and act on all the things that are important to them. In order for our political leaders to be brave, they need to be responding to a very engaged active citizenry where people are allowed to be heard, and all the different opinions are heard, and where leaders listen to people who traditionally have not have not been heard. And that might be the Indigenous people looking after the Congo Basin or those living in the slums of New Delhi – they all have perceptions that are important, and they're voters with human rights, so creating that conversation and that space is really important.

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Theme 1: Learning in Transnational Climate Action

Speaker: Dr. Katharine Rietig is the co-founder and co-lead of the Better Climate Governance Network with Christine. She is an Associate Professor in International Politics (known in the UK as Reader) at Newcastle University in the North of England. Her research over the past 12 years has focused on how decision-makers learn in the governance of climate change, especially the UNFCCC, but also on the national and regional level like the European Union.

In this session, the central question asked was: How can the world accelerate the learning needed to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees?

For learning to happen, there is a need to reflect on the new experience or information that are presented. Once reflection happened, the new information can be added to the existing knowledge (which would be factual learning, learning facts), or keep it can be kept as lesson learned for later use in ones personal or professional environment (which would be learning from experience, experiential learning). The new information might be so profound that it might actually change the way someone see things, their beliefs, or their view about the world overall such as the need for action on a challenge such as climate change, or how particular policies or other climate action should be designed. After someone engaged in constructivist learning that changed their beliefs, they might take on the role as a teacher or agent of change, and convince others about the importance of, for example, taking action. Then ones individual learning would spill over to others and could ultimately change the point of view of their organisation or government. This would mean that learning was transferred from individual to the organisational level. If they also managed to overcome any barriers such as opposing political viewpoints, lack of time or resources, this learning can translate into what the organisation or government does, for example, how it addresses climate change or climate change policies, or the implementation of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions. It might also lead to more ambitious NDCs or climate action.

The climate crisis is too urgent and existentially dangerous to waste time by trial-and-error or re-inventing the wheel. This means that it is important to learn from each other's experiences, share lessons learned, and reflect on the similar or different challenges in your local contexts when implementing these policies.

Dr. Rietig emphasised that the conference serves a forum for such open and transparent reflection, to encourage and facilitate mutual learning and thus capacity building through the exchange of knowledge and experiences. This can help everyone to be effective agents of change within their own organisations or governments, and hopefully teach others about the importance of the lessons learned and help to implement climate action in their own local contexts in the best possible way for everyone who is affected by it. This can be mitigation of carbon emissions in, for example, the energy, transport or agriculture/forestry sectors, or, of ever increasing importance, sharing lessons about affordable and effective adaptation to the unavoidable consequences of climate change that are felt everywhere by now, but especially in the global south while also facing a multitude of economic, social, other environmental and political challenges.

Theme 2: UNFCCC as learning forum

Speaker: Christine Peringer is a co-leader of the Better Climate Governance project with Katharine. She is a lawyer by training, but a facilitator and mediator by profession. She's a member of the Climate Change Project of Mediators Beyond Borders International, which has observer status with the UNFCCC – the UN Climate Change conference system.

In this session, the question was: How do we use the structures and processes of the UN climate change negotiations to support increased learning among all involved?

Christine discussed the changing nature of the UN climate negotiations and the need for new formats and initiatives. She began by giving a disclaimer that she is not a UNFCCC expert but a professional facilitator. She mentioned that she was appalled to see the UNFCCC negotiations several years ago showing contrast between the urgency voiced by civil society and some political leaders and the partially effectual and sluggish proceedings in the negotiating rooms. She shared that in an off-the-record discussion with a former senior UNFCCC official, she described the process as "medieval." Their response was, "Yes, mediocre and evil." She took that as confirmation that applying a facilitator's lens to the UNFCCC could have great benefits.

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Christine emphasized the importance of changing the format of climate change deliberations. Negotiation has been the prime function of the UNFCCC deliberations. Now with the Paris Agreement of 2015 and subsequent agreement on the rulebook to carry this out, negotiating agreements is no longer the prime function. She reiterated that the focus should be the move to action: to make change, to be accountable, and to learn from each other. She mentioned that it is very important that the UNFCCC move beyond its current processes to allow the sharing of knowledge more quickly, effectively and enjoyably, for all stakeholders. There are many within the UNFCCC process who share similar sentiments.

Over the years a number of new formats have been introduced, often by the COP presidencies, to improve communication between parties and sometimes non-party stakeholders. The Indaba process (first used in Durban at COP17 in 2011) and the Talanoa Dialogue (used in 2017) are two such formats in which more authentic and personal dialogue was made possible. Negotiators at the time of these innovations shared there were felt differences in the negotiating room as a result of these processes, a shift in the atmosphere that helped the negotiations progress. Unfortunately, notable about the Talanoa Dialogue and the Indaba process is that they were used for a session or two and then not continued. It is important to know the reason behind this decision especially if the practice has been positive. This question points to the importance of evaluating the impact of these processes so the whole UNFCCC system can learn from and adopt successful innovations.

There is currently a format, new to the UNFCCC, being tried within the Technical Dialogue of the Global Stocktake (GST) which started in Bonn last month. There, the Dialogue on the Friday of the first week of the Climate Change Conference in Bonn from 4 pm – 7 pm hosted a modified version of a World Café. (World Café is a process developed in the United States about thirty years ago to bring people together to speak informally about important matters.) In Bonn, the World Café welcomed experts, Parties, constituted bodies, observer organisations and other non-Party stakeholders to discuss specific thematic areas related to the GST. People chose which of 12 thematic tables they wanted to join. Every half an hour, there was a times up and everyone was invited to move to a different table. Five such rounds took place. There were more than 100 delegates still participating in the final round, which finished at 7 pm on a Friday night. This demonstrates a strong appetite for this kind of informal discussion across parties, across the divide between parties and non-parties and other silos. There was a frankness in those discussions that is not possible in the negotiating room. One party delegate said, “Our reputation on this isn’t great, but even we believe that fossil fuel no longer equals security.” Or “That’s good from the European side, how do you make it viable elsewhere?” That kind of ‘real’ exchange is essential to accelerated forward movement.

The UNFCCC needs to continue experimentation with new approaches and couple that with careful evaluation – in terms of impact, speed and participant satisfaction. Then there can be increased implementation across the UNFCCC of formats better equipped to support the changes needed by the UNFCCC and the planet.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

There were two rounds of breakout groups, each professional facilitated by a member of Mediators Beyond Borders International. (The facilitators are listed in Appendix X.)

Breakout 1: Learning in Transnational Climate Action

Participants in the first round, discussed the following questions:

1. How can we build capacity to meet Paris targets at all levels of governance?
2. What are success stories of learning in different sectors?
3. What lessons can we share in local/regional collaboration and impact?
4. What can we share about scaling up projects? Making them self-sustaining?

Here follow the ideas and recommendations that emerged in response to each question.

1. How can we build capacity to meet Paris targets at all levels of governance?

- Strengthen participation of non-national and grassroots actors within the UNFCCC process, including Track 2 [unofficial/non-governmental/back-channel] and Track 3 [grass-roots/individual] diplomacy
- Build the capacity of young UNFCCC negotiators
- Use national COP participation to get coverage of climate change by local media
- Use the best available knowledge – including Indigenous knowledge
- Build capacity in non-Indigenous actors to understand Indigenous paradigm (e.g., values derived from lives lived with the natural world) and capture this knowledge
- Find funding and share models for carbon sequestration, e.g., planting trees
- Use carbon markets to finance forestation and other forms of greenhouse gas mitigation
- Address concerns re carbon markets including being north-centric, the need to incentivise conservation, attuning markets to address areas of largest benefit and the treatment of loss and damage
- Support electric vehicles and other innovations
- Engage youth and children with inclusive, transformative educational activities
- Use what is already available but currently not being put into practice e.g., an understanding of the problems, ideas, technology
- Provide funding
- Share good practices and enhance grassroots action
- Support peer-to-peer learning and exchange opportunities internationally
- Use results-based payments for agricultural, environmental services Push for system-wide innovations, including good recycling plans, human-based solutions
- Encourage community-powered events including business/citizen partnerships
- Create mechanisms to not get trapped in the big companies' lobby and diminish the gap in power amongst different groups and different countries and sectors.

2. What are success stories of learning in different sectors?

- Universities and knowledge-creating institutions can support the development of regulations and monitoring frameworks
- In agriculture: Use local problems (e.g. low crop yield) to expand understanding of climate change impacts at the local level
- Increasing local awareness builds capacity for activism
- Cutting through technical jargon and linking climate change to everyday life makes it relatable and urgent for people
- Collaboration between academics and people on the ground
- Low-Carbon Workshops promote carbon neutrality and sustainable development.

3. What lessons can we share in local/regional collaboration and impact?

- All Africa Conference of Churches has developed the Africa Faith Actors Network on Climate Justice including leaders from all over Africa
- The Global Conference of Youth has had success in building local engagement and then sharing their results at regional groups and then at the transnational level at UNFCCC meetings

4. What can we share about scaling up projects? Making them self-sustaining?

No comments were made directly in response to this question.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Breakout 2: UNFCCC as a Learning Forum

In the second round the conference break out groups, participants considered the following questions:

1. How can nations benefit from the learning of other actors (nations and non-national actors) to strengthen their national policies?
2. What are successful examples of knowledge transfer (South to South; South to North; North to South)?
3. What resources and processes are necessary to facilitate learning?

Here follow the ideas that emerged:

1. How can nations benefit from the learning of other actors (nations and non-national actors) to strengthen their national policies?

- Use local/grassroot level knowledge to inform national positions
- Highlight collaborative efforts like those at COP26 on decarbonisation of electricity generation
- Use challenges like food insecurity as an opportunity to introduce more sustainable approaches
- Incorporate Indigenous knowledge into the national and global decisions
- Depoliticize and simplify the COP to provide a better space for learning

2. What are successful examples of knowledge transfer (South to South; South to North; North to South)?

- Many examples were shared, including local tree planting projects, knowledge-sharing on climate information, training in smart agriculture, sustainable farming, reverse hydro, fishing, alternative livelihood skills
- Exercise discernment around using others' best practices
- Palm oil industry: countries in Latin America and Southern Africa are learning from the mistakes made in Indonesia/Malaysia
- Bark beetle: information flow between different affected stakeholders (e.g., national parks in Austria and Germany)

3. What resources and processes are necessary to facilitate learning?

- Support for Indigenous engagement
- Engagement of those currently most affected by climate change
- Support for minority voices (e.g., USA Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Academy)
- Share knowledge that resources exist e.g., a catalogue of solutions and contact points
- Support creative problem-solving workshops
- Engage young people
- Develop supportive top-down and bottom-up regulatory and learning frameworks
- Pilot projects before frameworks are in place
- Support for emergence of locally-led projects
- Attention to communication to increase mutual understanding
- Support for new actors within the climate space e.g., a manual for UNFCCC observers
- Modification of UNFCCC structure to include grassroots and civil society input
- Improved monitoring of the impact of NDCs

APPENDIX

I. Conference Programme



Better Climate Governance Matters 2022

Learning in the implementation of the Paris Agreement

JULY 18, 2022 | 11:00 - 15:00 UTC | ZOOM

The Context: Learning takes time and with seven years since the signing of the Paris Agreement, it is important to know the stories about its implementation, what worked and what did not. Through a joint review and reflection of these lessons, stakeholders involved can make the necessary changes and be able to amplify practices that contribute to the achievement of the Paris Agreement.

Event Focus: Meeting the Paris Agreement targets requires accelerated learning about how to make the needed changes. This year's participatory conference will provide a forum for the exchange and development of ideas in relation to improving climate governance. The conference will be a space for discussions on collaboration, innovation, overcoming barriers to sharing values, skills, and approaches.

Central Question: How can the world accelerate the learning needed to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 – 2 degrees C? What are the characteristics of effective climate action at all governance levels?

Specific questions to guide the sessions are the following:

- How can we build capacity to meet Paris targets at all levels of governance?
- What are success stories of learning in different sectors?
- What lessons can we share in local/regional collaboration and impact?
- What can we share about scaling up projects? Making them self-sustaining?
- How can nations best leverage learning of other actors (nations and non-national actors) to inform their NDCs?
- What resources are necessary to facilitate learning?
- What are successful examples of knowledge transfer (South to South; South to North; North to South)?

APPENDIX

I. Conference Programme



Organizers: This conference is organised by the Better Climate Governance project (<https://betterclimategovernance.com>).

The Better Climate Governance project is funded by Newcastle University and led by Dr. Katharine Rietig (Newcastle University, UK) and Christine Peringer, JD (Mediators Beyond Borders International). See more details about the team by following this link: <https://betterclimategovernance.com/the-team/>.

Participation is free and the conference is entirely online (Zoom). A web-link with the Zoom access details will be emailed to participants after registration.

For conference registration: <https://forms.office.com/r/2eLTh503z1>

For more information, contact:
connect@betterclimategovernance.com

Time (UTC)	Agenda
11:00am to 11:15am	1. Welcome a. Welcome and event introduction <i>Focus: What are the characteristics of effective climate action at all governance levels? How can the world accelerate the learning needed to limit temperature rise to 1.5 – 2 degrees?</i>
11:15am to 11:45am	2. Keynote Speakers a. Dr. Tara Shine Founder of Change by Degrees, Co-Facilitator of the Structured Expert Dialogue of the 2nd Periodic Review under the UNFCCC, a process to monitor progress and enhance delivery on Paris Agreement goals. b. Dr. Antonio La Viña Associate Director for climate policy and international relations of Manila Observatory, former Dean of the Ateneo School of Government, former Undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Philippines.
11:50am	Stretch break

APPENDIX

I. Conference Programme



-
- 11:55am to 1:00pm
- 3. Discussion and Reflection**
- a. Theme 1: Learning in Transnational Climate Action
- i. Presentation – Dr. Katharine Rietig, Newcastle University
- ii. Facilitated break out groups
- Questions for discussion:
- How can we build capacity to meet Paris targets at all levels of governance?
 - What are success stories of learning in different sectors?
 - What lessons can we share in local/regional collaboration and impact?
 - What can we share about scaling up projects? Making them self-sustaining?
- iii. Plenary sharing of breakout discussion & reflection
-

1:00pm Break

- 1:15pm to 2:30pm
- b. Theme 2: UNFCCC as a learning forum
- i. Presentation – Christine Peringer, Mediators Beyond Borders International
- ii. Facilitated Breakout Discussions
- Questions for discussion:
- How can nations best leverage learning of other actors (nations and non-national actors) to inform their NDCs?
 - What resources are necessary to facilitate learning?
 - What are successful examples of knowledge transfer (South to South; South to North; North to South)?
- iii. Plenary sharing of breakout discussion & reflection (20 min)
-

- 2:30pm to 3:00pm
- 4. Closing**
- a. Synthesis Comments
- b. Better Climate Governance Network
- c. Closing thoughts
- d. Thank you
-

3:00pm Conference complete

APPENDIX

II. Countries represented

- Algeria
- Angola
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Austria
- Australia
- Bahamas
- Bangladesh
- Benin
- Bolivia
- Brasil
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Eswatini
- France
- Ghana
- Germany
- India
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Japan
- Jordan
- Kenya
- Kuwait
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Nigeria
- Norway
- The Netherlands
- Timor Leste
- Serbia
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Sudan
- The Philippines
- Togo
- Turkey
- Uganda
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

III. Photos



Conference speakers: Tara Shine, Katharine Rietig, Christine Peringer and Tony La Vina



Conference attendees

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Better Climate Governance Project would like to thank the following volunteer facilitators:

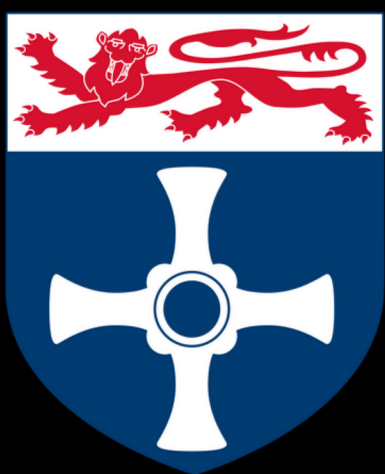
- Jeffery Sewell
- Anil Changaroth
- Liliana Pimentel
- Lisa Singh
- Chinmayee Somaiya
- Chris Kane
- Avinder Laroya

Well done to the the conference organisers!

- Jecel Censoro
- Elizabeth Muggleton
- Christine Peringer
- Katharine Rietig

Thank you to everyone who participated in our conference!

CONTACT US



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