

# CONCEPT NOTE

## A SPACE FOR CO-CREATION, REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE OFFERED TO DELEGATES OF COP25 IN CHILE

### Proposal for a space with new formats of daily events at COP25

Beside the typical side events and negotiations at COPs we propose to give space to sessions with **new formats** designed to deepen interaction amongst delegates and for **human issues** that have often been neglected at COPs.

This concept gives an overview about

- the perceived need for new formats of reflection and dialogue
- the advantages of sessions with new formats and themes
- how to building on the the Talanoa Dialogue of the Fijian Presidency
- the schedule of the daily program of the sessions
- elements of the interactively designed sessions
- requirements to facilitate the space

### Why the time is ripe

The expectations for COP25 negotiations are high. The latest IPCC report on land use presents new alarming results, reinforcing the messages from other reports that the promised contributions of nations are not yet nearly enough to mitigate global warming to stay well under 2°C. By the end of the year parties need to present their updated NDCs. This news enhances the pressure on the negotiations even more.

With a global public finally waking up to the urgency of climate change, the pressure on the COP and on delegates will be very high. The issues are deeply political and so stakeholder communication can often be long and difficult. Negotiators are defending by definition interests and are competing over diverging positions. Long held positions, individual perceptions and routine might result in too little listening and too limited exploration of synergies and new pathways for solutions. These dynamics are not only ineffective regarding the envisioned objective(s) but also increasingly exhausting and dissatisfying for the people involved. The longer such dynamics last, the more people risk losing their sense of orientation and purpose of the actual process.

Parallel to this, the global rise of nationalistic governments neglecting scientific evidence on climate change is forming fronts amongst stakeholders with increasingly polarized views. To counteract these developments and strengthen the democratic nature of the Paris Agreement and the NDCs, we need spaces where stakeholders can actually reorient themselves and really listen to each other's perspectives without the perceived need to compete. We need spaces where culturally specific modes of reasoning can be articulated, that give meaning to knowledge, and that help make knowledge more actionable (Lawrence and Schäfer 2019).

## Our offer for COP25

**The Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) is developing partnerships to offer a space where negotiators and other stakeholders can meet in formats that are typically not formats used in side events, but are more structured than informal dialogues in breaks or over meals. The space is designed to deepen meaningful interaction, build trust and engage openly in honest dialogue and reflection.**

The IASS piloted such spaces during COP24 in Katowice. We tested different facilitation formats to see what works in the setting of a UN Climate Change conference. The delegates who participated represented a diverse composition in terms of their professional background, cultural socialization, age, gender and role in the negotiations. Several of them strongly expressed the need for protected spaces for discussions in smaller groups, facilitated interactions, and reflections to think out loud and think together and to be supported in reconnecting to a deeper level of intention whilst participating and engaging in the COP.

Aside from the restorative and empowering effect such a space has on the individual, its potential for genuine encounters have shown to be equally valuable. Connecting (on a personal level) to other stakeholders creates a shared web of goodwill and knowledge by finding links between experiences, thoughts and feelings. Connecting occurs not just by sharing information, but by engaging and learning about the other side's story, their perspectives and concerns, and their worldviews on the situation. Connecting also promotes the human interdependence which must reflect the technical and political interdependence of climate change. This network of relationships can form the bonds for building a different relationship instead of one centred on exchanging positions and issues. Connecting allows parties to see the other as a person and to interact differently and to build collaborations. Each bond enhances the capacity for joint action (Fletcher 1998; Putnam 2004).

Based on this quality of connections, such trusted spaces hold the potential to draw creativity in thought and produce insights. Taking further into account that the different delegates coming to the COP conferences bring a substantial and diverse potential with them, the dialogues can as well be a space of co-creation. They can lead to new, more effective and efficient strategies and solutions. It is widely thought that only by working collectively, pulling

all available expertise together, will we be able to change the course of human development and resulting climate change to still meet the Paris Agreement goals.

## Building on the legacy of the Talanoa Dialogue of the Fijian Presidency

The legacy of the Fijian Presidency has been that they presented a completely new format to the UNFCCC community, the Talanoa Dialogue. According to the Fijian tradition the culture of Talanoa brought together many different stakeholders in a trusted and inclusive way to think together on global climate issues and solutions. The spirit and culture of the Talanoa Dialogue(s) was widely appreciated by the global COP community, and the fact that very many people engaged in its process worldwide underlines the need for such formats of dialogue.

It would be important to build further on this spirit. The suggested space for reflection and dialogue is designed to further cultivate mutual connections, inclusive dialogue and transparent ways forward within the UNFCCC.

In addition to this, the Chilean Presidency has the aspiration to make COP25 “The COP of the People” and increase opportunities to bring diverse stakeholders together. The reflection and dialogue space will be a valuable contribution to both building further on the culture and process of the Talanoa Dialogue and increase opportunities for diverse stakeholders encounter each other.

With the offer of a facilitated space for reflection and dialogue we would like to advance and deepen a collective culture of thinking and working together for a common goal. For these two reasons, the Reflection and Dialogue space would be an important aspect of the legacy of COP25 and promises huge potential for new and creative drivers for change. With this vision we would be honoured to host, together with you, a space for new processes.

## What do we want to achieve?

The IASS and a number of potential partner organisations are collaborating to offer their expertise in supporting transformative dialogue, reflection and a space for building meaningful relationships. Through empowerment, reorientation and co-creation of delegates (both party and observer), we believe that this will contribute to the success of the COP25 negotiations.

Looking further ahead, experimenting more with approaches of reflection, dialogue and building meaningful connections, we believe that these events could perspective even be a

space to try out on a small scale and advance new formats for the COP process post the Paris Work Programme.

We plan to harvest the experiences that the delegates gain through their participation in the spaces. We believe that the outputs will give powerful insights and impulses to fundamental questions as well as very practical ones such as:

- How can people – especially those in the very special role of negotiators, climate policy advisors, activists and scientists – work together in such a way that something valuable can emerge or be actively created, and which formats work for various contexts?
- How can meaningful (civil society) participation and connection-building in the UNFCCC process be improved and facilitated?
- How much collaboration has emerged through the space?
- Which ideas have come out of the thematic and non-thematic events?
- In which way can process particularly fitting to the COP be identified through the space?
- Did negotiators and stakeholders feel the dialogues and reflections improved the process?
- How can we help different forms of knowledge play their part?
- Which mindset or spirit, which attitudes, values and ethics could guide us best at the conference and how can we cultivate these?

## Overview of the structure of sessions

Each session will be announced with a clear description of the format and theme. A central explanation will inform negotiators and other COP participants about the opportunities of these new formats, giving space for the immense and diverse potential of delegates attending the COPs.

The events centering on and practicing a particular format of reflection and dialogue allow co-generation of topics for the exchange in a bottom-up manner from each participant.

- A mix of moderation techniques, such as appreciative inquiry, circle dialogue, world café and others, will be used.
- 5-minute impulses, included in 1-hour events with guided reflection and discussion. Topics for inputs could include:
  - Potentials of Co-Creation;
  - The power of optimism and changing narratives;
  - Forms of knowledge and trans-disciplinary approaches;
  - From fear-driven thought and action to working on the basis of trust.
  - Hearing vulnerable voices

- Spirituality and sustainability – where are there valuable connections?
- Real-time sharing/ reporting can allow delegates to inform themselves about the outcomes of sessions when they could not participate themselves. Outcomes will be shared via twitter and a blog.

There will also be time slots in which the room can be used for non-facilitated personal reflection, journaling and conversations. If desired at these times delegates still can use prepared questions for their reflections and conversations, which will be written on a flipchart.

## How will the Co-Creative Reflection & Dialogue Space be scheduled from 2.- 12. December?

Example of a day's schedule (sessions will flip their slots from one day to the other):

09:30 – 10:30	Guest Session
11:00 – 12:00	Co-Creative Reflection & Dialogue Session
12:15 – 12:30	Contemplative or embodiment practice
12:30 – 12:45	Sharing Experiences of practice
13:00 – 14:00	Free Space Forum
14:00 – 15:00	Guest Session
15:30 – 17:00	Co-Creative Reflection & Dialogue Session

Find schedule of the day during COP25 here:

Or on twitter: @reflectCOP

Tweet: #reflectCOP25



For questions please contact:

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