

On behalf of the constituencies **{{{ representing business and industry, research groups, indigenous peoples organizations, environmental groups, farmers, women and gender, trade unions, local government and municipal authorities and youth }}}}**, we would like to express our concern regarding the policy on cost recovery announced in the Secretariat's information note dated June 4. This policy threatens to undermine the quality of observer participation in the UNFCCC process.

From its beginning, the UNFCCC has recognized the value of observer participation, most recently during yesterday's Article 6 dialogue on public participation. Within the SBI negotiations and workshops, Parties have repeatedly acknowledged the "crucial and integral" role of observers in this process. Similarly, the Secretariat has recognized the value of our contributions, as stated in the announcement on this policy and in the guidelines on observer participation, which provide that participation "flourishes in an atmosphere of mutual trust which acknowledges respect for others and their opinions."

Despite this widespread recognition, the cost-recovery policy would effectively exclude many voices that cannot afford to pay the new costs, and threaten the credibility and legitimacy as well as mutual trust that have been established within this negotiation process. It will also undermine our ability to share diverse views and to present current research and innovative solutions to this complex problem.

This policy – which essentially shifts the burden from Parties to observers – would have significant impacts on our ability to engage in and influence the process. Many observer organizations already face resource and capacity constraints and, as recognized by the Secretariat, have limited opportunities to share their views and perspectives. The voices of civil society, in particular many organizations from developing countries and regions and from other groups representing those most vulnerable will be further marginalized if the right to speak is premised on the ability to pay.

As we've demonstrated in the past, we are committed to working with the Secretariat and Parties to find a solution to this budgetary problem. We offer to work with the Secretariat to find a real solution that doesn't link financial contribution to the ability of observers to effectively participate in this process. In the interim, we urge you to put this policy on hold until other options have been considered through a transparent and participatory process, which is critical to protecting diverse points of view and ensuring legitimate outcomes.

Let us work together to find a solution.