

RINGOs Statement

COP 22 SBSTA Opening

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement on behalf of the research community .

A month ago the United Nations Secretary General's Scientific Advisory Board issued a policy brief[1] stressing the importance of science, social science, engineering, and the humanities to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. The same principles apply to implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The Board declared that science is a “universal public good that lays the foundation for a sustainable world.” The Board stressed the importance of both basic and applied sciences and called for an integrated approach across disciplines. It encouraged strong programs in science literacy and capacity building.

The Board also went beyond the usefulness of science, and urged scientists to consider sustainability in setting their research agendas. This, too, applies to the climate regime. UNFCCC bodies need to identify gaps in knowledge and communicate them to the research community so that we can focus our work on filling those gaps and solving climate-related problems. Parties also should communicate knowledge gaps to national decision makers for incorporation into national science agendas.

The Science Advisory Board also cited the Future Earth “Strategic Research Agenda”[2] for emphasizing a multi-disciplinary approach “with an emphasis on engagement with societal partners in co-designing and co-producing knowledge as well as on international cooperation.” Science informs but does not dictate climate policies, programs, or practices. We all need to work together to find effective ways to reduce emissions sufficiently to meet our targets, and to identify and provide adequate protection for vulnerable people and ecosystems.

As you know, RINGOs members and our colleagues back home include researchers, practitioners, and educators across a wide spectrum of sciences, social sciences, engineering, and the humanities. Our researchers have been studying every aspect of climate change, and have developed theories, knowledge, skills, and technologies that can be applied to climate challenges. Our practitioners work at the interfaces among science, policy, and practice, and help ensure that decisions and programs are grounded in sound science and are achieving their intended goals. Our educators teach skills and knowledge to prepare the next generation and the public to deal with challenges related to climate change.

Science, social science, engineering, and the humanities will play a critical role in almost every aspect of implementation of the Paris Agreement. The SBSTA will take the lead in facilitating understanding and application, and in coordinating the integration of these fields into the myriad of tasks the parties must undertake. We hope you will call on the RINGOs to assist with your mission.

[1] “Science for Sustainable Development.” Policy Brief by the Scientific Advisory Board of the UN Secretary General, 5 Oct. 2016.

[2] *Id.*, citing Future Earth, “Strategic Research Agenda 2014: Priorities for a global sustainability.”