Advancing the Glasgow Work Programme on Action for Climate Empowerment Through the Priority Areas

A Submission from the Monitoring and Evaluating Climate Communication and Education Project

Introduction

The importance of Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) for advancing Action on Climate Empowerment (ACE) has been recognised in the new Glasgow Work Programme on ACE. Monitoring and Reporting was identified as one of four priority areas for advancing ACE implementation, alongside the related areas of policy coherence, coordinated action, and tools and support. The Monitoring and Evaluating Climate Communication and Education (MECCE) Project welcomes Member Parties' commitment to M&R, and the impetus this provides for enhancing the quality and quantity of activity across the six ACE elements. Effort now needs to be directed towards determining how Member Parties can make rapid progress to deliver on this commitment, in coordination with the UNFCCC Secretariat and working in collaboration with Non-member Parties, informal groups, and the broader ACE community.

In brief, the MECCE Project recommends the following matters be addressed at the in-session technical workshop as means to advance ACE implementation through the four priority areas, in order to support development of an action plan to guide the annual in-session Action for Climate Empowerment dialogue:

- That ACE target-setting and reporting be included within Nationally Determined Contributions and National Communications, underpinned by an evidence-based approach to M&R.
- That an expert group be established to support the development and implementation of M&R, bringing together expertise from Member Parties and Non-member Parties, M&R specialists, and representatives of youth, Indigenous, and marginalised groups.
- That tools and support be identified and implemented to build M&R technical capability and support sharing and collaboration amongst Member Parties, Non-member Parties, and other ACE stakeholders, including financial support.
- That coordinated, flexible approaches to M&R be developed and implemented. This could include an overarching international framework underpinned by robust data and indicators that will support diverse ACE activity.

In addition, we recommend that the upcoming in-session technical workshop include discussion of what constitutes quality ACE in diverse contexts; specifically, what quality ACE means in different countries and contexts amongst Member Parties and Non-member Parties, youth, Indigenous, and marginalised groups. This would involve exploring diverse needs and approaches to ACE, regional and cultural considerations, as well as barriers and enablers to action.

This submission sets out how M&R supports progress on the priority areas and offers suggestions for matters to be discussed during the in-session technical workshop in June 2022 to advance implementation of the six ACE elements. We outline ways in which the MECCE Project is contributing to global ACE action through M&R, and provide links to MECCE Project resources and information. The MECCE Project welcomes the opportunity to elaborate on this submission further, including by participating in the workshop and bringing expertise of the project's 100+ partners to global progress on M&R and other priority areas.

Priority 1: Policy Coherence

Achieving policy coherence involves Parties taking urgent, coordinated action on ACE within IPCC-recommended time frames. It involves fulfilling the 30-year commitment to climate change communication and education that was established in the original Convention (1992), re-articulated in the Paris Agreement (2015), and recently re-confirmed in the Glasgow Work Programme on ACE (2021). Policy coherence involves all Member Parties consistently prioritising action in each of the six ACE elements. A coherent ACE response would also be coordinated with other UNFCCC priorities, including with Gender and Capacity Building, and with other international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Target 13.3: "to improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning."[1]

Monitoring and Reporting supports policy coherence by using quantitative and qualitative data that support evidence-based insight, and that drive progress across policy areas. Using available data can enable benchmarking and target-setting across policy contexts without placing additional burdens on Member Parties.

To support policy coherence, the MECCE Project recommends that:
- ACE activity be included in countries' Nationally Determined Contributions, and reported more consistently in National Communications, supported by guidelines to support countries in generating robust data and indicators and effective ACE implementation.
- ACE M&R frameworks be developed in ways that support integration with other UNFCCC topics and interrelated frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

> **How the MECCE Project is Supporting Policy Coherence**
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> The MECCE Project is a six-year research-policymaking partnership funded by $2.5M CAD Partnership Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, with consistently growing partner funding totalling over $2M to date. **The Project was initiated to respond to the lack of ACE-related global benchmarks and targets available to support intergovernmental ACE processes.** The Project also responds to current gaps in understanding of what constitutes **quality ACE**, including barriers and enablers to action. This research-policymaking collaboration brings together the expertise of 100+ partners to help advance the policy objectives of Member Parties and intergovernmental organizations, including the UNFCCC and UNESCO. The Project is providing an original research base of numerical, narrative, and visual data to support target-setting and benchmarking of global climate action. Learn more at www.mecce.ca.

Priority 2: Coordinated Action

ACE activities are delivered by a broad stakeholder network, including those with direct involvement in UNFCCC processes (e.g., Member Parties and Non-member Parties), alongside a broader range of policymakers, researchers, and practitioners globally. Establishing mechanisms to support collaboration amongst this network will enable coordination of diverse expertise and interests, supporting the development and implementation of coordinated ACE policy as effectively as possible.

Evidence-based M&R supports coordinated action by providing reliable, comparable data and insights about ACE action to actors working at intergovernmental levels. M&R enables Member Parties and Non-member Parties to share ACE activity and expertise across countries and regions, and to develop and

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[1] United Nations (2015), Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations: New York.

implement locally appropriate and robust ACE activity. A coordinated approach to M&R will support both an increase in the quantity of ACE activities and enhancement of the quality of ACE globally.

To support coordinated action across the six ACE Elements, the MECCE Project recommends:
- The Secretariat establish and convene an M&R expert group that is responsible for supporting the development of an evidence-based M&R framework, guidelines, and mechanisms to support collaboration and sharing.
- The expert group's membership should include Member Parties and Non-member Parties; researchers, policymakers, and practitioners; and youth, Indigenous, women, and other marginalised groups.

How the MECCE Project is Using M&R to Support Coordinated Action

The MECCE Project partnership approach means that insights are built on a broad knowledge base and mobilised widely through our global team and associated network. Our governance structure includes an Advisory Group to advise on project methodology, regional issues, and opportunities for influence, and includes representatives from intergovernmental agencies such as the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNESCO, and IPCC. Our Working and Expert Groups bring together relevant, wide-ranging expertise including on ACE, indicator development, intergovernmental processes, global policy, and applied research impacts. Through meetings and online collaboration, the groups contribute to case study and indicator development as well as policy influence.

Our Regional Hub network provides a global forum for sharing our research-based insights, including knowledge of culturally and regionally appropriate ACE, and for developing capacity for coordinating ACE M&R action. Our Hubs are based in Australasia, Europe, Africa, Canada and the Americas, and currently comprise over 500 ACE stakeholders, including National Focal Points, policy-makers working at all levels, youth, Indigenous people, researchers, practitioners, non-governmental organization representatives, and others with an interest in ACE.

Priority 3: Tools and Support

Monitoring and Reporting contributes to this priority area by enabling tracking of ACE activity, for example, by: providing insights into the extent and types of ACE being delivered; illuminating where ACE-related investment is being made; and indicating where youth, Indigenous, and other marginalised groups are participating in policy decision-making, including factors that enable or constrain their participation.

However, tools and support are needed to develop and implement a coordinated and flexible approach to M&R that can ensure insights are reliable and evidence-informed. That is, the ACE Action Plan should seek to: build ACE M&R technical expertise of National Focal Points, policymakers, and ACE stakeholders; implement mechanisms to support sharing M&R sharing and expertise sharing; and encourage financing of ACE M&R.

The MECCE Project recommends that ACE implementation be advanced with M&R-related tools and support, including:
- A programme of training to develop M&R technical expertise amongst ACE stakeholders, beginning with Member Parties, which includes: how M&R advances ACE action in different contexts; the use and impacts of indicators; and engaging youth, Indigenous people, and other marginalised groups in M&R processes.

- Development of mechanisms to support collaboration and data and case study sharing amongst ACE stakeholders (e.g., through M&R networks, workshops, communities of practice).
- Identification of financial mechanisms to support ACE M&R.

How the MECCE Project is Advancing ACE with Tools and Support

The MECCE Project represents significant action and investment in ACE M&R that is supporting Member Parties, Non-member Parties, and other ACE stakeholders to enhance the quality and increase the quantity of ACE through M&R.

A key tool being offered by the MECCE Project to support the enhancement of ACE implementation internationally is an **Interactive Data Platform**. This platform, which is due to launch in mid-late 2022, provides intergovernmental and country level policymakers, researchers, and practitioners with a user-friendly online interface for understanding and sharing the extent and type of ACE provision in and across countries globally. The platform will allow users to analyze and visualize an unprecedented amount of research-led, rigorous quantitative and qualitative global data on ACE compiled and collected by the MECCE Project. Downloadable outputs such as graphs and cross-tabulated data will allow ACE stakeholders to learn about how other countries are implementing ACE, enable the setting of country benchmarks and targets, and support tracking and reporting of ACE progress.

The MECCE Project is also supporting the development of ACE technical expertise through:
- **Learning Institutes**, which will include policy forums for National Focal Points and ACE negotiators to receive advanced training on new approaches to improve the quality and quantity of ACE globally.
- A **Global Webinar Series** exploring a wide range of ACE-related topics, with prior topics including developing ACE indicators and youth participation in ACE policy decision-making.
- **Regional Hubs**, which as mentioned above, provide forums to build policy makers, researchers, and practitioners knowledge of ACE and M&R.
- A **growing research community** made up of graduate students, early career researchers, and others who are involved in research on ACE.

Priority 4: Monitoring and Reporting

A rigorous approach to M&R will advance ACE implementation by enabling countries to establish benchmarks, set targets, and track progress in ACE policy making and practice; deepening understanding of quality ACE, including barriers and enablers to action; and providing an evidence-base to enable ACE reporting to meaningfully inform national and intergovernmental policy making.

The MECCE Project recommends developing and implementing a coordinated, flexible approach to M&R to advance ACE implementation. Such an approach would include:
- Developing an overarching international M&R ACE framework to advance diverse ACE activity, developed with input from policy makers, researchers, and practitioners, as well as from youth, Indigenous people, and other marginalised groups. The M&R framework would: include agreed upon measures, be able to be used flexibly by all countries; support coordinated collection and compilation of robust data and indicators, using processes and methods that all countries can access (e.g., through partnerships with Non-member Parties); and be coupled with guidelines and support to assist Member Parties with implementation.
- Monitoring using high-quality indicators and data, paying particular attention to the progress of high-emitting countries.

- Evaluation mechanisms to deepen understanding of quality ACE around the world, including with a focus on the knowledge and approaches of youth, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups. This could include the provision of case study guidelines that Member Parties can use and adapt to their contexts working in partnership with Non-member Parties.
- Reporting mechanisms that coordinate with established UNFCCC processes (e.g., National Communications) and which incorporate agreed upon measures to move beyond self-reporting, where data are available.

How the MECCE Project is Supporting Monitoring and Reporting

The MECCE Project is developing **indicators, data, and M&R frameworks** across the ACE elements to support increased ACE quantity worldwide. The first set of indicators have been informed by a comprehensive review of **existing international data sets** and will be available on our Interactive Data Platform for COP27. Our team is also exploring opportunities for **data creation** to respond to data gaps identified in particular regions and for some ACE elements, and that recognise diverse knowledge types and approaches to ACE. The MECCE Project is also examining **data intersections** between ACE and non-ACE data to deepen understanding of how ACE activities relate to variables such as emissions, climate, economic, cultural, and geographic characteristics. We are also developing M&R frameworks for ACE comprising feasible national-level quantitative indicators, qualitative indicators with developed rubrics, and potential indexes to mobilize to countries.

The MECCE Project is also furthering ACE M&R by developing understandings of approaches to quality ACE in diverse contexts and regions, and barriers and enablers to action. The Project produces **country profiles** in partnership with the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report. The country profiles systematically review and summarize country progress on ACE and SDG Targets 4.7 and 13.3. Our team is also developing a set of ACE measures from the country profiles that could be used to track ACE progress. The first 20 profiles were published in 2021, and a second set of 30 profiles will be published on our Interactive Data Platform by COP27. The MECCE Project also funds **case studies** to showcase innovative ACE from around the world. The case studies are informing understandings of quality ACE policy and practice and will help inform and improve policy and practice in local, regional, and global contexts. The first data on our case studies will be available on our Interactive Data Platform for COP27, and data on 30 case studies will be published over the next three years.

Insights from our indicator development, country profiles, and other research are summarized in our brief "Advancing Global Climate Literacy and Action."

Resources and Information

1. Research Brief: Advancing Global Climate Literacy and Action Brochure
2. Report: Key Activities in 2021: A Progress Update on the MECCE Project
3. Resource: Country Profiles
4. Related MECCE Project Webinars: Developing ACE indicators and youth participation in ACE policy decision-making
5. Related MECCE Project Blog Post: The role of indicators in advancing global ACE
6. Scholarly Paper: Climate change education and communication in global review: Tracking progress through national submissions to the UNFCCC Secretariat
7. Call for Proposals: Case Studies