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Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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## FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS

### PART I

### PROGRAMME ISSUES

#### SUMMARY

**C. Proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change**

In accordance with 38 C/Res.21, the Director-General submits to the Executive Board a proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change.

Any financial and administrative implications related to the present document will be proposed within the framework of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5).

**Action expected of the Executive Board:** Proposed decision in paragraph 17.



**C. Proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change**  
(Follow-up to 38 C/Resolution 21)

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**INTRODUCTION**

1. By its Resolution 38 C/Res.21, the General Conference invited the Director-General to present to the Executive Board at its 200th session a proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change taking into due consideration the outcomes of COP 21.
2. Accordingly, the Director-General presents in this document and its Annex a proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change solidly anchored in the UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (document 37 C/4) and duly reflecting the Paris Agreement adopted by the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. A final proposal of an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change will be presented to the Executive Board at its 201st session to ensure that it will also reflect the results of the ongoing consultations on the Draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5).<sup>6</sup>

**II. THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE PARIS AGREEMENT**

4. While acknowledging that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change, the 2030 Agenda includes a dedicated goal on climate change, SDG 13: *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*. Reaching the SDG 13 targets will be key in ensuring the feasibility of successfully achieving most if not all of the 17 SDGs. Similarly, progress on SDG 13 will require advances on a number of other SDGs.
5. Addressing climate change in the context of the 2030 Agenda will therefore require a truly comprehensive approach for which UNESCO is particularly well suited due to its comprehensive mandate and corresponding competencies and expertise.
6. The Paris Agreement constitutes a major breakthrough under the UNFCCC.<sup>7</sup> It aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by: (a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change; (b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; (c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate.
7. Under the Paris Agreement, each Party shall prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve. Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions.

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<sup>6</sup> In Member States' responses to the questionnaire on the 39 C/5, 60% of replies globally, and 85% in Africa, indicated SDG 13 as a high priority area in which UNESCO's support would be required. Moreover, 50% of respondents rated climate change as an area where UNESCO should further capitalize on its multidisciplinary expertise and enhance its intersectoral approach to support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

<sup>7</sup> As of 29 June 2016, there are 178 signatories to the Paris Agreement among which 19 States have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval accounting in total for 0.18 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions (at least 55 Parties accounting in total for at least 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions are required for the Agreement to enter into force).

8. The Paris Agreement covers a number of UNESCO priority areas and competencies and points to the need for multidisciplinary collaboration. The Decision of the Paris Agreement is strong on ethical considerations, which underlines the relevance of UNESCO's work in this domain in the years to come.

### **III. PROPOSED UPDATED STRATEGY FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

9. As outlined in document 38 C/67 (Contribution by UNESCO in Combating Climate Change), the UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change that was originally developed in conjunction with the Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4) and approved by the Board at its 180th session (document 180 EX/16 Rev.) was complemented by a detailed plan of action presented in an enhanced version to the 182nd session of the Executive Board in document 182 EX/5 Part II and in document 182 EX/INF.7.

10. Building on the strength of the original strategy, the proposed updated Strategy for Action on Climate Change takes into account not only the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, and the linkages between them, but also other recent policy frameworks, such as the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, and the Global Framework for Climate Services. The proposed updated strategy is in line also with the UNESCO long-term SIDS Action Plan approved by the Executive Board at its 199th session, the MAB Strategy (2015-2025) and associated Lima MAB Action Plan (2016-2025), and the Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2016-2021), and the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015-2021). Other notable updates include a stronger emphasis on social and human sciences, the inclusion of ethics, and the strengthening of community-based resilience to climate change through the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage and the implementation of the heritage-related conventions. Furthermore, UNESCO-designated sites as climate change observatories will be reinforced through the addition of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

#### Objective, principles and criteria for action on climate change

11. The objective of the Strategy is to enable Member States to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts through education, sciences, culture, communication and information. The Strategy will identify a set of basic principles and criteria that are to be applied in the development and implementation of UNESCO climate change actions which should specifically:

- (a) Meet the needs of Member States in relation to their efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement in the overall context of documents 37 C/4 and 39 C/5;
- (b) Draw on, support and be consistent with relevant existing UNESCO programmes, strategies and action plans;
- (c) Raise awareness on climate change as a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary issue in an overall sustainable development context while building on the strength and focus of each Major Programme of the Organization;
- (d) Focus on activities that can be scaled-up in order to ensure a seamless, coherent and structured combination of regular and extrabudgetary sources;
- (e) Ensure synergies with the overall United Nations system.

#### Action priority themes

12. The proposal for an updated Strategy is structured around four key themes:

- I. Supporting Member States to develop and implement climate change education and public awareness programmes and policies;
- II. Promoting interdisciplinary climate knowledge and scientific cooperation for climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- III. Mobilizing creativity, diversity of cultural expression and cultural heritage preservation for climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- IV. Supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue and promoting ethical and gender mainstreaming principles in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Covering several sub-themes, all the above themes will address UNESCO global priorities Gender Equality and Africa, as well as SIDS and youth as target groups.

### Duration

13. Taking into account that the period covered by the current UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy (37 C/4) lasts until 2021, it is proposed that the updated Strategy cover the period 2018-2021.

### Implementation and reporting

14. The updated Strategy will be implemented through actions undertaken by the Major Programmes, as well as through intersectoral and inter-programme cooperation involving in both cases, UNESCO Headquarters and field offices. The overall coordination will be facilitated by the the intersectoral UNESCO Task Force on Climate Change.

15. Since the Strategy covers the period 2018-2021, which is the same period for the Draft Programme and Budget (39 C/5), it is proposed that the implementation of the Strategy and reporting thereon be included in the statutory periodic reporting on the execution of the 39 C/5 with the aim to ensure consistency with the 39 C/5 programming, and facilitate and streamline reporting.

16. The financial resources needed for the implementation of the updated Strategy are to be reflected in the Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5). It is expected that the effective implementation of the updated Strategy would rely on the availability of extrabudgetary resources. An overview of resources required will be included in the final draft of the Strategy.<sup>8</sup>

### **Proposed decision**

17. In the light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to take the following decision:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 197 EX/Dec.45 and 38 C/Res.21,
2. Underlining the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement for guiding UNESCO's actions on climate change,
3. Having examined document 200 EX/5 Part I (C),

<sup>8</sup> It should be recalled in this context that in 38 C/Res. 21, the General Conference: "8. *Encourages* the Director-General to pursue efforts towards UNESCO becoming an accredited implementing entity under the Green Climate Fund and that such efforts indeed are being pursued; 9. *Confirms* the commitment of its Member States to support UNESCO's activities and programmes in this essential field at the core of its mandate; 10. *Invites* Member States to make voluntary financial contributions to that end."

4. Expresses its appreciation to the Director-General for the proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change taking into due consideration the outcomes of COP 21,
5. Requests the Director-General to present to it at its 201st session a final draft of an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change taking into due consideration the discussion at its 200th session.

## ANNEX

### PROPOSAL FOR AN UPDATED UNESCO STRATEGY FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE:

#### *CHANGING MINDS, NOT THE CLIMATE EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

#### I. BACKGROUND

1. Climate action is essential for transformative sustainable development. It is also a major opportunity to leverage desirable social transformations that will favour social inclusion and justice as well as safeguard the climatic and ecological systems on which we depend. It is high time to redirect our technology, science, finance and ingenuity to transform our economies, ensure equality and promote a sustainable future for all, including young people, women, and indigenous and ethnic minorities. This requires leadership from governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society, as well as the active involvement of the most affected groups.

2. The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stresses that human influence on the climate system is clear, recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history and recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems.<sup>9</sup>

3. In 2015, the international community made a historic Agreement on climate change in Paris, during the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). That same year governments adopted a global post-2015 sustainable development agenda with a whole new set of 17 sustainable development goals. For UNESCO, the Paris Climate Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development lead down the same path and we consider them as one and the same agenda. Climate change mitigation and adaptation require a comprehensive and long-term approach to be truly sustainable. In 2015, the world set a new milestone and committed collectively to a global action in order to achieve the future we want.

#### ***The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDG 13***

4. While acknowledging that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change, the 2030 Agenda includes a dedicated goal on climate, SDG 13: *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*. Reaching the SDG 13 targets (see below) will be key in ensuring the feasibility of successfully achieving most if not all of the 17 SDGs. Similarly, progress on SDG 13 will require advances on a number of different SDGs.

The following targets have been set under SDG 13:

- 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
- 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning
- 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
- 13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/index.shtml>

\$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible

13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

5. Addressing climate change in the context of the 2030 Agenda will therefore require a truly comprehensive approach for which UNESCO is particularly well suited due to its broad mandate and corresponding competencies and expertise.

### ***The UNFCCC COP21 Paris Agreement***

6. The Paris Agreement constitutes a major breakthrough under the UNFCCC. It aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by: (a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change; (b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; (c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate.<sup>10</sup>

7. The Paris Agreement was opened for signature on 22 April 2016 at a high-level ceremony at the United Nations New York convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. A record number of 175 parties (174 countries and the European Union) signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016. During the ceremony, the Secretary-General urged “all countries to move quickly” so that the Agreement can enter into force “as early as possible”.<sup>11</sup>

8. Under the Paris Agreement, each Party shall prepare, communicate and maintain successive Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) that it seeks to achieve. Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions. This implies a bottom-up approach to holding the global average temperature increase and to augmenting adaptation abilities. A process to assess collective progress every five year will begin in 2018.

9. The IPCC will prepare a special report on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C above Pre-Industrial Levels and Related Global Greenhouse Gas Emission Pathways to be delivered in 2018, in time for a “facilitative dialogue” to take stock of progress under the Paris Agreement.<sup>12</sup>

10. Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the General Conference at its 38th session invited the Director-General to present to the Executive Board at its 200th session a proposal for an updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change taking into due consideration the outcomes of COP 21 (38 C/Res.21, Contribution by UNESCO to combating climate change).

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<sup>10</sup> The decision to adopt the Paris Agreement (Decision 1/CP.21) contained in document FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1 together with the authentic text of the Paris Agreement are available in the six official UN languages from pages: [http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced\\_search/items/6911.php?preref=600008831](http://unfccc.int/documentation/documents/advanced_search/items/6911.php?preref=600008831) and [http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php)

<sup>11</sup> As of 29 June 2016, there are 178 signatories to the Paris Agreement among which 19 States have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval accounting in total for 0.18 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions (at least 55 Parties accounting in total for at least 55 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions are required for the Agreement to enter into force). Source: [http://unfccc.int/paris\\_agreement/items/9444.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9444.php)

<sup>12</sup> For information on the report, see: <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>

11. In addition to duly reflecting the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, and the linkages among them, the proposed updated Strategy also reflects other recent policy frameworks, such as the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, and the Global Framework for Climate Services. The updated strategy also refers to the UNESCO long-term SIDS Action Plan and the Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2016-2021). IOC will address the role of the ocean in climate through international coordination of a range of observing and research activities as outlined in the documentation for the 49th session of the IOC Executive Council (2016) and in the IOC Capacity Development Strategy (2015-2021). Community-based resilience to climate change will also be strengthened through the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage and the implementation of the heritage-related conventions. Furthermore, UNESCO Global Geoparks together with World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves will reinforce UNESCO-designated sites as climate change observatories.

12. Having in mind that the duration of the Strategy for Action on Climate Change (herein after the “Strategy”) presented below coincides with that of UNESCO’s Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5), the implementation of the Strategy and reporting thereon will be embedded in the process of the statutory periodic reporting under the 39 C/5.

## **II. UNESCO PROPOSAL FOR AN UPDATED STRATEGY FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE [2018-2021]**

13. UNESCO’s contributions to rethinking sustainability globally include a wide range of actions under our mandate reflecting the multifaceted nature of climate challenges and associated mitigation and adaptation solutions. Undertaken in synergy with the overall United Nations system, UNESCO’s climate change actions are and will be developed and implemented through its different Sectors, field offices, designated sites, category 1 and 2 centres, UNESCO Chairs and Networks, with the purpose of providing Member States with climate-related knowledge, data and information services and policy advice to enable a shift in mindsets towards enhanced sustainability.<sup>13</sup>

## **III. OBJECTIVE**

14. The objective of the Strategy is to enable Member States to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts through education, sciences, culture and information and communication, in line with the COP21 Paris Agreement and in the overall context of the 2030 Agenda and its SDG 13.

15. Targeting a wide range of stakeholders, including decision- and policy-makers, regions and communities, the private sector, academia, NGOs, youth and individuals, UNESCO will achieve this objective by harnessing its expertise in its fields of competence and built upon its experience and lessons learnt along the following three-pronged approach:

- (1) Knowledge (co-)production and dissemination;
- (2) Provision of climate services<sup>14</sup>;
- (3) Policy advice.

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<sup>13</sup> Information on UNESCO’s ongoing climate change actions, including a Climate Change Task Force Working Document prepared for the development of the updated UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change, is available on <http://en.unesco.org/themes/addressing-climate-change>

<sup>14</sup> The notion of climate services refers here to data and information compiled and presented in a way that responds to present expressed and anticipated future needs of stakeholders in relation to their efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



#### **IV. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA FOR UNESCO'S ACTIONS**

16. This Strategy is to be implemented through actions and activities outlined in the UNESCO document 39 C/5 that satisfy a set of general principles and criteria. Specifically, such actions and activities should:

- (a) Meet the needs of Member States in relation to their efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement in the overall context of documents 37 C/4 and 39 C/5;
- (b) Draw on, support and be consistent with relevant existing UNESCO programme and priority strategies and action plans;
- (c) Raise awareness on climate change as a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary issue in an overall sustainable development context while building on the strength and focus of each Major Programme of UNESCO;
- (d) Focus on activities that can be scaled-up in order to ensure a seamless, coherent and structured combination of regular and extrabudgetary sources;
- (e) Ensure synergies with the overall United Nations system.

#### **V. THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS AND PRIORITIES**

17. Consistent with the UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (document 37 C/4), UNESCO actions on climate change shall target the following thematic focus areas:

- I. Supporting Member States to develop and implement climate change education and public awareness programmes and policies;
- II. Promoting interdisciplinary climate knowledge and scientific cooperation for climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- III. Mobilizing creativity, diversity of cultural expression and cultural heritage preservation for climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- IV. Supporting inclusive social development, fostering intercultural dialogue and promoting ethical and gender mainstreaming principles in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Within these thematic focus areas, priority shall be given to actions contributing to Gender Equality, Africa, SIDS and involvement of youth.

#### **VI. CLIMATE CHANGE AND UNESCO PRIORITIES**

##### **VI.I Global Priority Gender Equality [SDG 13 and SDG 5]**

18. As stated already in 2001 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "climate change impacts will be differently distributed among different regions, generations, age, classes, income groups, occupations and genders" (IPCC, 2001). Gender-specific issues at stake include: (i) women are affected differently and more severely by climate change and its impact on agriculture, natural disasters, climate-change induced migrations because of social roles, discrimination and poverty; (ii) women are largely under-represented in decision-making processes regarding climate change, greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation/mitigation; and (iii) there are

significant gender biases in carbon emissions and hence carbon footprints due to women's and men's economic production and consumption patterns.

19. As women suffer disproportionately from poverty, they will also suffer most when erratic weather brings droughts or floods to marginal lands or crowded urban areas where poverty is most felt. While existing evidence underscores the vulnerability of women to climate change, there is also a wealth of evidence which underlines that women play an important role in supporting households and communities to mitigate the effects and adapt to climate change. Women are most of the world's farmers, household resource managers and caregivers; and women have led – and continue to lead – many of the most innovative responses to environmental challenges. At the local level, women provide particular kinds of social capital for mitigation, adaptation and coping with environmental change, actively organizing themselves during and after disasters to help their household and community.

20. Women are also in the best position to influence changes in behaviour for better disaster risk management as well as participate in and manage post-disaster efforts. Women are also able to map risks and vulnerabilities from their own standpoint and to play an important role in creating and monitoring early warning systems. Women's knowledge in adaptation (traditional and community specific) is an important resource in education for sustainable development. As effective agents of change in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and education for sustainable development, enhancing women's capacities to address climate change is a critical area of action. Women's access to resources as well as their involvement in decisions and the development of policies related to climate change is of utmost importance both to identify their specific needs and priorities but also to make full use of their knowledge and expertise, including traditional practices.

21. Men and women have different access to public awareness information, including early warning systems. These societal and cultural issues must be an integral part of providing truly universal access to information, especially with a view to enhancing gender equality in this vital area.

22. UNESCO will therefore work to raise awareness of gender specificities in adaptation and mitigation to climate change, including through the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, mapping of gender-specific emissions profiles, and differences in mitigation and adaptive capacities and strategies.

23. Based on the information in the Global Ocean Science Report, to be published in 2017, a sex-disaggregated distribution of researchers in different fields of ocean science will be provided by IOC, including marine science with the focus of climate change. These data will serve as a baseline for biennial performance indicators and targets for the next quadrennial period.

## **VI.II Climate Change and Global Priority Africa**

24. Recognizing that climate change could endanger future well-being of the population, ecosystems and socio-economic progress of Africa and cognizant of the vulnerability of African economic and production systems to climate change and climate variability and the continent's low mitigation and response capacities, UNESCO shall aim to improve education, outreach and the policy dimension of addressing climate change in African countries, in addition to its direct contribution to the regional knowledge base. Particular attention shall be paid to the development of science and technology and related policies, as stated in the UNESCO contribution to the African Union Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.

25. To assist with adaptation strategies along the coast of West Africa, the continuing IOC Integrated Coastal Area Management Project will incorporate a human dimensions component. This is an example of what shall become common practice: incorporating social and policy aspects into all ongoing climate-related science projects in the region.

26. The IOC is developing the capacities of its Member States in Africa by brokering innovation and learning, facilitating the transfer of marine technology and providing science-informed policy advice for the implementation of integrated ocean governance and management.

27. In the area of water UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) is implementing projects related to knowledge generation and capacity-building for water management under climate stress in all regions of Africa. IHP is also studying the impacts of global changes on river basins and groundwater resources with a focus on transboundary aquifers and SIDS groundwater systems, enhancing resilience to climate disasters (flood and drought) and urban water needs. This includes the first ever multi-disciplinary assessment of groundwater resources in 199 transboundary aquifers and 42 small islands, and the development and implementation of an experimental drought monitor project for Africa that provides near real-time monitoring of land surface hydrological conditions, based on modelling supported by remote sensing to improve capacity-building and adaptation to climate change.

28. African biosphere reserves, particularly in Central Africa and the Congo Basin, will be promoted as sites for pilot projects for reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+), thus addressing climate change mitigation.

### **VI.III. Climate Change in the UNESCO SIDS Action Plan**

29. With an increasingly changing global environment, due in particular to climate change, impacts are showing to be particularly devastating for small island developing states (SIDS), due to their continuing reliance upon natural resources for food security, health, shelter and livelihoods. This was the case in 2015 in Vanuatu after the Cyclone Pam, or more recently after the Cyclone Winston, which hit Fiji in February 2016. The consequences of this global environmental change (coastal inundations from sea level rise, droughts, extreme climatic events, expanding urban or industrial development, establishment of protected areas), exacerbate competition for already scarce resources, such as food, water and accessible land, leading to conflicting contexts at a local level. This is what makes SIDS challenges very specific and puts them in an extremely vulnerable situation.

30. These specific concerns of the SIDS were reiterated by the international community at the Third International Conference on SIDS (Apia, Samoa, September 2014), in the 2030 Agenda, as well as at the UNFCCC COP21. The outcomes of these events shaped the development of the UNESCO long-term SIDS Action Plan approved by the UNESCO Executive Board at its 199th session.

31. The dedicated UNESCO SIDS Action Plan proposes a set of objectives and follow-up actions to address the unique vulnerabilities and challenges faced by SIDS. It represents UNESCO's engagement in the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action [S.A.M.O.A.] Pathway, while reflecting the 2030 Agenda including the corresponding SDGs and their specific targets, as well as the UNFCCC COP21 Paris Agreement outcomes. Indeed, the Action Plan echoes many articles of the SAMOA Pathway, including *Climate Change* (paragraphs 31-46), and reflects most of the SDGs and some of their specific targets such as SDG 13. It also implements certain articles of the Paris Agreement, in particular articles 4, 6, 7.5, 10, 11, 12 and 14.

32. The focus of the Action Plan consists of five priority areas and aims at reinforcing SIDS human and institutional capacities via education and capacity-building; enhancing the resilience and sustainability of SIDS ecosystems; promoting social transformation, inclusion and justice; preserving tangible/intangible cultural and natural heritage, promoting culture for sustainable development; as well as increasing connectivity, information management and knowledge sharing in SIDS. It mobilizes UNESCO's multidisciplinary expertise from all its programme sectors to address the unique vulnerabilities and challenges faced by SIDS, including climate change. Through the Action Plan, UNESCO will collaborate with SIDS countries and communities to ensure the sustainable management of terrestrial and marine natural resources and heritage at the

regional, national and local levels; the adaptation of individuals, communities and states to climate and environmental change and natural hazards; as well as strengthen SIDS preparedness and response to natural disaster events and population related consequences.

33. One of the actions proposed to reduce island vulnerability and enhance resilience in the face of global environmental change, is the Sandwatch project. Through its broad-based participatory and integrated citizen-science MAST (Measure/Monitor, Analyse, Share, Take Action) approach, Sandwatch helps communities and policy-makers anticipate threats and co-design potential adaptive solutions to reinforce their resilience and contribute to global assessment process.

34. IOC's engagement in support of SIDS will be guided by the IOC SIDS Action Plan and Strategy adopted by IOC Member States in June 2016 in response to the SAMOA Pathway, with particular emphasis on the building of SIDS actions related to coastal hazard early warning systems, the development of marine scientific and technological capacity of SIDS, and enhanced cooperation to assess ocean acidification impacts.

35. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 highlights international, regional, sub-regional and transboundary cooperation and calls for a broad and more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk. It specifies seven global targets, among which is the need to substantially increase assistance to developing countries to complement their national action and ensure access to multi-hazard warning systems and disaster risk information and assessment by 2030. The IOC's hazard warning system was developed in complete accordance with the Sendai Framework and is highly relevant in the context of SIDS and low-lying coastal countries.

#### **VI.IV Youth – actors in understanding and addressing climate change**

36. Climate change impacts a wide range of sectors that affect the lives of all populations, particularly those of young women and men. The environmental, social and economic consequences of climate change impact youth access to safe and adequate water and food, as well as to education, good health, housing, work and an overall standard of living. Climate change also exacerbates poverty and enhances migration, leading to challenges related to the social inclusion of young migrants.

37. Youth embody the present and the future of the planet. There are currently 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 in the world. This is the largest youth population ever, and in many countries young women and men constitute the majority of the population. These young people are also the most educated, with strong social and environmental awareness and the power to transform societies towards a climate resilient future. As such, youth should play a major role in both understanding and addressing climate change.

38. In line with the UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021), the role of youth in leading change, by mobilizing their energy and ideas to address climate change, will be particularly emphasized. UNESCO will mobilize its youth networks, including young men and women scientists, to promote mitigation and adaptation to climate change by encouraging their involvement as knowledge holders, innovators and leaders in policy processes, as well as in education and public awareness campaigns. Building capacities of youth to become today's and tomorrow's drivers of green economies, green growth and sustainable development will be a particular priority. This will not only tackle climate change in the long term, but will also respond to major concerns regarding youth employability and livelihoods, and will enhance their recognition and inclusion as key actors in the development of our societies.

## VII. IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

39. The Strategy will be implemented both through actions undertaken by UNESCO Major Programmes, as well as through intersectoral and inter-programme cooperation involving UNESCO Headquarters and field offices facilitated by the intersectoral UNESCO Task Force on Climate Change. Full use will be made of the UNESCO designated sites (i.e. biosphere reserves, UNESCO Global Geoparks and World Heritage sites) for this purpose.

### A. International and Intergovernmental UNESCO Programmes, Networks and Partners:

40. The international and intergovernmental science programmes (MAB, IHP, IGCP, LINKS and MOST) and IOC will be fully engaged in the implementation of the Strategy, including through dedicated joint activities duly reflected in document 39 C/5. Through these programmes, UNESCO will also mobilize the global academic community for common climate change actions.

### B. Collaboration with United Nations bodies, including the UNFCCC, and COP host countries

41. The Strategy shall be implemented in synergy with United Nations partner organizations, while avoiding overlaps, consistent with established common core principles for a United Nations system-wide approach for climate action.<sup>15</sup> UNESCO shall also further build on partnership opportunities with the UNFCCC Secretariat on actions of mutual interest for the implementation of the Strategy,

42. Following its initial success in relation to COP20 and COP21, and collaboration in progress for COP 22, UNESCO, through the 'UNESCO for COP' Partnership Initiative (U4C), will continue to cooperate with COP host countries for the mobilization and engagement of the scientific, educational, media, and private sector communities, as well as the public at large, for enhanced climate change awareness and action in the lead-up to, during and in the follow-up to UNFCCC COPs.

### C. UNESCO designated sites (World Heritage, biosphere reserves, UNESCO Global Geoparks)

43. The iconic value of UNESCO-designated World Heritage sites, biosphere reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks means they serve as a very useful platform for the implementation of the Strategy by facilitating the sharing of information on applied and tested monitoring, mitigation and adaptation processes, and by raising awareness on the impacts of climate change on human societies and cultural diversity, biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the world's natural and cultural heritage. Spread across different regions, climates and ecosystems around the world, UNESCO designated sites serve as global field observatories for climate change, where information on the impacts of climate change can be gathered and disseminated. Studies are currently being conducted at several sites, and the results are used to plan tailored adaptation and mitigation measures. This includes the promotion of sustainable applications of renewable energy technologies, energy efficiency and sharing of related best practices.

44. UNESCO supports its Member States, as the sovereign custodians of their sites, in these efforts including in building their capacity to design sustainable development options, responding to the new conservation challenges posed by climate change, developing innovative policy, tailoring management strategies, and recognizing the value of resilient communities and of protected area systems that help safeguard the global environment and human societies from the threats posed by climate change.

45. Finally, by effectively linking efforts under the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, and by creating synergies and among them and other UNESCO Conventions in the field of Culture,

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<sup>15</sup> Common Core Principles for a United Nations system-wide Approach to Climate Action is contained in the Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its Thirty-First session (document CEB/2016/4)/

UNESCO designated sites provide the Organization with a significant comparative advantage in the overall United Nations family.

D. UNESCO Centres and Chairs

46. The full range of relevant UNESCO category 1 and 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs will be encouraged to engage in the implementation of the Strategy.

E. UNESCO National Commissions

47. Ultimately, the success of the Strategy will depend on the effective mobilization of actors and stakeholders at the national levels. This implies that UNESCO National Commissions and national committees linked to UNESCO intergovernmental programmes have an important role to play, including through projects financed under the UNESCO participation programme, in the implementation of the Strategy.

F. Cities and regional authorities

48. City and regional authorities are increasingly pioneering innovative climate change and sustainability initiatives. UNESCO will subsequently establish mechanisms under the Strategy for effective partnerships with such authorities.

G. NGOs, Youth and ASPnet

49. UNESCO, through its NGO Liaison Committee, Youth Networks and the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), will engage with the global NGO community, youth and schools on issues of common interest linked to actions promoting the implementation of the Strategy.

H. Private sector

50. In view of the crucial pivotal role of the private sector for addressing contemporary and future climate change and sustainable development challenges, UNESCO will seek to establish partnerships with relevant private sector partners and branch organizations esteemed for their climate change and sustainable development credentials in industry, business and finance.

I. Intersectoral UNESCO Task Force on Climate Change

51. Established in 2015 by the Director-General as a platform for information sharing, action project design, policy development, fundraising and interagency cooperation with representation of all sectors and central services and dedicated focal points in field offices, the UNESCO Task Force on Climate Change will, under the leadership of the Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, contribute to the coordinated and effective implementation of the Strategy. The Natural Sciences and the Social and Human Sciences Sectors are co-chairing the Task Force's Executive Committee.

## **VIII. BUDGETARY PROVISIONS**

52. Financial resources needed for the implementation of the Strategy will be estimated and included in document 39 C/5. It is expected that the effective implementation of the updated Strategy will depend to a significant degree on the availability of extrabudgetary resources. Cognizant of this fact, the Strategy endorses as a guiding principle a focus on activities that can be scaled-up in order to ensure a seamless, coherent and structured combination of regular and extrabudgetary sources. Enhanced efforts for enlarging the donor base and establishing new strategic partnerships will be made. This includes ongoing efforts to renew the Organization's accreditation to the Adaptation Fund and accreditation to the Green Climate Fund. In view of the

fact that many developing countries among the Member States, especially those most vulnerable, will require substantial financial support to carry out mitigation and adaptation efforts, UNESCO will also seek to act as an honest broker assisting Member States in their efforts to secure financing, such as under the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

## **IX. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH**

53. Actions undertaken to implement the Strategy shall include communication and outreach components. These shall be fully consistent with the Strategy's mission statement "Changing minds, not the climate" and its objective. UNESCO's social media facilities shall be mobilized in support of the Strategy. This will include the preparation of a set of core messages and graphical resources to be made available to interested Member States and implementation partners. A special brochure for the general public on UNESCO's climate change actions will be prepared.

## **X. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

54. The implementation of this Strategy will be monitored and reported on as an integral part of the 39 C/5 periodic reporting process. Evaluation of the Strategy implementation will be undertaken in collaboration with IOS.