

Action for Climate Empowerment under International Climate Law: Evolution, Legal Status and Implementation Challenges

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The Laboratory of Modern Technology Applications in Law

Received: 20/01/2026 Accepted: 03/04/2026 Published: 17/08/2026

Abstract:

This study analyzes the international legal framework governing Action for climate empowerment (ACE), tracing its conceptual development and identifying its fundamental elements, while highlighting its role in enhancing the effectiveness of climate action. This concept constitutes one of the supportive mechanisms to achieve the objectives of international climate instruments, starting with the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), passing through the Kyoto Protocol, and culminating in the 2015 Paris Agreement. The concept serves as a strategic tool to engage individuals and communities in efforts to combat climate change and strengthen their resilience against its impacts, by encouraging the adoption of more sustainable patterns, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of climate goals and the Sustainable Development Agenda.

The work for climate empowerment is based on the implementation of six interconnected areas, including: education, training, public awareness, access to information, public participation, and international cooperation. These areas are relied upon to raise general environmental awareness, embody behavioral transformation, and expand the scope of community participation in the formulation and implementation of climate policies, in a manner that supports the principles of climate justice and paves the way for a just and inclusive transition.

These activities have gained increasing attention and experienced gradual development through decisions of the Conferences of the Parties (COP), both regarding the Convention and the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA). International programs and action plans have been established to promote these activities, with calls for members to integrate them into national policies, education systems, and youth programs. They have also been reformulated and incorporated into the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, with an emphasis on involving marginalized groups to ensure a fair and inclusive approach to addressing climate challenges.

Although this study, which relied on an analytical methodology of relevant international legal texts, concluded in response to its problem statement that the international legal framework for work on climate empowerment is relatively adequate, the international reality reveals shortcomings in the binding nature and implementation of its elements. These shortcomings remain subject to several challenges mainly related to disparities among states, particularly concerning limited resources and institutional capacities, weak integration of climate issues into educational systems, and limited involvement of actors and stakeholders,

especially vulnerable groups and civil society, in climate decision-making. Addressing these challenges requires activating international partnerships, building local capacities, and enhancing access to accurate climate information for all relevant actors.

Keywords: Work for climate empowerment, climate change, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Paris Agreement

Introduction

Climate change has become an undeniable reality and lived experience after having been long neglected by governments and states. Today, it asserts itself prominently in international forums, competing with the most significant global issues as one of the greatest emerging humanitarian challenges of the twenty-first century (Franziska-Carolin, 2020, p. 21). Its severe consequences, some irreversible, extend beyond environmental impacts to affect various economic and service sectors such as agriculture, forestry, education, health, and water services (ODEKU & Edson, 2010, p. 159), as well as social dimensions. Currently, climate change is regarded as a security issue and an existential threat ([UNFCCC], 2019, p. III) that jeopardizes the sustainability of human societies and ecosystems worldwide.

The growing awareness of the impacts and severity of climate change, which makes urgent action imperative—especially given that there remains an opportunity to address the issue—has catalyzed international mobilization under the United Nations framework to regulate climate matters. The objective has been to establish legal obligations for proactive and reactive measures to ensure an effective and appropriate response to prevent or adapt to its effects, particularly following the emergence of scientific evidence on the phenomenon and the increasing intensity and frequency of its impacts. These efforts culminated in the formulation of three key climate instruments. The first legal instrument, the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), recognized the global nature of the greenhouse effect and its severe consequences at multiple levels and across all sectors, deeming it a common concern of humankind. The Convention attributed the unprecedented human impact on the environment to direct and indirect alterations in the composition of the global atmosphere, necessitating concrete steps to redirect human activities in harmony with environmental protection requirements.

Undoubtedly, climate action, like other transboundary environmental issues, requires collective effort and the contribution of all actors and stakeholders, thereby strengthening national efforts to implement effective climate policies and facilitating practical measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to preserve the planet's future and sustain life, as well as to adapt to climate changes to avoid the worst consequences.

While major efforts must come from states committed to taking actions on climate change based on equity and their common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities to repair damage, these states cannot fully implement their environmental and climate policies without involving individuals, civil society, and the private sector in these efforts and sharing the endeavors with them. This principle was affirmed in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which states that “environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens.” This acknowledgment by states underscores the shared interest and necessity for cooperation to achieve effective climate efforts and generate the required added value. To make this approach a tangible reality, individuals worldwide must

meet certain prerequisites before engaging. Recognizing this, Article 6 of the UNFCCC enshrined a set of activities for Action for Climate Empowerment.

On this basis, the present study seeks to analyze the extent to which the main international climate instruments contribute to institutionalizing and enhancing Action for Climate Empowerment by examining the legal frameworks that govern it and evaluating their effectiveness in supporting the participation of various actors in addressing climate change challenges.

Accordingly, the principal research question of this study is formulated as follows:

To what extent is the international legal framework governing Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) adequate?

First Section: The Conceptual Framework of Action for Climate Empowerment(ACE)

To increase the momentum and effectiveness of efforts aimed at mitigating climate change and its impacts—whether through formulating and implementing strategies and measures related to the reduction of anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or enhancing the capacity of individuals and communities to adapt to its recurring effects—broad participation of all societal actors and stakeholders is essential. However, before such engagement can be effective, these actors must possess a deep understanding and awareness of the problem to fulfill their roles successfully; otherwise, efforts will be futile. Therefore, it is necessary to target a set of interconnected fields to build the capacities of partners, accelerating and expanding the scope and pace of efforts while ensuring their effectiveness, ultimately producing the desired climate response.

This section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic by defining the concept of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and exploring its domains, thus establishing an integrated knowledge base to guide efforts toward achieving effective and impactful climate empowerment.

First: The Conceptual Framework of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

Environmental empowerment is the ability of communities to respond to rapidly changing environments by making appropriate internal and external changes through increased social awareness, higher levels of socio-economic participation and adopting new insights into environmental processes for change and self-renewal (Faedlulloh, Retnayu , & Bambang , 2019, p. 012055). Environmental empowerment has a more technical subset called “Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE),” which refers to the six interrelated areas that the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) recognized in Article 6 of the Convention as a holistic framework to promote climate goals. These areas include education and training, public awareness and participation, public access to information and international cooperation.

Although the UNFCCC does not explicitly define ACE but rather enumerates its elements, it can be understood within the Convention’s context as a process aimed at enhancing communities’ capacity to prepare for and appropriately respond to climate change impacts. This is achieved by equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge and understanding to confront the complex challenges posed by climate change (Cintron-Rodriguez, Haley , Deb , Frank , & Jen , 2021), ensuring their effective participation and assigning them roles in national climate action. The end goal is to create an informed society that recognizes the challenge and

acts, shifting climate change from a state-centric issue to a multi-actor issue that inclusively engages all within a participatory framework, making climate action a collective responsibility.

The term “Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)” was officially used for the first time at the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24), held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 15 December 2018, during the third part of the first session of the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA1-3). This came after the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI48) in May 2018 recommended the adoption of a draft decision on the issue ([UNFCCC], 2018). COP24 therefore referred to efforts related to implementing Article 12 of the Paris Agreement on climate change as “Action for Climate Empowerment,” in paragraph 1 of decision 17/CMA.1, rather than the previous reference as “action to implement Article 6 of the UNFCCC.”

Given the significance of the activities outlined in Article 6, COP24 reaffirmed all these elements as integral to fulfilling the ultimate objectives of both the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

Thus, Action for Climate Empowerment emerges as a comprehensive approach and process aimed at generating a collective response by strengthening the capacities of individuals and communities to contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change and adapting to them. This is achieved by focusing on knowledge areas and community engagement to enhance resilience against climate risks and to support climate policies centered on carbon emission reductions.

The UNFCCC’s targeting of these six domains stems from their critical role in fostering necessary transformations in lifestyles, attitudes, and behaviors vital to sustainable development and resilience against emerging climate impacts. The ultimate aim is to promote environmental awareness and learning; build individual and community capacity through training and technical support; and realise climate justice by ensuring equal access to climate-related opportunities – especially for vulnerable groups such as the poor, children, women and the elderly. It allows them to build the ability to deal with climate risks like droughts, floods and temperature rises, or to move towards more sustainable practices in agriculture, water management, forestry, renewable energy and beyond.

It is worth noting that Action for Climate Empowerment has some overlap with a number of related concepts while maintaining its own functional and substantive identity. While climate justice focuses on equity in the distribution of burdens and impacts of climate change, ACE focuses on capacity building and the promotion of participation in climate action. “Climate governance” refers to the organization and steering of responses to climate change at various levels through regulatory mechanisms. ACE, on the other hand, focuses on empowering the actors themselves through education, training, awareness and access to information. At the same time, “environmental participation” is a mechanism of participation in environmental decision-making, while ACE is broader, involving the preparation and qualification of individuals for effective participation.

In general, ACE has increasingly evolved into an important enabling framework for effective and inclusive climate action. It facilitates and accelerates the development and implementation of strategies by states, ensures sustainable climate progress through cultivating

a public will that holds current and future governments accountable to climate goals, and guarantees that climate policy is equitable, inclusive of all voices, and attentive to their interests.

Second: Areas of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

Recognizing the importance of climate empowerment, the UNFCCC obligates Parties, under Article 4, paragraph 1(d) entitled "Commitments," to "promote and cooperate in education, training, and public awareness related to climate change, and encourage widest participation possible in this process." To comply, the provisions of Article 6 of the Convention delineate the elements of ACE.

Although many provisions of the UNFCCC contain general commitments based on voluntary responsibilities (Latim, 2021) without legally binding obligations (Roeben & Mark, 2022, p. 34) or specific sanctions for non-compliance (Matz-Luck, 2009, p. 442), they establish principles and foundations for adopting further instruments (MAYER, 2022, p. 37). This was realized with the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which reaffirmed Article 6 of the Convention in its Article 10(e), urging Parties to cooperate internationally to develop and implement educational and training programs, strengthen national institutions—especially human and institutional capacities—and exchange or second personnel to train experts, particularly in developing countries. Nationally, Article 10(e) called for facilitating public awareness and access to climate-related information and for developing appropriate means of implementation through relevant Convention bodies.

The Paris Agreement adopted at COP21 in 2015 is a new framework for the international climate regime, which sets approaches for post-2020 action. Article 12 requires Parties to "cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information." This highlights the significance of these actions in advancing the Agreement's goals.

The comparison of Article 6 of the UNFCCC with Article 10(e) of the Kyoto Protocol and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement shows that the latter two largely repeat the substance of Article 6 with some variation in the wording. Article 6 sets out six areas of work on climate change, five of which are to be undertaken at the national level and one at the international level, as detailed below:

a. Domains of Action for Climate Empowerment at the National Level

Most of the ACE elements under the UNFCCC are implemented at national level, in line with national laws and capacities.

1- Climate Change Education: Article 6(a)(1) encourages Parties to facilitate climate change education and awareness. Education is seen as a powerful grassroots tool for positive change and a key enabler in the global response to the climate crisis. UNESCO defines education for sustainable development (ESD) as the curricula that are generally designed to address the urgent needs to understand and respond to climate change, and to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that are necessary to act as agents of change (UNESCO, n.d).

Despite many definitions, climate education is often narrowly defined as the transfer of scientific knowledge in the context of environmental education which is concerned with academic understanding and ignores the wider dimensions of empowerment, behavior change, values and practical skills. It should also highlight the institutional environment in which

learning takes place and promote resilient, sustainable and green education systems (Anderson, 2012, p. 193).

Implementing the necessary knowledge in learners helps build a generation more aware of the consequences of climate change. It enhances understanding, ensuring the ability to grasp the interconnectedness of climate change events and the necessary adaptations, while also fostering problem-solving skills and sound decision-making on related issues. Furthermore, it enables learners to share their learning with their families to build climate-conscious communities. Therefore, climate education is expected to achieve the following benefits:

▪ **Raising Awareness of Climate Change Impacts and its Awareness:** A good understanding of climate-related issues and their interaction with other societal issues equips people with the knowledge they need to enhance preparedness for the challenges of climate change and raise adaptive capacity to cope with climatic phenomena such as floods, droughts and wildfires. Knowledge of concepts related to greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, climate phenomena, renewable energy, sustainability and similar notions helps reduce vulnerabilities and build climate-resilient societies. Climate education also raises awareness on environmental and health rights, creates a sense of individual and collective responsibility, and encourages participation in voluntary activities such as emergency response and first aid, tree planting, environmental clean-up campaigns and other community initiatives.

▪ **Encouraging Sustainable Practices:** Climate education helps to create a generation that understands the relationship between human activities and climate change, and so enables deep and lasting changes in awareness and behavior towards practices that contribute to climate change mitigation. Such education influences lifestyle patterns, promoting more environmentally responsible behaviours like the use of renewable energy sources, rationalization of consumption and reduction of household waste. It also develops adaptive capacities by equipping learners with the knowledge and skill to tackle emerging environmental issues and prepare for future risks. Furthermore, climate education contributes to global decarbonization efforts by enabling social learning processes that can lead to rapid, equitable and transformative transitions to sustainability, particularly in regions that depend on fossil fuels (Tàbara, et al., 2024, p. 325).

▪ **Supporting climate decisions and policies:** Climate change is a complex problem which requires the coordinated and active involvement of all stakeholders. Such active participation plays a great role in the success of climate policies. Public participation, which means the exchange of information between governments and citizens on climate-related issues, promotes cooperative action and improves the implementation and efficacy of national and local climate policies. In this sense, Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (United Nations, 1992) states that environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level.

Given the importance of the field of climate education, it has become necessary to intensify efforts to update curricula and educational programs to ensure the integration of concepts, values, and even behaviors related to understanding and dealing with climate change, at various educational levels with its mandatory implementation. Educational activities can take many forms depending on the educational level, such as scientific research and academic

studies at the university level, simple educational activities suitable for the primary and secondary education stages, as well as textbooks and various pedagogical aids.

The United Nations has included climate education in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), under Goal 13.3, which aims to enhance education, public awareness, and institutional capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and early warning.

UNESCO champions education on climate change as central to its educational work through initiatives like the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) programme and the Climate Preparedness pilot project within its Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet). UNESCO's 2018–2021 Climate Change Education Strategy is committed to the urgent fight against climate change through education, science, culture, information and communication, under the theme of "Changing Minds, Not the Climate".

In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its Special Report urged countries to accelerate education on climate change to facilitate widespread behavior change consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5 °C (Allen, Dube, & Solecki, 2018, p. 22).

The 2021 Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development calls for urgent action on the interlinked global challenges of climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution. It recognizes education as a powerful enabler to address these challenges and support integration across the dimensions of sustainable development.

In September 2022, the United Nations convened the "Partnership for Green Education" summit, which drew attention to the need to transform education so that it best responds to the climate and environmental crises by equipping learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for climate action and sustainable development.

In conclusion, climate education is a relatively new phenomenon, called for by Article 6 of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Today, it is gaining increasing recognition and is being gradually integrated into national curricula. While it contributes to equipping individuals with the knowledge necessary to achieve the established climate goals, it will take considerable time for this positive transformation to become fully apparent, potentially exceeding a decade according to some experts. This is in addition to the limitations that may hinder the implementation of this component, the greatest threat of which is climate change itself, which undermines the very foundation of education. Providing quality education and ensuring the physical and psychological well-being of learners under harsh climatic conditions, coupled with the potential damage to school and educational facilities, is extremely challenging and can disrupt the continuity of education (Anderson, 2012, p. 193). Furthermore, in developing countries, the implementation of this component within the education sector remains weak, representing an untapped opportunity to combat climate change.

2- Training: Technical skills and knowledge are key to effectively tackling climate change. Training programs are generally tailored to specific audiences such as academics, technicians and administrators (Article 6(a)(4)). COP26 increased training to include important climate actors, including journalists, teachers and community leaders with a local influence (Paas, 2016, p. 68).

Training in ACE equips with technical competencies to perform activities such as climate data collection, modeling, national emissions inventories, identification of climate-friendly technology and national action planning. Activities include specialized technical training,

workshops, seminars, conferences and technical documentation creation (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[UNFCCC], 2002).

The success of this element depends on the government's efforts to organise and supervise capacity-building for specialists and to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills, sometimes with external expertise.

3- Public Awareness: In public policy, it is essential to inform the public about matters of importance to them, and such efforts are usually launched to achieve specific objectives (MCGUIRE, EVANS, Emily, & KANE, Eddie, 2021, p. 417). In the field of climate, public awareness refers to a communication process or organized effort to inform the target audience about the risks associated with climate change. The aim is to increase their awareness, suggest ways to change behavior to mitigate these risks, and empower them to make informed decisions to reduce their exposure, thus protecting lives and property. This is especially important given that many individuals are dealing with climate change without sufficient knowledge, making it crucial to focus on enhancing their understanding and building their knowledge to strengthen their resilience and ability to cope with climate change.

Unlike the Climate Education (CCE) component, which targets school-aged children and students, this component targets all groups, including school-aged children, with the aim of creating widespread interest in climate issues and fostering public understanding that translates into changes in attitudes and behaviors, helping people make climate-friendly choices. Without comprehensive public awareness of the importance and objectives of climate solutions, these solutions cannot be implemented effectively if the public is unaware of what they are doing. This makes the dissemination of accurate, reliable, and age-appropriate information and educational materials essential (Morgera, 2024).

Given the broad range of target groups for public awareness campaigns, governments, various organizations, and the private sector are responsible for implementing these campaigns through a variety of traditional and modern methods to reach the widest possible audience. The focus of knowledge is typically related to climate-related issues such as health, biodiversity, and water resource management and conservation. Public awareness activities can take many forms, including workshops, seminars, conferences, forums and networks, exhibitions, and campaigns. With the possibility of producing and distributing media materials on a large scale, such as brochures, newsletters, press releases, websites, and television and radio programs, including translation into appropriate languages, for the results of the study and research.

4- Public Access to Climate Information: It is important to access climate information, which is part of a broader category encompassed by the term environmental information. This element has two aspects: the first relates to it being a human right, falling under the first generation of rights, and its realization brings welfare to individuals and contributes to their enjoyment of their rights. The second aspect considers it as one of the means supporting environmental protection (Jaber, 2017, p. 91).

In general, it can be defined as "the right of an individual living in a society to obtain sufficient information from the administration or authority governing that society about matters that concern them and that they wish to know" (Al-Nsirat, 2016, p. 8). It is evident from the definition that the information to which access is granted is that produced by the public sector in the context of its duties.

Given the importance of implementing this element, paragraph A(2) of Article 6 obliges the parties to the agreement to "ensure the public's access to information related to climate change and its impacts." It is expected that the widespread dissemination of climate information by involving citizens and civil society organizations or by facilitating access procedures for those who request it and making it available for free will increase awareness and understanding, thereby enabling the building of capacities related to resilience against the negative impacts of climate change and improving preparedness. It also contributes to exploiting the opportunities arising from climate variability and change, thus helping the community to become more resilient in dealing with the increasing impacts of climate change (Machingura, Nyamwanza, Hulme, & Stuart, 2018). Thus, obtaining this type of information contributes to building an individual capable of fulfilling their role in society and meeting their environmental responsibilities. In addition, enshrining this right allows individuals to participate in decision-making related to climate issues and contribute to improving their quality, as well as enhancing climate change programs and policies and implementing them to achieve national climate goals through interaction or discussions based on the principles of participation and transparency.

Despite the increasing demand for access to information related to climate change due to its role in raising public awareness as an important element for climate empowerment, there are many various obstacles that prevent access to it. On this basis, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) adopted a set of 26 voluntary guiding principles during the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council in 2010 to overcome obstacles and develop national legislation to improve access to environmental information, public participation, and access to justice in environmental matters, thereby enhancing the "effective implementation of its commitments under Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration." The first part includes seven guidelines for states regarding access to information, aimed at bridging gaps in legal rules and practices and encouraging broad access to information, which included the following (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)):

- Affordable, effective, and timely access for individuals to environmental information held by public authorities upon request, without the need to prove a legal or other interest.
- Environmental information in the public domain should include information about environmental quality, environmental impacts on health and the factors affecting it, as well as information about legislation and policies, and advice on how to obtain the information.
- Clarity of laws regarding the grounds on which an environmental information request can be denied. In addition, explaining the reasons for the refusal, taking into account the public interest served by the disclosure.
- States should ensure that their competent public authorities regularly collect and update relevant environmental information, including information related to environmental performance and compliance of operators with activities that may impact the environment. To ensure the adequate flow of information regarding proposed and existing activities that may significantly impact the environment.
- States should prepare and periodically publish updated information on the state of the environment at reasonable intervals, including information on its quality and the pressures on the environment.

- In the event of an imminent threat to human health or the environment, states should ensure the dissemination of all information that would enable the public to take measures to prevent such harm immediately.
- States should provide the means and encourage effective capacity building, among public authorities and the public alike, to facilitate effective access to environmental information.

Climate information is considered an enabling tool related to the principle of availability and disclosure and is linked to the right when the law recognizes it; it is a restricted right with specific areas. In addition, when the law guaranties this, it becomes an obligation on the state to proactively publish as much information as possible in good faith to demonstrate its transparency and gain the trust of its citizens (Abat, 2014), or by providing it to those who request it and facilitating access procedures.

5- Public participation in addressing climate change: To ensure the effectiveness of mitigation efforts and addressing the harmful effects of climate change, broad participation from various community groups, all sectors of society, and at all levels is essential. On this basis, paragraph A(3) of Article 6 mandates the necessity of "public participation in addressing climate change and its impacts and preparing appropriate responses." Participation in climate change issues means directly mobilizing the public to understand, assess, prevent, and correct climate change. Enhancing public and effective participation in public decision-making related to climate issues represents a fundamental aspect, enabling the formulation, development, implementation, and monitoring of policies and plans related to climate change and its risk reduction.

The report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in its twenty-seventh session called for the full participation of all people and allowing their effective influence in public decision-making processes, stating that "the rights of public participation include the rights to be consulted at every stage of legislative drafting and policy formulation, to express criticism, and to make proposals aimed at improving the performance and inclusiveness of all government bodies involved in public affairs". (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2014)

Mobilizing the widest possible audience, including civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, and so on, requires organizing conferences, dialogs, and meetings aimed at stimulating discussion (Caprini, Aneeqah Tariq, Cecilia Consalvo, Max van Deursen, & Sofie de Wit, 2020, p. 8), ultimately leading to the successful implementation of national climate policies and their associated activities related to mitigation and adaptation to climate impacts. Participation can also be through policy dialogs with stakeholders; advisory groups; voluntary projects; discussion groups; and community projects.

The second part of the guidelines for developing national legislation on access to information, public participation, and access to justice in environmental matters by the United Nations Environment Program includes seven guiding principles for countries to ensure public participation in environmental decision-making (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)):

- States should ensure early and effective public participation in environmental decision-making. To this end, the relevant members of the public should be informed of their opportunities to participate early in the decision-making process;

- States should, as much as possible, make efforts to proactively seek public participation in a transparent and consultative manner, including efforts to ensure that the concerned public is given an appropriate opportunity to express their views;
 - States should ensure the availability of all relevant information related to environmental decision-making in an objective, understandable, timely, and effective manner to the concerned public;
 - States should ensure that due consideration is given to public comments in the decision-making process and that decisions are announced to the public;
 - States should ensure that when conducting a review process where issues or circumstances of environmental significance have not been previously considered, the public should be able to participate in any such review process to the extent permitted by the circumstances.
 - States should consider appropriate ways to ensure, at an appropriate stage, public participation in the preparation of legally binding rules that may have a significant impact on the environment and in the preparation of environmental policies, plans, and programs;
 - States should provide means for capacity building, including environmental education and awareness-raising, to enhance public participation in environmental decision-making.
- Paragraph A(3) of Article 6 directly aligns with Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, which establishes a fundamental concept of democratic governance and effective environmental management on a global scale. This principle emphasizes that "the best way to address environmental issues is through the participation of all concerned citizens." From here, the role of the previous element "access to information" emerges as a cornerstone for achieving this participation, as open information enables public engagement in the process of formulating environmental policies and making environmental decisions. This transparency in performance will contribute to building trust between the government and citizens, thereby supporting the achievement of more sustainable and inclusive environmental solutions.

b. Areas of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) at the international level

It includes one element, which is: international cooperation. Addressing climate change requires a global response, supported by appropriate and effective international cooperation to address climate changes and their impacts appropriately, especially since the risks associated with climate change are much greater in low-income countries (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2009). Therefore, it has become essential today to establish responsible and non-discriminatory processes to target the most needy individuals, groups, and peoples. It was also mentioned in a report issued by the Human Rights Council in 2009 that "today, the interests of countries and the impacts of the actions they take have become increasingly interconnected, and the new challenges include those posed by climate change... and if we want to address it effectively, we must do so collectively" (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2009). This is what was previously called for in paragraphs (1 and 2) of Article Six (6), obliging the parties to cooperate with each other and with the existing bodies in this regard. Including: developing and exchanging educational materials and public awareness about climate change and its effects; developing and implementing educational and training programs, including strengthening national institutions and exchanging or seconding staff to train experts in this field, especially for developing countries.

Thus, the commitment of countries to implement treaties is not limited to making efforts within their jurisdictions only, but also includes contributing, through international cooperation, to assisting developing countries. This activity aligns with the principle stated in the United Nations Framework Convention on "common but differentiated responsibilities." According to this principle, developed country parties (listed in Annex I) are committed to assisting developing country parties (not listed in Annex I) in covering the costs of adapting to the adverse effects of climate change and giving full consideration to the specific needs of the least developed countries regarding financing. International cooperation is not just a commitment of one country toward another, but also a commitment toward individuals (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2009).

It is noted that this element came to enhance the five elements within the framework of international cooperation to promote and implement them, by addressing the needs of countries in accordance with their specific circumstances and priorities, and it also closes the door for countries to excuse themselves by citing their weak knowledge and technical capacities in implementing the provisions of Article 6 nationally. Where sub-regional, regional, and international cooperation in the aforementioned activities can play a key role in enhancing the collective capacity of the parties. Also international governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, in implementing the agreement, improving synergies between different agreements, and ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of all in efforts toward sustainable development (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2009). This element is also important for bridging implementation gaps to achieve climate goals, which requires establishing and improving bilateral or multilateral partnerships to raise ambition regarding climate empowerment efforts.

Summary Table of Article 6 Activities — Scope and Objectives:

Domain	Objectives		Implementation Problem
<i>Education</i>	Promoting a better understanding, changing habits in the long term	Enhancing a better understanding and capacity to address climate change and its impacts.	curriculum integration
<i>Training</i>	Develop practical skills		funding/expertise
<i>Public awareness</i>	Reaching individuals of all ages and backgrounds	Promoting community engagement, creativity, and knowledge in finding solutions to climate change.	outreach
<i>Public access to information</i>	Making information available, affordable, and free		legal barriers
<i>Public participation</i>	Involving all stakeholders in decision-making and implementation	Engaging all stakeholders in discussion and partnership to respond collectively to climate change.	limited influence
<i>International cooperation</i>	Strengthening cooperation, joint efforts, and knowledge exchange		capacity disparities

(Source: Paas, L. (2016). Action for Climate Empowerment: Guidelines for Accelerating Solutions through Education, Training, and Public Awareness. UNESCO Publications, p. 3)

It is clear from the above that the main international instruments related to climate have not treated climate empowerment as a secondary element, but rather established it as a fundamental mechanism to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of climate policies. In this context, Article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has worked to establish a comprehensive reference framework for it by targeting six areas, which are expected to contribute to building climate awareness and capacity development, thereby supporting an effective response to the challenges of climate change. However, the practical implementation of the commitments of this article still faces a number of challenges due to its flexible formulation. Among these, the implementation of the six elements is linked to national capabilities and international cooperation, which results in varying levels of application among the parties to the agreement, raising questions about the effectiveness of the international legal framework for climate empowerment. Not to mention other challenges, the most prominent of which are the limited integration of climate issues into educational systems, the weakness and inadequacy of training programs, and the shortcomings of awareness strategies in reaching various segments of society. The absence of effective mechanisms to influence decision-making, the disparity in interests and capabilities between countries, which hinders the process of international cooperation.

Therefore, the effectiveness of working toward climate empowerment does not stop merely with its acknowledgment in international instruments, but rather depends on the ability of countries to translate normative commitments into effective institutional policies and practices that ensure sustainable engagement and participation of various actors in climate action. How much we need to identify and implement complementary operational factors for it to translate into a tangible impact on the ground.

The second Section: The legal evolution of climate empowerment efforts within the international climate system

Since the crowning of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development "Earth Summit" (UNCED) in Rio in 1992, with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which primarily aimed to work toward stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions alongside adapting to the impacts of climate change. For this purpose, Article 6 was included, which contains a set of elements as supporting tools to achieve the objectives of the agreement. Despite the inclusion of general provisions in the article, additional efforts were required to develop and explain it, along with establishing mechanisms for its gradual implementation through resolutions by a presiding body representing all the parties to the agreement. This "supreme body" is known as the "Conference of the Parties (COP)" established under Article 7 of the Framework Convention, which meets annually to review the implementation of the Convention and makes decisions within its jurisdiction to enhance this implementation at both the institutional and administrative levels (Caytas, 2018, p. 3), verify the compliance of the parties with the commitments they undertook under the Convention; it also seeks to stimulate and create an easy framework for exchanging information on the adopted measures and their effects; and any other actions for legal instruments it may adopt, and "keeps the implementation of the Convention under regular review. (United Nations, 1992)" Thus, the

efforts related to enhancing and developing the provisions of Article 6 of the agreement came from the Conference of the Parties with assistance from its subsidiary bodies. Therefore, tracing the conceptual development of this framework requires examining the key milestones that contributed to its formulation within the international climate legal system.

a. Working to implement Article 6 of the Framework Convention before the emergence of the Paris Agreement on climate change

Initially, the first initiatives to promote the implementation of Article 6 were undertaken during the resumed sixth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 6-2), held in Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 27 July 2001. (Churie, et al., 2000, p. 11), to consider a draft decision on the guidelines for the implementation of Article 6 of the Framework Convention. At the same time, the fourteenth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) was taking place. The latter received a proposal from the European Union to consider further work for the implementation of Article 6; to facilitate the exchange of information; in addition to cooperation and coordination of activities at the international and regional levels. The SBSTA referred the proposal to its secretariat to include it as an agenda item in its subsequent session (Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice [SBSTA], 2002), considering the possibility of establishing a "Workshop" to exchange experiences, lessons learned, and best practices related to activities under Article 6 (Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice [SBSTA], 2001, para. 27). In its fifteenth session of the SBSTA from June 2 to 3, 2002, in Germany, a "workshop" was established and a draft defining its mandates was prepared. Its task was to draft a work program regarding the activities of Article 6. It held its first meeting in Bonn, Germany in June 2002, and the most important conclusions were:

- The necessity of enhancing and facilitating education, training, and public awareness regarding climate change at the national, regional, and sub-regional levels. She emphasized that international cooperation in this field can enhance the parties' ability under the agreement to collectively improve the implementation of their commitments;
- Education, training, public awareness, and public participation were considered social tools that can be useful in gaining the cooperation of social groups in addressing climate change issues. Engaging stakeholders in the development and support of climate policy and their voluntary participation in implementation is also allowed;
- It also acknowledged the existence of several obstacles that could hinder the implementation of Article 6 by the parties, including the lack of financial resources and institutional capacities, and the absence of appropriate reporting guidelines.

Recognizing the need to establish a national work program that enhances cooperation, coordination, and information exchange among governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, and community organizations, to ensure the effective implementation of activities under Article 6, the eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) decided to adopt the recommendations of the seventeenth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), known as the "New Delhi Work Program on Article 6 of the Convention," to serve as a flexible framework guiding countries in implementing Article 6, in accordance with their specific needs and circumstances, and reflecting their national priorities and local initiatives. It includes (Conference of the Parties [COP], 2002, Decision 11/CP.8):

- Adoption of a five-year work program on Article 6 for the period 2002-2007;
- Conduct a review of the work program by 2007, with an interim review in 2004 to assess progress and evaluate its effectiveness;
- The parties are requested to prepare reports (within the scope of their national communications) on their efforts to implement the work program for the purpose of reviewing the program in 2004 and 2007;
- International governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to continue their activities related to Article 6 and are called upon to develop responses to the five-year work program;
- The parties are encouraged to fully utilize the existing opportunities provided by the Global Environment Facility, as it serves as the entity managing the financial mechanism of the convention.

At the Conference of the Parties (COP13) in 2007, the parties adopted the amended New Delhi Work Program. By extending the program for another 5 years, with a review in 2012 and an interim review in 2010 to assess the progress made and its effectiveness, while identifying gaps and emerging needs. Some guidelines were established in formulating the five-year work program related to Article 6, which included ([UNFCCC], 2007) :

- ✓ The program approach should be national;
- ✓ Cost-effectiveness;
- ✓ A phased approach that integrates activities related to Article 6 into existing climate change programs and strategies;
- ✓ Strengthening partnerships and establishing synergy networks, especially synergy between agreements;
- ✓ Multidisciplinary approach;
- ✓ An integrated holistic approach;
- ✓ Principles of sustainable development.

The Conference of the Parties (COP18) held in Doha from November 26 to December 1, 2012, reaffirmed the importance of Article 6 of the Framework Convention in achieving the ultimate goal of the Framework Convention and the effective implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures. The meeting concluded with the adoption of the "Doha Work Program on Article 6," which extends over 8 years (2012-2020), with a review of the program in 2020 and a mid-term review in 2016 to assess and improve effectiveness. The conference requested the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to organize an annual dialog during its sessions with the participation of the parties, representatives of relevant bodies, and stakeholders. The dialog aims, by providing an organized space, to exchange ideas, good practices, and lessons learned regarding the implementation of Article 6 of the agreement. The elements of Article 6 are divided into two areas that are reviewed in succession on an annual basis. The first area includes education and training, while the second area encompasses the remaining four elements. He also emphasized the necessity of international and regional cooperation, which would enhance the collective capacity of the parties to implement. To this end, the Doha Work Program called on the parties to identify key national focal points ([UNFCCC], 2012) on issues related to climate empowerment work to unify expertise and relative strengths to achieve maximum synergy and consistency of activities, support the parties

in their efforts to design, initiate, and implement activities related to Article 6 of the Convention on climate empowerment work, and establish a link between the work of coalition members and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process. Finally, the Doha Work Program called on countries to develop national strategic plans in this regard (UNFCCC COP, 2012,(Decision 15/CP.18)).

The first dialog on Article 6 of the agreement was held during the thirty-eighth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI38) on June 10 and 11, 2013. The dialog included the elements of education and training, in accordance with decision 15/CP.18, with the main focus of the discussions being (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Subsidiary Body for Implementation [UNFCCC SBI], 2013):

- The strategic approach and long-term planning for education in the field of climate change;
- Opportunities to enhance the implementation of education and training in the field of climate change through international cooperation;
- How to translate international climate change policies into national education actions;
- Curricula for measuring the effectiveness of education in the field of climate change and the links between science, traditional knowledge, and education on climate change;
- Introducing climate change into school curricula and incorporating "results-based" education on the subject;
- Connecting formal and informal education regarding climate change.
- The skills and competencies required through technical and vocational training to address climate change.

During the dialog, the Conference of the Parties launched a joint framework initiative titled "Youth Working to Combat Climate Change: Inspiring Stories from Around the World," aimed at uplifting the youth, particularly, and amplifying their voices regarding the climate crisis, as well as increasing their participation in initiatives to address its impacts. Given that the majority of the population in many countries are young people, with their ability to take the lead in transforming our communities toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient future, the initiative represents a tool and source of inspiration in the field of developing and implementing projects to raise awareness about the causes and impacts of climate change, promote sustainable lifestyles, and enhance low-emission development capable of adapting to climate change (Subsidiary Body for Implementation [SBI], 2014,(FCCC/SBI/2014/3)).

The focus of the second dialog on Article 6 of the Convention during the fortieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI40) on June 5, 8, and 11, 2014, was on the second area: public awareness, public participation, and access to information. Representatives of the parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and the media exchanged experiences, ideas, best practices, and lessons learned regarding public participation, public awareness, public access to information, and international cooperation in such matters. The discussions focused on (SBI, 2014,(UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2014/15)):

- The importance and value of public participation in making decisions and taking actions related to climate change policy;
- Good practices and lessons learned in enhancing public participation and raising public awareness in decision-making and actions related to climate change policy;

- Good practices and lessons learned from enabling public access to information related to climate change;
- The importance of raising public awareness and access for the audience as a means to mobilize climate action;
- Public access to information as a means to enhance public contribution to informed decision-making and the effectiveness of climate action.

In December 2014 in Lima, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP20) adopted the "Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness," where the parties emphasized their commitment to promoting education, training, public awareness, public participation, and access to information for their essential role in achieving climate-resilient sustainable development and contributing to the goal of the framework convention (UNFCCC, COP, 2014, (Decision 19/CP.20)). Additionally, Resolution 18/CP-20, titled "Lima Work Program on Gender," was adopted, outlining a plan to enhance women's participation in climate change efforts and calling for the development of climate policies that consider gender perspectives and ensure balanced participation of women and men in the context of climate change, in accordance with the circumstances of each country. In 2016, the Conference of the Parties (COP22) in paragraph 27 of decision 21/CP-22, called upon the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to develop a gender action plan to support climate action under the Convention and implement gender-related decisions. Following that, the Conference of the Parties adopted in 2017 decision 3/CP.23 titled "Gender Action Plan," which acknowledged the promotion of women's full, equal, and meaningful participation, the enhancement of climate policies that consider gender considerations, and the integration of a gender perspective in all elements of climate action. On June 2 and 3, 2015, the third dialog on Article 6 of the Convention was held during the forty-second session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI42). The main outcomes of the dialog were (SBI, 2015, (UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2015/15)):

- The need to integrate climate change into every subject in the curriculum and use information and communication technology, due to the role of education and training in preparing people to participate in activities to address the challenges posed by climate change; Developing skills and training the workforce for green, climate-friendly jobs for low-emission development;
- Enhancing climate-resilient development through skill development and adaptation training;
- Intensifying climate change training through international cooperation;
- Planting the future with knowledge and the ability to enhance the participation and full engagement of citizens;
- Education in the field of climate change and international cooperation in this regard;
- Promoting societal transformation and behavioral change through formal and informal education.

The Conference of the Parties at its twenty-first session (COP21) in Paris requested the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to conduct a mid-term review of the Doha Work Program on Article 6 of the Convention at its forty-fourth session.

b. Working toward climate empowerment after the Paris Agreement on climate change

With the development of the international legal framework related to climate and its enhancement in 2015 with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and its entry into force. Article 6 of the Framework Convention is reinforced by Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, which stipulates that the parties cooperate in taking measures to enhance education, training, and public awareness in the field of climate change, public participation, and access to information. The parties agreed at the (COP22) conference held from November 7 to 18, 2016, in Marrakech, on a set of activities and measures to enhance the effectiveness of the Doha Work Program on Article 6 of the Convention. This included encouraging the systematic integration of gender-sensitive and participatory education, training, public awareness, public participation, and public access to information in all mitigation and adaptation activities implemented under the Convention, as well as under the Paris Agreement, including in the implementation of their nationally determined contributions and the formulation of long-term strategies for developing low greenhouse gas emissions ([UNFCCC], 2016). A set of guidelines and principles was also launched as a joint initiative between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and UNESCO, providing a flexible phased approach for the strategic and systematic implementation of climate empowerment activities at the national level, taking into account the circumstances of each country.

On May 18 and 19, 2016, the fourth dialog on Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) was held during the forty-fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI44). The discussions concluded that (SBI, 2016,(UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2016/6)):

- Acknowledgment by parties and other stakeholders that there has been progress in planning, coordinating, and implementing the elements of Article 6 of the agreement, but these activities remain incomplete. What necessitates the inclusion of all elements covered by Article 6 of the agreement in the nationally determined contributions with the aim of enhancing commitment and action toward climate empowerment.
- The remaining obstacles to the implementation of Article 6 of the agreement, including the lack of public awareness and knowledge, the absence of institutional arrangements, insufficient funding, the lack of human resources, and inadequate coordination and cooperation between the country's authorities, persist.

The fourth dialog also resulted in a set of recommendations, the most important of which are (SBI, 2016,(UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2016/6)):

- The necessity of enhanced international cooperation regarding all elements covered by Article 6 of the agreement, including the establishment of partnerships with relevant stakeholders at all levels and the promotion of public participation in decision-making processes;
- That funding for climate change education should be ensured by establishing an initial fund with voluntary contributions from parties, institutions, and other donors to support the implementation of activities related to Article 6 of the agreement, led by governments, non-governmental organizations, and youth;
- Climate change policies and strategies related to Article 6 of the Convention should be nationally oriented and meet the specific needs and circumstances of the parties. Additionally, climate change policies and strategies related to Article 6 of the agreement should aim to

integrate gender-sensitive principles in order to address gender inequality in education, training, and public awareness;

- Strengthening national focal points through activities at the international, regional, and national levels;
- The need to empower youth to enhance the implementation of climate action by establishing a mechanism to provide financial support to youth to attend events of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, especially youth from the Global South.

During the forty-sixth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI46) from May 8 to 18, 2017, in Bonn, Germany. The fifth dialog on work for climate empowerment was held, focusing on education, training, and international cooperation in the field of climate change. The main focus areas for the working groups in the dialog were: the necessity of enhancing climate-resilient infrastructure in educational environments; increasing coordination between ministries; the need to integrate indigenous knowledge with scientific methods; accelerating skill-building for the transition to low-emission and climate-resilient development by linking research with local realities; engaging non-state actors in climate change education; establishing indicators to measure the impact of climate change education; promoting peer-to-peer learning; involving NGOs, youth, and local organizations; and mobilizing resources to finance climate change education activities (SBI, 2017, (UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2017/10)).

The Subsidiary Body for Implementation, at its 48th session (SBI48) held between 30 April and 10 May 2018, requested the Parties, when reviewing the Doha Programme of Action on Article 6 of the Convention in accordance with decision 15/CP.18, to include efforts relating to the implementation of Article 12 of the Paris Agreement; and that the contact persons designated under Article 6 of the Framework Convention serve as contact persons under Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, to be referred to as contact persons for action for climate empowerment in the context of the Paris Agreement; urged the Parties to encourage the continued strengthening of the systematic integration of education, training, awareness-raising, gender-sensitive and participatory public engagement, public access to information, and regional and international cooperation in all mitigation and adaptation activities implemented under the Convention, as well as under the Paris Agreement; the Parties to develop and implement national strategies on action for climate empowerment in relation to Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, taking into account their national circumstances; It also called on Parties and non-Party stakeholders to consider relevant activities that promote action for climate empowerment (SBI, 2018, (UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2018/L.3/Add.2)), as indicated in the Workshop Report on Action for Climate Empowerment (SBI, 2018).

During the same session, the sixth dialog on climate empowerment was held on May 8 and 9, 2018. In addition to the elements of climate empowerment, the discussions focused on ways to integrate gender considerations into the implementation of climate empowerment work. During the 50th session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI50), the seventh dialog on climate empowerment took place from June 19 to 24, 2019. The discussions focused on the final review of the Doha Work Program and ways to enhance actions to implement the elements of work under Article 12 of the Paris Agreement.

During the Conference of the Parties (COP25) from December 2 to 13, 2019, in Madrid, the parties requested the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to initiate a review of the implementation of the Doha Work Program on Article 6 of the Convention at its fifty-second session, and to consider future work to enhance the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. They also requested parties, observer organizations, and other stakeholders to provide information on the steps taken to implement the Doha Work Program and on work for climate empowerment, including activities, outcomes, best practices, lessons learned, gaps, and emerging needs, as well as recommendations and views on future work to enhance the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement ([UNFCCC], 2019).

Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the eighth dialog on work for climate empowerment was organized virtually from June to December 2020. Four regional dialogs and two global events were held, aimed at driving discussions on recommendations and opinions regarding future actions to enhance the implementation of climate empowerment work. Each session of the regional dialogs focused on the following topics (SBI, 2021,(UNFCCC Document FCCC/SBI/2021/1)):

- Enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation within the country regarding climate empowerment efforts;
- Enhancing regional knowledge exchange and highlighting best practices to monitor and review the implementation of the Doha Work Program on Action for Climate Empowerment;
- Providing recommendations and opinions on future work to enhance climate empowerment efforts until 2030.

With the completion of the Doha Work Program on Article 6 of the Agreement, which concluded by 2020. The Conference of the Parties (COP26) held from November 1-13, 2021, in Britain, adopted the "Glasgow Work Program on Climate Empowerment." The program was designed to provide the foundation and scope for implementing activities related to climate empowerment in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and the Paris Agreement. The program maintained the national approach like its predecessors in this regard, but granted the parties, within the framework of flexibility, long-term implementation periods (a ten-year program) with a review of progress in 2026 and a final review in 2031. And it left each party the freedom to choose the measures they see fit to meet their needs and align with their specific circumstances, reflecting their priorities and capabilities, to be formulated in a strategy that covers all six elements of climate empowerment work, ultimately allowing for the achievement of the goals of the Framework Convention and the Paris Agreement. In addition, the program is based on another set of principles, the most important of which are: a gender-sensitive and intergenerational approach; a phased approach that integrates activities under Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement into climate change programs and strategies; a participatory, interdisciplinary, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder approach; adherence to the principles of sustainable development; and a call to enhance partnerships and synergies, especially among the parties.

The conference also called on the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to hold an annual dialog during its regular session each year on climate empowerment efforts. The first dialog will focus on engaging children and youth in implementing the four priority areas of the

Glasgow Work Program: policy coherence; coordinated action; tools and support; and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. The second regular session of each year for the SBI will review the progress made and prepare an annual summary report regarding the implementation of activities under the Glasgow Work Program. With a work plan focusing on immediate action through short-term, clear, and time-bound activities, guided by the priority areas specified in the Glasgow Work Program.

At COP27, held from November 6 to 18, 2022, in Sharm El-Sheikh, the parties adopted a four-year action plan within the Glasgow Program framework, focusing on immediate action through short-term activities that are clear and time-bound. This plan is guided by the priority areas of the Glasgow Work Program (policy coherence; coordinated action; tools and support; and monitoring, evaluation, and reporting) and considers the six elements of climate empowerment in a balanced manner, implemented in an inclusive, intergenerational, and gender-responsive manner ([UNFCCC], 2022).

Perhaps the most notable observation in the previous stages of the development of climate empowerment efforts within the international climate legal system is its gradual transition from merely a limited awareness or educational framework to a comprehensive governance approach that focuses on the effectiveness of climate action itself. And perhaps this development shows an attempt to transform climate empowerment efforts into a relatively organized institutional path through the establishment of periodic work programs, the organization of annual dialogs, and the appointment of contact points for monitoring and evaluation.

The human rights dimension of the concept has also been strengthened, shifting from an approach based on empowering individuals and groups to exercise rights directly related to environmental and climate governance to another based on justice and non-discrimination, ensuring more inclusive and equitable participation. Where the gender dimension and social justice requirements have been integrated, leading to an expansion of the concept of beneficiaries of climate action, with a greater focus on gender and social differences, intergenerational dimensions, vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as indigenous peoples and communities most exposed to climate risks, women, children, and youth. This development has ultimately reflected in strengthening the connection between climate empowerment efforts and a set of other concepts, including transparency, climate justice, inclusion, and non-discrimination.

Conclusion

It is clear that climate empowerment work was introduced by Article 6 of the Framework Convention and is reinforced by Articles 10(e) of the Kyoto Protocol and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. The work for climate empowerment has developed and crystallized after a series of Conferences of the Parties, both under the Framework Convention and the Paris Agreement. These efforts have contributed to the transition of the concept within the international climate legal system from merely a marginal awareness or educational mechanism to one of the key pillars that enhance the effectiveness of climate action in pursuit of the goals of climate agreements. Where its elements have been supported by numerous work programs and follow-ups within the international climate system.

The six elements aim to work toward climate empowerment to work side by side, building a wider circle of informed individuals capable of making decisions that will be crucial in addressing climate emergencies and achieving the goals of climate agreements. It will also enable communities to continue their efforts in all areas of sustainable development over the coming years and decades (Paas, 2016, p. IV).

There is no doubt that working toward climate empowerment is the cornerstone of enhancing a comprehensive and sustainable understanding of this issue, by activating its six elements, which not only play a role in raising awareness and understanding but also contribute to building the capacities of individuals and communities, encouraging them to interact and take responsibility to become an active part of an integrated system of solutions that reinforce each other.

Given the importance of these activities, it has become necessary to develop and implement national strategies related to them, with the allocation of financial resources for this purpose or the utilization of climate funding provided by various climate funds. These strategies allow for the systematic and long-term organization of national efforts, with evaluation periods to identify needs, gaps, develop tools and methods, rearrange priorities, and even change procedures while considering the community's specificities. These flexible plans allow for the upliftment of communities to contribute to the efforts made to achieve an effective and sustainable response from everyone.

However, the analysis shows that The international legal framework for ACE is relatively developed at the normative and institutional levels, but remains limited in terms of legal enforceability, implementation, monitoring, and accountability. This leads us to say that transforming commitments to climate empowerment and implementing them through real policies may still face some challenges, particularly those related to limited funding and training, weak integration of climate issues into educational systems, insufficient awareness efforts, obstacles to enforcing the right to access climate information, and the weak involvement of civil society and vulnerable groups in climate decision-making processes. All of that and more will undoubtedly reflect and limit the effectiveness of climate empowerment efforts and their ability to build more aware communities capable of adapting to increasing climate challenges.

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