



Project Description

WORLD WIDE VIEWS ON GLOBAL WARMING

On September 26, 2009, World Wide Views on Global Warming (WWViews) will give citizens all over the world an opportunity to define and communicate their positions on issues central to the negotiations at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen, starting two months later.

The main objective is to give a broad sample of citizens from across the world the opportunity to influence the COP15 negotiations and thereby the future of global climate policy. The overarching purpose is to demonstrate that political decision-making processes on a global scale benefit when everyday people participate.

WWViews will send vital messages about climate policy from citizens to decision-makers. It will create awareness about the importance of climate policy globally, nationally, locally and individually. And it will set a pathbreaking precedent by demonstrating that ordinary people merit, and can have, a voice within global political processes.

COP15 and the role of the citizens

The UN's climate summit will take place in Copenhagen from the 30th of November to the 11th of December 2009. It is expected that ministers from more than 170 countries will participate, as well as 8.000 other participants consisting of government officials, representatives of NGO's, business and industry. The goal of the Danish hosts is to reach a binding global climate agreement that will apply to the period after 2012 when Kyoto Protocol expires.

The structure of negotiations of the climate summit must be described as mostly top-down national policies that are not necessarily in tune with the citizens that have to live with climate change and the consequences of the climate policy. Before and at the COP15 meeting, the political decision-makers will be provided with pertinent scientific, technical and economic analysis, and the views of organized stakeholder groups (notably industry representatives and environmentalists). In order to decide, however, what is in the public interest, they need also to know the views of ordinary citizens who are not active in stakeholder groups, but who have had an opportunity to learn what competing expert and stakeholder groups think, to test their ideas against those of people holding different views, and to reach a considered judgment that integrates all of this new information with their own values, worldview and life experience. The latter is what a deliberative process like WWViews is uniquely able to offer. Contrary to opinion polls, deliberative methods ensure informed and well-considered answers from the citizens, thereby providing more robust and trustworthy policy advice.

The idea of the project

The idea of this project is to give citizens of as many countries as possible the highest degree of capability to reflect on a number of key questions of relevance to the forthcoming climate policy. During a single day, September 26 2009, WWViews partners will host deliberations all around the globe. Within each participating nation roughly 100 ordinary citizens, chosen to represent their region's demographic diversity, will gather to engage in a structured dialogue

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WWViews

- Global citizen consultation on climate change
- National citizen meetings around the globe, connected and communicated on the Net
- Up to the UN conference on climate change COP15 in Copenhagen, November 2009
- Initiated and coordinated by The Danish Board of Technology and The Danish Cultural Institute
- National citizen meetings coordinated by partners all over the world

aimed at answering an identical set of questions, and the results will be gathered through a web interface. The questions should reflect major controversies at the centre of negotiations on COP15 and they should have a principled and not too technical character. The introduction material presented to the citizens before and during the WWViews meetings (both written material and information videos) will show how these slightly abstract negotiations on the COP15 may affect people's lives in different ways with regards to changes in regional weather patterns as well as socio-economic consequences.

Discussions among the nations currently revolves around the following five issues:

- Shared vision (What kind of goal should be set for the future? What should be the global goal for a cut in CO2 emissions?).
- Mitigation (What principles should determine the different nations' share of cuts in CO2? Should quotas for example be administered according to current UN classifications of developed and non-developed nations, per capita or per GNP? Also, what kinds of means – if any - should be employed to make sure that cuts are actually made?).
- Adaptation (How much do we need to spend on adaptation, who should pay, and how should funding be distributed?).
- Technology (How do we ensure the development of new, CO2 neutral technology and the proliferation of existing technologies?).
- Finance (How should the initiatives decided on be financed?).

Some, if not all, of these issues will be addressed in WWViews in the form of predefined questions to vote for. In addition, citizens will be asked to give, in their own words, their recommendations to their fellow citizens/next door neighbours, their national politicians and all COP15 negotiators.

The individual national WWViews will be carried out almost simultaneously, meaning that from the first meeting concludes in the first time zone (which one has not been decided yet) until it concludes in the last time zone, 24 hours will have passed. On this day only, discussions about the questions given and the factual information relating to it, as well as all the voting and all the writing of recommendations will take place. So will the reporting of the results to the WWViews website. Some partners may wish to start the meeting the day before in order to have better time to prepare for the deliberations and some may also wish to continue the following the day with deliberations on questions of concern to the national context. The national meetings will be organised by National Partners, meeting a set of criteria established in order to guarantee neutral and comparable results. The partners should be non-profit, independent of political influence and preferably experienced with regards to citizen participation.

Target group and presentation of the project

The primary focus is on policy makers around the world and negotiators at the COP15 meeting. It will be an additional goal for the project to deliver results that will be accepted and referred to in the coming years by climate scientists, NGO's and political decision-makers.

The COP15 host – Danish Minister of Climate, Mrs. Connie Hedegaard – supports WWViews as ambassador for the project, and additional direct relationships with the COP15 process is sought. WWViews results will be conveyed directly to the delegates and results publicized visually in the cityscape of Copenhagen.

The national partners will each be responsible for creating national political attention. An international work group on media relations is established in order to coordinate media activities. The realistic ambition is that several COP15 negotiators will be familiar with the main conclusions reached during the WWViews deliberations and with how these relate to the COP15 agenda.

The introduction material will in itself be of interest and value to the media, as well as to educational institutions. Media coverage – ideally including coverage by international newspapers, television and Internet – will increase worldwide decision-maker, stakeholder and popular awareness on climate issues and project results.

The project homepage will be updated regularly with new information about the project. It is not the intent that it should compete with other internet based resources on giving exhaustive information about global warming and the climate meeting, but it will encompass central links to scientific background resources, politically relevant homepages, in addition to resources of the involvement of world citizens in the political decision-making process and technology assessment. Generally the project will signal openness towards other agents and institutions to use the materials and questions in connection with their own initiatives.

Method

The core of the method will be citizens meetings with roughly 100 participants in as many countries as possible. The method used for the national citizen meetings has been constructed as a hybrid with elements from well tested existing methods. It will contain an element of authentic citizen expressions in terms of suggestions for individual/local/national/international action, for which techniques from the 'Citizen Hearing' will be used. Part of the programme of the meeting will be split into thematic deliberations, which will lead to on-the-spot voting on a set of pre-prepared questions. This includes elements inspired by the 'Deliberative Poll', the 'Citizen Summit', and the 'Voting Conference'. These on-the-spot votes will be supplemented by an exit-questionnaire, which will make in-depth analysis of the opinions in the citizen group possible after the meeting.

The citizens will receive information before and during the meeting, which will be based on the same principles of balanced expertise that is used in a variety of methods, including the 'Consensus Conference'. The method will have unique features, which are mainly connected to the global internet based cooperation and communication of the results, which makes it possible to include a - at least theoretically - unlimited amount of meetings into the project. These tools will be based upon templates for reporting results, which will be reported inside the projects eLearning system based intra-net.

At the meetings, the participants will discuss the questions in groups through a number of sessions. Each round will be introduced by a short information video presenting some facts and opinions about the issues in question. The information video (as well as the written material) will be based on the principle of oppositional expertise – meaning that if there are diverging expert views on a certain point, then all sides must be heard. After the introduction, discussions will take place at the tables. The groups will each have a facilitator to guide them through the questions and encourage good discussions. There will be a few experts present at each event

to help answer any technical questions that may come up during the group discussions.

The answers that the participants will give will be fed into the web-based tool when a national WWViews meeting is concluded and this will make it possible to compare the answers to the different questions across countries, regions and continents. The web tool will be available to the public, which thereby has the opportunity to keep track of the citizens' opinions continuously.

Different ways of interpreting the results is under development. One idea is that a few panels of experts could be put together with the purpose of discussing and analysing the results of the meetings, while simultaneously the data from the WWViews would come in via the web interface. They could post their observations on a blog or even convey them on live TV.

The Danish Board of Technology is responsible for the development of the method and the questions that the citizens will be asked at the meetings. Both will be made together with the national partners participating in a method group. The Danish Board of Technology is also responsible for developing the web tool that will function as the interface and main artery of data collection, as well as the preparation of the introductory material in English. National partners will be responsible for translating this material into their respective languages.

Citizens from a limited number of countries will be involved in the selection of the questions, for example by holding a focus group meeting on each continent. Furthermore, selected experts will be involved in the selection of questions and in making the introductory material. An international Scientific Advisory Board will be established in order to vouch for the quality of this material.

Project organisation

The Danish Board of Technology will manage the project within the framework of the WWViews Alliance, established and coordinated by The Danish Board of Technology and The Danish Cultural Institute. For a description of the WWViews Alliance structure, please see the separate paper "WWViews Alliance".

Time schedule

Autumn 2008:	Establishment of partnerships with national partners Developing the questions to the citizens Development of method Planning of the web tool
Winter 2008/2009:	Completion of the web tool Further establishment of partnerships with national partners Finalising the method
Spring 2009:	Creating the information material Training workshop for project managers
Summer 2009:	Translation of the questions and information material into the respective national languages
September 26, 2009:	WWViews taking place around the world

Autumn 2009:	Analysis and communication of the results
2010:	Follow-up, evaluation and communication and promotion of the result

Budget

The Danish Board of Technology will entertain all expenses in the project related to the core activities, except those for national activities in the participating countries. All national partners will take care of expenses related to the conduction of their national WWViews, the translation of the information material, etc, as well as expenses in connection with participating in the training workshop for the project managers. The WWViews Alliance is based upon this pay-for-yourself principle to ensure that the project will be brought to effect and project execution can continue, no matter if large common funds can be established or not. A Work Group on Funding is established with the objective of raising common funds.

These should primarily be used for

- Supporting national partners from low-income countries.
- Global activities such as the training course, the development of information material, the web-tool, etc.
- Events in connection to the COP15 – for example promotion of the project and its results in Copenhagen during the summit.
- Expanding the activity scope of the project – for example by supplementing the methodology with global Internet discussions, polls etc. Or by bringing some of the involved citizens to Copenhagen during COP15.