

RINGO Statement, Paris Pre-COP meeting, 8 November 2015

Thank you for this opportunity to meet and discuss the global response to the challenges of climate change. The researchers, educators, students and practitioners of the Research and Independent NGOs are working in universities, research institutes, think tanks and consultancy, and are involved in making sense of a broad spectrum of causes, impacts, and solutions relating to climate change. We appreciate the frequent references to the importance of good science in the draft agreement. We hope these references maintain a central position in the final text and are accompanied by a commitment to ground implementation planning in the latest scientific research, including contributions from the social sciences and the humanities.

As researchers, educators, students and practitioners in and across disciplines, we are not only concerned with crucial issues such as understanding climate and ecosystems or technology development. We also study how science interacts with law and policy; how governance and politics guide and constrain action; how people perceive risks and form attitudes. We suggest policy alternatives and evaluate their impacts on economies, societies, and environments. We explore ethical issues and encourage debate. We evaluate infrastructure and built environments, and help communities around the world increase energy efficiency, identify vulnerabilities and improve resilience. Knowing that capacity building will be essential to successful implementation, we also believe researchers can play key roles in capacity building, through research collaborations, training, and ongoing relationships to share skills and knowledge to address climate-related problems.

Applying research to practice will contribute to a successful implementation and evaluation of the Paris agreement. Monitoring, reporting, and verification of both mitigation and adaptation activities will be critical to maintain transparency of the process and to promote effective programs. But monitoring, reporting, and verification requirements can be onerous in themselves. The agreement should promote the collection of information with the aim to provide feedback to help improve existing programs as well as to signal the need for additional efforts. In that perspective, we believe our researchers and practitioners can play a vital role in evaluating mitigation and adaptation programs and success and failure of technology development and transfer. In addition, we can assist parties in giving meaning to equity as a leading principle and help them with building effective and legitimate national governance systems able to deliver on commitments made in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions.

Taking this into account, we think it is key to build into the architecture of the agreement, particularly in the assessment and review components, the possibility for researchers, in cooperation with other non-state actors, to evaluate and report on implementation. By working together we can strengthen the transparency of the process and enable broad participation in planning and decisions based on sound data and meaningful deliberation among all concerned, and help people throughout the world to deal with the challenges of climate change.