



First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG) for the elaboration of a preliminary text of a declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change

Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, 20 to 24 September 2016

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WORKING DOCUMENT:

TOWARD A FIRST DRAFT OF A PRELIMINARY TEXT OF A DECLARATION ON ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

SUMMARY

In accordance with the decisions of UNESCO's General Conference at its 38th session and of its Executive Board at its 199th session ([38 C/Resolution 42](#) and [199 EX/Decision 5.I.B](#)), the Director-General of UNESCO constituted the Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG), to prepare a first draft of a preliminary text of a non-binding declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change.

The first meeting of the AHEG has been convened by the Director-General, at the generous invitation of the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, in Rabat from 20 to 24 September 2016.

The outcome of the AHEG's work will be the first draft of a preliminary text of a non-binding declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change (herein after referred to as the First Draft) which should be finalized by the AHEG by Saturday, 24 September 2016.

The present document provides background information on UNESCO's preparation of such a declaration. It was revised exclusively in ANNEX 2 so as to include additional potentially relevant principles as identified by the members of the AHEG (revisions appear in bold italics). Other written comments by AHEG members will be circulated in the meeting.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In November 2015, the General Conference of UNESCO, at its 38th session, adopted 38 C/Resolution 42, by which it mandated the Director-General “to prepare a preliminary text of a non-binding declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change”, which is to be submitted to the General Conference at its 39th session in 2017.
2. UNESCO Member States adopted this decision by consensus after six years of rich discussions on the feasibility of elaborating such a declaration. The General Conference had considered the same issue twice before, but only in 2015 did it resolve to take up the matter.
3. 38 C/Resolution 42 confirmed the strategic role of UNESCO in promoting an ethical framework for climate change, it being the only UN agency with a specialized mandate in the social and human sciences, as well as in the natural sciences, education, culture and communication, whose constitutional aim is to advance international peace and the common welfare of mankind through strengthening its “intellectual and moral solidarity”.
4. UNESCO has gained a leading role at the UN level and globally in promoting ethical science - science which brings progress for the benefit of all, protects the planet from ecological collapse and constitutes a solid basis for peaceful cooperation among peoples. Through the work of its consultative organs – the International Bioethics Committee (IBC, created in 1993); the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IGBC, 1998); and the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST, 1998) - UNESCO has deepened its reflection on the role of science, technology and innovation in sustainable development, on equitable and inclusive social development, and on a coherent response to climate change through addressing the ethical principles of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

II. WORK OF COMEST AS THE TECHNICAL BASIS FOR THE DECISION OF UNESCO

5. The decision to proceed with a declaration followed on from ten years of consideration of these issues by COMEST, a multidisciplinary scientific advisory body of UNESCO, made up of independent experts. The work of COMEST has built on and complemented work on climate change being done within the United Nations system, for instance by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
6. COMEST was among the first international scientific bodies to draw attention to the ethical dimension of climate change and reflect on the moral basis of the response to climate change at both the policy and action levels. Starting from its Third Ordinary Session (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2003), COMEST has devoted significant efforts to environmental ethics with a special emphasis, since 2008, on the complex phenomenon of climate change. This work led to the adoption of several COMEST reports and statements: “[The Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change](#)” (2010); a “[Framework of Ethical Principles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation](#)” (2011); “[Issues Relevant to Consideration of the Desirability of Preparing a Declaration on Ethical Principles in Relation to Climate Change](#)” (2012); “[Background for a Framework of Ethical Principles and Responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation](#)” (2013); and the report on the “[Ethical Principles for Climate Change: Adaptation and Mitigation](#)” (2015). The 2015 Report served as the technical basis for discussion at the 38th session of the General Conference.
7. In addressing the urgent need to fight climate change, COMEST underscored and underlined that climate change is fundamentally an ethical issue. In its 2010 Report, COMEST stressed that “failure to act could have catastrophic implications, but responses to climate change that are not thought through carefully, with ethical implications in mind, have the potential to devastate entire communities, create new paradigms of inequity and misdistribution, and render even more vulnerable those peoples who have already found themselves uprooted by other man-made political and ideological struggles”.

8. COMEST has underlined that the complexity of climate change requires equally complex responses, that necessitate the cooperation of stakeholders across the various levels and sectors of the international community. Global cooperation on climate change is indispensable for the complex solutions needed to tackle the unintended consequences of anthropogenic action on the environment.

9. Moreover, to effectively address the problem of climate change, a global inter-cultural dialogue is needed. COMEST has underlined the need to address “the cultural and lifestyle practices that affect the way human beings deal with the environment and their fellow human beings during the course of their everyday life. Such practices are ethical in nature since they involve ways of understanding and transforming the natural world and the manner in which human beings relate to one another.” COMEST has underscored the urgent need for ethical action that will bring about the change necessary to create “a more considerate and caring human community that responds to the vulnerabilities of nature and their fellow human beings”.

10. Furthermore, COMEST has sought to identify a set of consensual general and specific ethical principles that address the ethical dimensions of global climate change. These ethical principles have been distilled from existing relevant international conventions and literature, classified and further elaborated in content and relevance.

11. In its 2015 Report, COMEST identified several ethical principles relevant to climate change which “provide the ethical basis on which responsibilities in respect of climate change adaptation and mitigation may be established”, namely: biological diversity; cultural diversity; the interdependence of life on Earth; the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind; global justice; the duty to do no harm; resilience; sustainability; frugality; the precautionary principle; the duty to share scientific knowledge; and the integrity of scientific research. According to COMEST, these general and specific ethical principles related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, “could also be an inspirational basis for a potential process to elaborate a Declaration of ethical principles and responsibilities in relation to global climate change, if so desired by the Member States of UNESCO”. For these reasons, the work of COMEST may be considered a meta-study of particular interest for the task of the preparation of the First Draft, entrusted to the AHEG.

III. THE RELEVANCE OF UNESCO’S WORK ON A PRELIMINARY TEXT OF A DRAFT DECLARATION ON THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

12. The General Conference, in its 38 C/Resolution 42, indicated that a declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change is to complement existing reference instruments and its preparation is to be carried out: i) in cooperation with COMEST; ii) in consultation with Member States; iii) taking into consideration the outcome of negotiations within the framework of the 21st and 22nd sessions of the Conference of Parties (COP-21 and COP-22) to the UNFCCC.

13. The 38th session of the General Conference was held on the eve of the Paris Climate Conference (COP-21 - the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC, 30 November-11 December 2015). There was general agreement at the General Conference that there was no conflict or duplication between the work of the UNFCCC, which is the main forum for negotiations related to climate change, and the work of UNESCO on ethical principles which constitutes an integral part in this UN common framework.

14. The work of UNESCO on a First Draft is particularly relevant in the light of the results achieved at COP-21, which succeeded in delivering the universal breakthrough of the Paris Agreement. All countries committed to action on climate change developed their own commitments on the basis of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). The voluntary character of the INDCs makes UNESCO’s work on a declaration of ethical principles particularly relevant. It may complement and assist the existing negotiation framework, and may inform the work of Member States on the elaboration of their INDCs. This was noted by

UNESCO's Member States during their debates at the 38th session of the General Conference; it was also noted that the UNFCCC, as well as other UN partners, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and others, would be included in the elaboration of the preliminary text, to ensure coordination among the UN entities.

IV. TASKS OF THE AD HOC EXPERT GROUP RELATED TO THE PREPARATION OF A FIRST DRAFT OF A PRELIMINARY TEXT OF A NON-BINDING DECLARATION ON ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

15. According to the rules in force at UNESCO, the preparation of a First Draft is guided by the [“Multi-stage procedure for the elaboration, examination, adoption and follow-up of declarations, charters and similar standard-setting instruments adopted by the General Conference and not covered by the Rules of Procedure concerning recommendations to Member States and international conventions covered by the terms of Article IV, paragraph 4, of the Constitution”](#) (33 C/Resolution 87). This multi-stage procedure stipulates four stages; now, the process is at Stage 2, because a preliminary text of a declaration is being drawn up.

16. Pursuant to 38 C/Resolution 42 and 199 EX/Decision 5.I.B, the AHEG was constituted by the Director-General of UNESCO to advise UNESCO in the elaboration of a preliminary text of a declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change. The AHEG's main objectives are:

- i. As a group, the experts should collectively elaborate the First Draft that fully covers the topic, including questions of mitigation and adaptation. The text should be submitted to the Director-General by 30 September 2016 (1st Report to the Director-General). The text should be of a nature and quality that can be translated and transmitted directly to all UNESCO Member States for their consideration. This task is to be completed during the first meeting of the AHEG, which will be held, at the generous invitation of the Government of Morocco, in Rabat, Morocco, from 20 to 24 September 2016, and will be hosted by the Morocco National Commission for UNESCO, in accordance with the Host Country Agreement signed between UNESCO and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco. UNESCO will then communicate the findings of the AHEG to Member States.
- ii. The experts should collectively revise the First Draft so as to reflect the comments on it provided officially by Member States, and thus elaborate a revised draft of a preliminary text, reporting to the Director-General (2nd report) no later than 30 April 2017. This task is to be completed either at a second meeting or through work by other means. Subject to securing the required funds and/or a host country, a second meeting of the AHEG to integrate into the final draft the comments received from Member States and other stakeholders could be convened for three working days by April 2017. The exact dates of the meeting would be decided on by UNESCO in agreement with the Chairperson of the AHEG and its Bureau. If such a meeting is convened, Member States could participate as observers. However, if lesser or no extrabudgetary funds are available, this work is to be carried out by the AHEG through electronic means. In principle, the UNESCO Secretariat is to finalize the work on the First Draft by mid-May 2017 for its transmission to Member States for consideration at a category II intergovernmental meeting of experts, to be followed by examination by the Executive Board at its 202nd session and the General Conference at its 39th session.

17. UNESCO will provide the Secretariat for the AHEG to assist in the preparation of its reports, to be responsible for preparing, translating and distributing all official documents of the AHEG, and undertaking all practical arrangements for its meetings.

V. SOURCES TO BE CONSIDERED IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE AHEG

18. In order to meet the objectives described above, each member will consider a variety of source materials, as well as all comments offered officially by UNESCO Member States and apply his/her own expertise to arrive at conclusions. The sources which shall be considered by the AHEG, so that their results meet UNESCO's requirements, include UNESCO and United Nations system sources.

V.1 UNESCO sources

19. The links to the relevant UNESCO sources are given in the Summary and paragraph 6 of this Working Document.

V.2 The United Nations system sources

20. Among the UN system sources the following may be mentioned:

- i. The 'Brundtland Report', '[Our Common Future](#)' which was produced in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development
- ii. [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#) (1992)
- iii. [Agenda 21](#) adopted at the Earth Summit (1992)
- iv. [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC) (1992);
- v. [Kyoto Protocol](#) (1997)
- vi. [Paris Agreement](#) (2015)
- vii. Other UN environmental protection conventions, including:
 - [UN Convention on Biological Diversity](#)
 - [UN Convention to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD, Bonn, Germany)
 - [Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer](#) (UNEP)
 - [Convention for the Protection of The Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution](#) (Barcelona Convention)
- viii. [Assessment Reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC), including:
 - Working Group II Report "[Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability](#)", Working Group II contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2014)
 - Working Group III Report "[Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change](#)". Working Group III contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, chapter 3 "Social, Economic and Ethical Concepts and Methods" (2014)
- ix. Other UN system publications and documents, as deemed appropriate by the members of the AHEG (UN publications are presented on this website: [Library of Documents, UN CC: Learn, the One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership](#))

21. Sources such as the UNFCCC and the international agreements linked to it, as well as other international conventions clarifying principles and norms that address the global challenges of climate change will be critical for this effort. At the same time, the Member States of UNESCO during their discussions of the desirability of the preparation of a declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change emphasized that, if such a declaration is elaborated, it should not duplicate or contradict the normative principles and norms which were agreed upon under the UNFCCC, but, rather, complement this important work, as presented in paragraphs 12 to 14 of this Working Document.

V.3 Other sources

22. In addition to the UNESCO and UN system-wide sources, other international and regional conventions, tribunal decisions, and international customs such as those which feed into international law may be included, as well as states' policy documents and declarations.

Thus, the AHEG, in order to fulfil its task, needs to thoroughly elucidate whatever tacit and explicit principles and approaches are propelling states' undertakings in regional and international settings. The following links to some sources may also be useful to the AHEG:

- i. [Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership](#) (2013), adopted by the Forty-Fourth [Pacific Islands Forum](#) in Majuro, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, on 5 September 2013
- ii. [Sacred Earth: Faiths for Conservation](#) initiatives of the World Wide Fund for Nature ([WWF](#))
- iii. World Council of Churches: [Interfaith statement on climate change](#) (2014)
- iv. [Islamic Declaration on Climate](#) adopted at an [International Islamic Climate Change Symposium](#) in Istanbul, Turkey (2015) – [statement at the UNFCCC COP-21](#)
- v. [A Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change](#) “The Time to Act is Now” (2015) - [Interfaith statement calls for worldwide consensus on how to halt global warming](#)
- vi. [Encyclical Letter LAUDATO SI' of the Holy Father Francis On Care for Our Common Home](#) (2015)
- vii. [Low Carbon Technology Initiative](#) led by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development ([WBCSD](#))
- viii. [Adapting to Climate Change: A Guide for the Consumer Products Industry](#) produced by the [Business for Social Responsibility](#) network
- ix. [Climate](#) web-page of the World Resources Institute ([WRI](#))
- x. [Resolutions on climate change](#) of the World Conservation Union ([IUCN](#))
- xi. [10 principles of environmentally responsible behavior](#) developed by the Coalition of Environmentally Responsible Economies ([CERES](#))
- xii. The Greening of Industry Network ([GIN](#))

23. The variety of source materials for the AHEG's work adds complexity to it, because the same principle may be formulated in several ways. For example, a principle of safeguarding the interests of future generations appears in several different formulations in: the UNFCCC; the Convention on Biological Diversity; the [UNESCO Declaration on the Responsibilities of the Present Generations Towards Future Generations](#) (1997); and the [UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights](#) (2005).

VI. POSSIBLE FORMAT OF THE OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE AHEG (RABAT, MOROCCO, 20-24 SEPTEMBER 2016)

24. To meet its aims, in the context of this process, the text resulting from the AHEG's Rabat meeting should identify and clarify a set of ethical principles for the actions of the international community to address climate change.

- i. Ideally, the form of the text will be short, accessible and easily communicated to a variety of audiences, including after its translation into many languages.
- ii. The text should be precise and use common terms that are aligned with technical terms that appear in other international texts.
- iii. A particular concern is that the First Draft should accurately take into account the tacit, and sometimes explicit, principles that have been in use in the negotiations of various international instruments including, notably, the agreements derived from the 1992 Rio Conference.
- iv. There is also concern that the First Draft be complete and balanced, covering all the essential guiding principles of approximately equal importance, without neglecting or misrepresenting any important matters.
- v. The AHEG should consider its work as aiming at clarifying ethical principles for the international community in such a way as to make it easier to adapt these ethical

principles to practical uses, implemented not just by states but also by a variety of actors at various levels.

25. The declarations adopted by UNESCO follow different formats, as can be seen on the [web page of UNESCO that contains the texts of all declarations](#). Several declarations are composed of: a preamble; general provisions, covering the scope and aims; the principles; a description of how these principles will be applied; measures aimed at the promotion of a declaration and follow-up action by UNESCO; as well as final provisions. Others contain a preamble; main principles; and measures of implementation. The AHEG will have to decide on the format of the outcome document that **it should draft by the end of its meeting in Rabat on Saturday, 24 September 2016** (the provisional skeleton of an outcome document is presented in Annex 1).

VII. AN INITIAL SUMMARY TABLE TO GUIDE REFLECTION

26. An initial summary table annexed to this document (Annex 2) is conceived as a working tool that may serve the AHEG in its preparations for the Rabat meeting. The ethical principles identified by COMEST as relevant for climate change in its 2010, 2013 and 2015 reports have been entered in this table to facilitate the work of the AHEG. Thus the AHEG may consider the extent to which COMEST's work presents a starting point for its reflection. In addition, the principles contained in the UNFCCC and the international agreements linked to it are also presented in the table.

27. Thus the table sets out each of the identified potentially relevant ethical principles. It then proposes in some cases one or more preliminary formulations of key message(s), derived from the source material, and drafted in a style appropriate for an international declaration. (The ordering and focus can be decided subsequently).

28. The AHEG is invited to consider this initial table as its working tool, modifying it as they deem appropriate. This will entail:

- i. reworking the set of principles, by identifying others, and re-ordering them. (Until the principles and responsibilities are conceptually ordered, it is evident that they will appear in this table with repetitions, reflecting the variety of sources.);
- ii. deriving responsibilities from broad principles where that is feasible, so as to make the ethical principles easier to adapt to practical uses, not just by states but also by a variety of actors at various levels; and
- iii. re-formulating key messages so as to develop a complete and well-ordered set containing the responsibilities that have been identified. This can be achieved either by selecting and reworking the early proposals that appear in the current table, or by beginning afresh.

29. It is the final step of ordering and assembling the key messages that may bring to life the prototype of a first version of a preliminary text of a draft declaration.



First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group (AHEG) for the elaboration of a preliminary text of a declaration on ethical principles in relation to climate change

Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, 20 to 24 September 2016

ANNEX 1

Provisional skeleton of an outcome document

FIRST DRAFT OF A PRELIMINARY TEXT OF A DECLARATION ON ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

(to be written by the AHEG by Saturday, 24 September 2016)

The Member States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Paris at the thirty-ninth session of the General Conference, from 7 to 29 November 2017,

Preamble

Conscious of.....

Reflecting on

Recognizing

Resolving

Recalling

Noting

Considering

Aware that

Bearing in mind

Stressing

Considering

Proclaim the principles that follow and adopts the present Declaration.

General provisions

Article 1 – Scope

...

Article 2 – Aims

...

Principles

Article 3 – Principle 1

...

Article 4 – Principle 2

...

Article 5 – Principle 3

...

Article 6 – Principle 4

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Article 7 – Principle 5

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Article 8 – Principle 6

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Article 9 – Principle 7

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Article 10 – Principle 8

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Article 11 – Principle 9

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Article 12 – Principle 10

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Article 13 – Principle 11

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Article 14 – Principle 12

...

Promotion of the Declaration (e.g. climate change ethics education, etc.)

Article 15

...

Article 16

...

Article 17

...

Article 18

...

Final provisions

Article 19 – Interrelation and complementarity of the principles

...

Article 20 – Limitations on the application of the principles

...

ANNEX 2: SUMMARY TABLE TO GUIDE REFLECTION

	Ethical Principle	Key message	Sources
Potentially relevant principles as identified by COMEST in 2010			
1	Precautionary principle Precaution	<p>a. Member States commit to take precautionary measures to anticipate, prevent or minimize the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects.</p> <p>b. When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm.</p> <p>c. To promote the development of innovative alternatives for potentially risky technologies.</p> <p>d. Adaptation to and mitigation of climate change are pre-emptive measures against threats to human life and the environment that entails systems complexity and unquantifiable scientific uncertainty and that should be undertaken despite uncertainty.</p>	UNFCCC Art.3, COMEST 2010
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common but differentiated Responsibilities (COMEST) • On the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities • The principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances 	<i>It is the primary responsibility of the parties to set their respective contributions of domestic greenhouse gas emission reductions, on the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, while taking into account the different national situations.</i>	COMEST 2010 UNFCCC Art. 3 UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement
3	Safeguarding and promoting the interests of the present as well as future generations	<i>From a moral high ground and given the principle of solidarity between the generations, it is imperative to take all necessary measures to safeguard and protect the environment and the climate for present and future generations.</i>	UNFCCC Art.3, COMEST 2010, UDBHR Art. 16

	Ethical Principle	Key message	Sources
4	Protection of human rights	<i>Climate change has environmental and health consequences that would have a direct impact on human existence and the global ecosystem.</i>	COMEST 2010; Art. 3 of the UDHR ; 5th Report of ICCP
5	Equitable access to medical, scientific and technological developments, as well as the greatest possible flow and the rapid sharing of knowledge, concerning those developments and the sharing of benefits, with particular attention to the needs of developing countries		COMEST 2010, UDHR Art. 27, International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights Arts.12, 15
6	The cost of pollution should be borne by the polluter Polluter pays	<i>In order to better manage the environmental risks and the damages to the environment by a third party, it is imperative to apply nationally and internationally the ‘polluter pays’ principle.</i>	COMEST 2010, UN Declaration on Environment and Development - 1992 Rio Declaration, Principle 16
7	Sustainability, notably in connection with development		UNFCCC Art. 3, COMEST 2010
Principles for climate change adaptation as identified by COMEST in 2013			
8	Avoiding harming people and the environment by failing to respond to climate change or by responding to it in an ill-considered way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. b. Avoid harming people or the environment by failing to act in response to climate change or by responding to it in an ill-considered way. 	COMEST 2013
9	Fairness: giving special attention to the poorest countries and people, given their greater vulnerability and direct exposure to climate change for which they very often are the least responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recalling that dignity and justice for each and every human being are central concerns of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, treat individuals or parties equally, and take into account the claims of the less advantaged. b. Help poor countries on a path of welfare for the poorest people (health, education, economic opportunity). c. Help poor communities adapt to climate change. 	COMEST 2013

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
10	Equitable access to actions that enhance capabilities and resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All persons have a right of access to education, experience, knowledge and technologies with the capacity to change behaviour and promote well-being in a perspective of sustainability. b. In order to develop the technical and scientific basis to address climate change, there should be equitable access to medical, scientific and technological developments. This implies a responsibility at international level that scientific capacity, resources and data be shared. 	COMEST 2013
11	The intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Human beings as a group and individually have obligations toward the environment linked to solidarity, and especially toward the most vulnerable. b. Cooperation being essential for the protection and flourishing of common goods of the earth – oceans, lands and air – there are mutual obligations of assistance, especially toward those who are most affected by climate change. 	COMEST 2013
12	Environmental sustainability, understood as embracing the protection of biodiversity and the integrity of ecosystems as the very basis of life on Earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Moderation and frugality should inform policies and decisions. b. Adaptations to climate change should relate human beings to their environment in a long-term perspective. 	COMEST 2013
13	Common but differentiated responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Developed countries should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof. 	COMEST 2013, UNFCCC Art. 3, 1992 Rio Declaration (Principle 7)
<i>Principles for climate change mitigation as identified by COMEST in 2015</i>			
14	Biological diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. So as to guarantee the survival of entire ecosystems, Member States commit to maintain and sustain the diversity of relationships between species and their ecosystems. 	COMEST 2015
15	Cultural diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As part of a genuine ethical dialogue that respects global climate justice and equity, Member States commit to clarify responsibilities of concerned parties and help them 	COMEST 2015

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
		be accountable for their decisions and pursue ethical dialogue with a view to arriving at consensual decisions when cultural traditions are deemed to be inimical or causing harm to any society.	
16	Interdependence of life on Earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Humankind holds responsibility for the sustenance of the Earth as a living system. b. Humankind bears responsibility that other life forms be allowed to flourish for the sake of their own existence. 	COMEST 2015
17	Intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind implies that humankind bears responsibility according to the affordability and needs, particularly toward affected individuals and populations, and toward the environment and future generations. 	COMEST 2015
18	Global justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Global justice in relation to climate change requires the participation of all members of human society regardless of their contribution to the problem. b. Global justice should take the interests of non-human animals and the health of Mother Earth into account. c. Justice requires developed countries (which have contributed significantly to the emission of greenhouse gases) to provide developing nations with finance, adapted technologies and capacity-building support in order to not only solve the problem of climate change but at the same time eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development. d. Member States have the responsibility to ensure that the activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. 	COMEST 2015
19	Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Member States commit to develop strategies to lead communities toward self-organization and feedback mechanisms that can optimize their resolution of climate related problems and ensure they address risks; in particular strategies should overcome socially-constituted 	COMEST 2015

	Ethical Principle	Key message	Sources
		<p>limits to coping capacity for vulnerable groups such as rural women, indigenous populations, poor and marginalized groups.</p> <p>b. Recognizing and addressing strategies to overcome socially constituted limits to coping capacities.</p> <p>c. Member states should ensure women's participation, not only in knowledge sharing, but equally in policy and decision making by addressing women as actors who have knowledge and experiences, as agents of change, educators of the next generation.</p>	
20	Sustainability (frugality, renewable energy, reforestation, water resources)	<p>a. Humankind should privilege adoption of a path to a more sustainable economy, including by frugality.</p> <p>b. Member States commit to privilege renewable energy.</p> <p>c. Member States commit to massive reforestation and implementing a carefully planned system for regenerating forests even while they are used, privileging indigenous species and ensuring that plant and animal species complement and support each other in a managed equilibrium.</p> <p>d. Appropriate mitigation must be developed for the frugal management of water resources.</p>	COMEST 2015
21	Precautionary principle Precaution	<p>a. As a manner of managing politically and morally unacceptable but scientifically uncertain risk, anticipatory action should be taken to avoid harm.</p> <p>b. Innovative alternatives for potentially risky technologies should be privileged, and investments made to demonstrate these alternatives can be suitable replacements.</p> <p>c. Pre-emptive measures against threats to human life and the environment that entail systems complexity and unquantifiable scientific uncertainty should be undertaken despite uncertainty.</p>	COMEST 2015

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
22	The duty to share scientific knowledge <i>Common availability of scientific knowledge</i>	a. Humankind has a duty to share scientific knowledge, so as to allow all to participate in action addressing climate change.	COMEST 2015, International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights Art.15
23	Integrity of scientific research	a. Access to an adequate scientific knowledge base is essential for all. b. Appropriate risk assessment, and scientific research that is objective, impartial, truth-seeking, and meets the highest standards of research integrity being essential to decision-making to address climate change, Member States commit to develop strategies to uphold the integrity of climate research. c. Scientific researchers will be protected from attacks and defamation in relation to their communications.	COMEST 2015
<i>Other relevant principles or sub-principles for climate change adaptation</i>			
24	Country-driven approach		UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7
25	Gender-sensitive approach		UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7
26	Participatory approach		UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7
27	Fully transparent approach		UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7
28	Take into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems		UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7
29	Be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems	<i>Adaptation to climate change should be based on and guided by the best available science, as well as by traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating them into the innovation process.</i>	UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Art. 7

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
30	Not result in the duplication of efforts undertaken in-country, but facilitate country-owned, country-driven action.	<i>For the sake of rationalizing and optimizing the means used in the fight against climate change, it is necessary to ensure good governance of the climate change issue within institutions.</i>	UNFCCC COP
31	Respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.		<i>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights -1948-</i> ; UNFCCC COP Paris Agreement, Preamble
32	Responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty.		Preamble UNFCCC
33	Each Party shall prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve	<i>In respect to human solidarity, the national contributions determined at national level need to reflect each party's capacities to fight against greenhouse effects and climate change, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.</i>	UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Arts. 3 and 4
34	Parties shall promote environmental integrity, transparency, accuracy, completeness, comparability and consistency, and ensure the avoidance of double counting		UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Art. 4

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
35	Deforestation and forest degradation		UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Art. 5 (2)
36	The integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity		UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Preamble
37	Sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production		UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Preamble
38	Averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events	<i>To support and help developing countries through both financial and technological means to counter and repair demands and prejudices caused by climate change.</i>	UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Art. 8
39	Developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties with respect to mitigation and adaptation	It is necessary to enhance the capacity and ability of developing countries, in particular countries with the least capacity, such as the least developed countries, and those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, such as small island developing states, to take effective climate change action, including, <i>inter alia</i> , to implement adaptation and mitigation actions, and facilitate technology development, dissemination and deployment, access to climate finance, relevant aspects of education, training and public awareness, and the transparent, timely and accurate communication of information	UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Art. 9 and 11.
40	Technology development and transfer in order to improve resilience to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions	<i>It is necessary to help developing countries to undertake an assessment of their technological needs to allow them to identify the best practices and the appropriate technologies and reforms to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions as well as to adapt to climate change.</i>	UNFCCC COP-21 Paris Agreement, Art. 10
41	<i>principle of contraction and convergence</i>		<i>COMEST Environmental Ethics 2004</i>
42	<i>Right to development</i>	<i>Member states should recognize specific needs to developing countries, including for the eradication of</i>	<i>UNFCCC Art 3</i>

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
		<i>poverty, and the right to sustainable economic growth and development.</i>	
43	<i>Principle of sustainable development</i>		<i>Consolidating principles 3,7,12,20,32, 37</i>
44	<i>Avoid to harm human beings, biological resources, and the environment, and/or to limit/reduce negative impacts</i>		<i>Consolidating principles 8, 38</i>
45	<i>The integrity of all the world's ecosystems and of the circumterrestrial space</i>		<i>Consolidating principles 12, 16, 34, 36</i>
46	<i>Rational use of natural resources</i>		<i>Partially Consolidating principles 12, 20</i>
47	<i>The conservation of the world's biodiversity that is threatened by climate change</i>		<i>Consolidating principles 12, 14, 36</i>
48	<i>Humankind must prepare to respond to new global challenges</i>	<i>Scientific studies, decisions and strategic approaches, should address future scenarios and measures to respond to threats.</i>	<i>para. 3 art. 3, para. 1 art. 4 of the UNFCCC ; para. 1 art. 10 of the Kyoto Protocol; para. 4 art. 8 para. 9 art. 9, para 1 art. 11 of the Paris Agreement; p. 3, 18 of the Brundtland Report ; principles 2, 4, 14 of the Stockholm Declaration ; p. 11, 15, 19 of the World Charter for Nature ; principles 12, 17, 18 Rio Declaration, para 1 art. 8, art 20 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification ;</i>

	<i>Ethical Principle</i>	<i>Key message</i>	<i>Sources</i>
			<i>art. 10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity;</i>
49	<i>A principle determining the right attitude toward communities that could become victims of major catastrophes</i>		<i>principle 22 of the Stockholm Declaration ; para 2 art. 10 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; 20, 21 of the Convention on Biological Diversity</i>
50	<i>Address threats to human well-being</i>		<i>COMEST 2010</i>