

Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change

Summary of the consultations on the priorities for the future thematic reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change (12 December 2024)

From September to November 2024, the Special Rapporteur on climate change and human rights, Ms. Elisa Morgera, carried out a series of more than 20 in-person, hybrid and online consultations. The objective of the consultations was to exchange ideas on possible topics for the next thematic reports with States, national human rights institutions, UN agencies, children, young people, Indigenous peoples, environmental human rights defenders, civil society organisations, business, and academia, with contributions from over 300 participants across the six continental regions of the world. In-person consultations were held in Geneva, Bangkok, New York, Cali on the margins of the UN Biodiversity COP16, and Baku in the margins of the UN Climate COP29. Several partners (UN System, NGOs, universities, research networks, business associations) supported the consultations, for which the Rapporteur is extremely grateful.

1. Format

Through the consultations, the Rapporteur asked participants to share views and needs in relation to:

- which sectors of the just transition (eg, energy, extractives, transport) should be addressed as a priority?
- which approaches to climate action (technologies, nature-based solutions, carbon markets, funding) should be addressed, as a priority, to further shed light on the human rights challenges in the context of climate change?
- which cross-cutting human rights (eg, human right to a healthy environment, human right to education, human right to health, human right to science,) should be addressed or used as a lens in each report, to further shed light on the human rights challenges in the context of climate change?

The consultations also provided an opportunity for the Rapporteur to hear about new and emerging areas of research and evidence/knowledge production or practices by various actors.

The conversations were informed by an evolving “mind map” that the Rapporteur introduced at the beginning as a basis for discussion and feedback. At each consultation, the mind map had been adjusted to reflect insights from the previous consultations. On the occasion of particularly well-attended sessions, Slido and interactive surveys were also used, to gauge views from all participants.

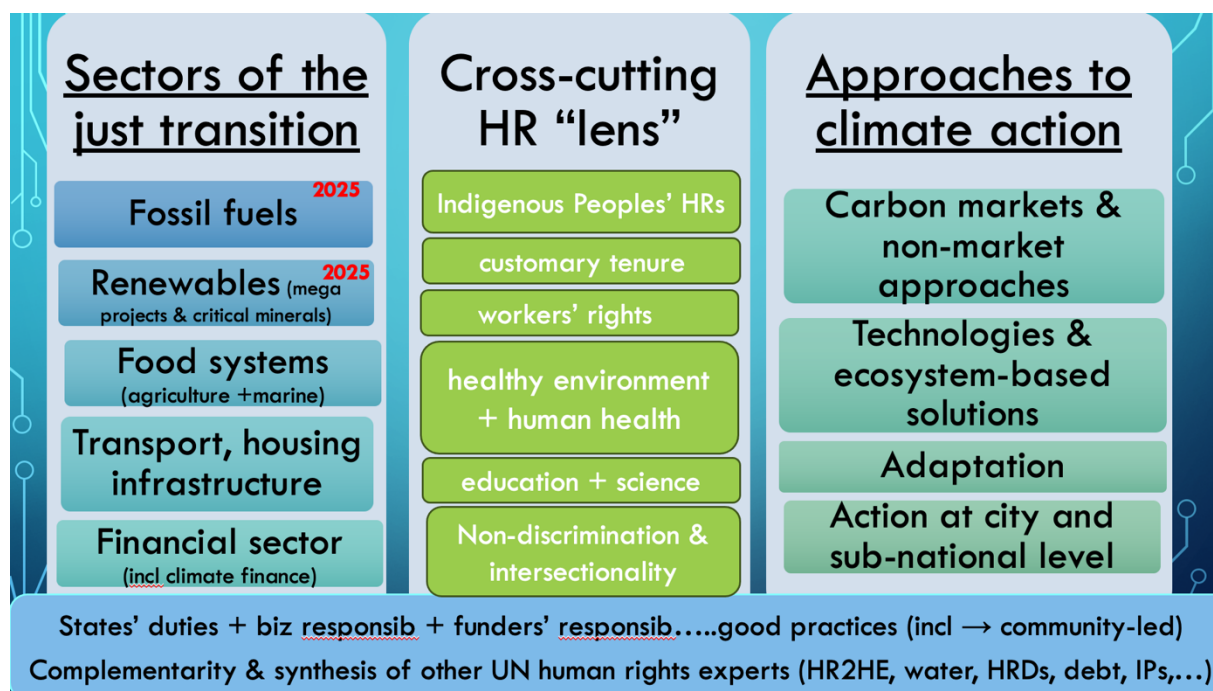
An innovative consultation was held on the sidelines of the UN Biodiversity COP16 in Cali, in conjunction with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to a Healthy Environment on Oceans and human rights. While the consultation had distinct sections, one on Ms. Morgera’s thematic priorities and the other on the next report on the right to a healthy

environment and the ocean, it provided insights that were beneficial for the coordination of the two mandates. In addition, the joint consultation was also attended by the Inter-American Special Rapporteur on economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, which provided an opportunity to discuss collaboration in the implementation of the three mandates at regional and international levels.

2. Key findings from the consultations

On the whole, the consultations confirmed the selection of thematic priorities in terms of sectors of the just transition, and approaches to climate action (right-handside and left-handside columns in the image below). Comments from participants helped clarifying the scope of each proposed theme, and where certain themes could be addressed jointly. Several participants supported an analysis of these themes from the perspective of transformation. In addition, the consultations served to clarify and expand the cross-cutting human rights “lenses” to be explored in each report (middle column).

The Rapporteur has announced at the beginning of December 2024 the themes of the next two reports (fossil fuels; and renewables and critical minerals). Ms. Morgera will decide the timings of the remaining selected themes in line with relevant international developments.



The consultations also confirmed broad interested in the thematic reports not only clarifying State obligations, but also:

- business responsibility & advice to enhance business practices along supply chains;
- accountability of international climate funds and international financial institutions;
- responsibilities of scientists/ researchers;
- everyone's contributions to the protection of climate defenders as environmental human rights defenders; and
- global solidarity in terms of care for life on the planet.

In addition, the consultations served to emphasize key areas of evidence increasingly linked to climate change for consideration in all reports, namely:

- inter-generational and intra-generational health impacts
- climate change-related human mobility
- cultural heritage, mental health, innovation, and spirituality
- informal sectors (economies, work, settlements)
- land-ocean interface
- organised crime and illegal economies
- war and militarisation
- unilateral coercitive measures
- international economic law (multilateral, bilateral, unilateral), including Investor-State Dispute Settlement
- fair and equitable benefit sharing
- AI and machine learning applications to climate action
- disaster capitalism
- fiscal justice (taxation and debt).

Fundamentally, participants in the consultations expressed converging expectations on the future thematic reports contributing to:

- ⇒ focusing on the **root causes** of climate change
- ⇒ distinguishing **false solutions** from effective and fair climate solutions
- ⇒ clarifying the role of international human rights law to: 1) provide a legal basis for a just transition, supporting complex **balancing** of needs and interests; 2) document and prevent negative human rights **impacts**; 3) identify **good practices**;
- ⇒ pointing to international legal standards and meaningful practices on **equity** (including in relation to inter-generational equity, and common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities)
- ⇒ developing a **holistic vision for transformation** through the just transition and climate approaches
- ⇒ exploring a range of **follow-up** approaches to the recommendations of thematic and country visit reports.

3. Children's views on the priorities of the mandate

One of the most innovative parts of the consultations was a dialogue with children. Two Working Groups – on Child Participation and on Children and the Environment – of Child Rights Connect – a global child rights network of NGOs – organized an online dialogue between the Rapporteur and 20 children from different regions, aged 9-17. This had been preceded by a closed, preparatory meeting among 34 children, who shared views based on a children-friendly version of the Rapporteur's mindmap and a 5-minute video by Ms. Morgera explaining the mandate and share her intention to explore ways in which she could be in an ongoing dialogue with children in the implementation of the mandate.

During the consultation, children spoke very thoughtfully about some of the proposed thematic priorities and shared detailed examples from their countries. The children were keen for their priorities to be widely shared with other interested actors: see images below.

What should be the priorities of the Special Rapporteur on climate change?

Children from different countries discussed their proposals for the SR on climate change then the group voted about the priorities. Here come the results!



No. **1** priority should be...

Implementation of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 26. on children's rights and climate change

No. **2** priority should be...

The impact of climate change on children's rights to health, food and good standard of life (also covering hunger and poverty)

No. **3** priority should be...

Safe participation of children in climate policy-making, advocacy and activism

Many children also voted for...

- ! Climate education in schools, access to information and participation of children in innovative projects and climate research
- ! Unequal access to new technologies and the energy transition
- ! Discrimination in the context of climate change
- ! The impact of climate change on children in vulnerable situations

In addition, children in the consultation raised two fundamental questions:

- ⇒ Why are governments **not listening** to the demands for the protection of human rights and the environment?
- ⇒ Why are children not being **adequately and appropriately informed and involved** in decisions about the effects of climate change on their lives now and their future?

The Rapporteur continues to explore with Child Rights Connect and other partners how to create a permanent dialogue with children on the implementation of the mandate, notably in the preparation of thematic reports, their integration in education and outreach materials specifically for children, and in international engagements. As a first step, Ms. Morgera will create a TikTok and Instagram Ms.iles for the mandate to communicate on a regular basis with children. These were suggested by children as their preferred social media channels, at the end of the consultation.

Finally, Ms. Morgera and Child Rights Connect are also planning to capture the learning from these consultations and share it with other Special Procedures, as well as compare with the lessons learnt from previous ad hoc consultations between children and other UN human rights experts and bodies.