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What kind of process is this?

WWViews is a process of global citizen deliberation on climate change. It will bring members of the general public together to hear balanced expert opinions on climate change, discuss different views face-to-face in small groups, vote on questions, and propose and prioritize action recommendations.

Participants are not invited on the basis of their knowledge or qualifications; instead normal adult citizens are randomly invited to ensure the group closely reflects the demographic diversity of the whole community. In deliberative processes, citizens have the opportunity to learn what competing experts 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.

Although 100 citizens will be involved in each WWViews event, the process involves face-to-face discussions in small groups. In some participating countries where advanced communications technologies may not be available to the organisers, this will only be possible by bringing everyone together in one location. To make the process as similar as possible in all countries, every participating country will bring participants together in one location in that country.

Has this process been used before?

Citizen deliberations have been tested and proven extremely valuable at a national level over two decades. During the past five years, citizen deliberations across multiple countries have also been implemented successfully at the European level. However, there has never been a global citizen deliberation process before.

How does this process compare to other deliberative processes?

The WWViews methodology is a hybrid based on several decades of innovation by the Danish Board of Technology (DBT) and other WWViews Alliance members. WWViews has commonalities with several other deliberative processes, such as:

- Assisting citizens to engage with detailed information, expert views and each other's opinions, before they reach their own conclusions (eg. Citizens Juries)
- Using the principles of balanced expertise to develop the information that citizens will receive before and during the event (eg. Consensus Conferences)
- Asking citizens to vote on a pre-prepared set of questions after deliberating on the issues (eg. Deliberative Polling®)

What is different about this process?

WWViews is the first-ever global citizen deliberation exercise, using internet based collaboration to enable instantaneous communication and comparison of the results from all participating countries. Each World Wide Views event around the world will be using the same methodology, a very similar program, and will be addressing the same set of questions at the event.

This global citizen deliberation is designed to feed into the global policy-making process at the UN Climate Change negotiations (COP15) in Copenhagen in December 2009.

The WWViews process is shorter than many other deliberative processes that can span three or more days. Also, participants in WWViews will not directly question a panel of expert witnesses, although they will receive a detailed information package and video briefings prepared with expert input. Unlike some other deliberative processes, participants will not develop a detailed list of recommendations. They will have time to formulate a single recommendation per table group, but the focus will be on discussing and voting on pre-prepared questions regarding the challenges of global climate change and possible solutions.

What other citizen deliberations on climate change have been held in Australia?

There have been several other important citizen deliberations on climate change in Australia. WWViews acknowledges the valuable contribution made by the following Australian events:

[NSW Community Climate Summit, Sydney, Feb 2009](#)

([Nature Conservation Council of NSW](#) , assisted by the [NSW Government's Environmental Trust](#))

80 NSW citizens met over three days to hear expert views on climate change and deliberate with each other in small groups. Their recommendations on responses to climate change in NSW were provided as input in the development of the NSW Government's Climate Change Action Plan.

[Rising Above Hot Air Workshop, Melbourne, Sep 2008](#)

([EPA Victoria](#) & [Monash University](#))

42 Victorian citizens met for a one day workshop to hear expert views, discuss responses to climate change and vote on recommendations. The event was broadcast live on the internet, and there was an online forum for participants to prepare beforehand and continue contributing afterwards.

[The National People's Assembly 2008, Brisbane, Aug 2008](#)

([Green Cross Australia](#) , funded by [Griffith University](#) , [Qld Government](#) & [Brisbane City Council](#))

14 Australian citizens participated in a citizens' panel, meeting over two weekends in a three

month period of briefings by experts. They formed recommendations on Australia's responses to rising sea levels in the Asia Pacific. The recommendations were provided to the Federal Government.

[WA Sustainability Within a Generation Online Deliberation, Current \(pilot project ended Feb 2008\)](#)

([WA Government](#) & [Murdoch University](#))

WA citizens using “online deliberation in self managed teams” to develop proposals for local solutions to climate change problems. The most promising ideas are funded to create demonstration projects. A large ‘21st Century Dialogue’ was proposed to be held with thousands of participants collaborating across a computer network to “determine the broad scale initiatives that will work best for the State” [\(Hartz-Karp, 2007\)](#) .

[Capital Region Climate Change Forum, Canberra, Dec 2006](#)

([Institute for Sustainable Futures](#) , funded by [NSW Greenhouse Office](#) & [ACT Office of Sustainability](#))

20 citizens from the Capital Region met over three days in a “citizens’ jury” format, which involved questioning experts and deliberating together to form recommendations on responses to climate change in the Capital Region. The recommendations were provided to the ACT government.

What will participants do at the World Wide Views event?

At the event participants will work together in small groups through different sessions, each introduced with a short video clip. They will sit together with 6-8 other citizens at a round table and have the opportunity to discuss with them and vote on certain important issues. The final session will consist of making recommendations together with other citizens to the politicians and negotiators at the United Nations climate meeting in December. Finally the overall results will be announced, and the Australian results compared to those generated around the world at

other World Wide Views events.

Isn't this just a public meeting?

WWViews is much more than a public meeting, for several reasons. Participants have been randomly recruited to take part to ensure that the mix of participants reflects the diversity of the Australian population as a whole. It is a highly structured process which provides balanced information to participants before asking them to vote on pre-prepared questions about climate change. It will be held simultaneously in at least 38 countries across the world, covering every continent. The results from each country will be available for comparison on the WWViews website, as soon as they are posted by each country.

Why is this kind of engagement important?

It is important for ordinary citizens to make an informed contribution to decision-making processes that affect their future. Yet governing bodies usually make decisions based solely on input from experts and various organised interest groups. Citizens who are not affiliated with community organisations are generally ignored, except at election time. Citizen deliberation processes enable ordinary citizens to engage with the issues and provide well informed policy advice that considers a much wider range of perspectives.

Politicians, business leaders and NGOs will make momentous decisions at the UN Climate Change negotiations (COP15) in Copenhagen in December 2009. WWViews seeks to inject this decision-making process with the informed views of ordinary citizens from around the world.

Is the process transparent?

The media will be present at the WWViews event in Sydney, and highlights from the event will be broadcast on ABC-TV if possible, or made available online. In addition, the WWViews methodology is publically available for inspection at [the central WWViews website](#). The background reading materials for participants will be made publically available. The specific questions that participants will vote on are not publically available before the event, in order to avoid influencing participants' responses prior to the deliberations. The questions will fit within four thematic areas: personal views on climate change, long-term goals and urgency, responsibility for dealing with greenhouse gas emissions and the economics of dealing with climate change.

How are experts involved in this event?

Selected experts were involved in the selection of questions and in developing the introductory materials for participants. An international Scientific Advisory Board was appointed to vouch for the quality of this material. There will also be staff present at each event to help answer any technical questions that may come up during the group discussions, basing their responses on the background information materials.

How has the background reading material been put together?

The WWViews citizen deliberations will be informed by well-balanced briefing material. Scientific experts, political decision-makers, and a diverse range of other stakeholders have contributed to formulating the questions and briefing packets, which have been distributed to WWViews partners by the Danish Board of Technology (DBT) and by each partner to the participants in their country.

Why did a Danish organization initiate this?

The Danish government initiated WWViews because it has several decades of experience and innovation in using communication technology and deliberative processes to engage citizens in political decision-making. In addition, the Danish government is hosting the UN Climate Change negotiations in December 2009. The Danish Minister for Climate and Energy, Ms. Connie Hedegaard, has become a formal Ambassador for WWViews. The results of WWViews will be publicized visually in the cityscape of Copenhagen. This increases the probability that the views of ordinary citizens, expressed through WWViews, will be considered in the COP15 negotiations.

While the Danish Board of Technology and the Danish Cultural Institute are coordinating WWViews, it is structured as a global alliance of individuals and institutions, including government agencies, NGOs and universities.

Are different views represented in the background information material?

The background information material largely builds on the latest assessment report published in 2007 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC is the authoritative source of knowledge on the issue. It was created by the UN General Assembly in 1989 to provide scientific advice for decision-makers. The IPCC regularly examines and assesses the scientific contributions of thousands of scientists. The main conclusions are approved by scientists and by government representatives as well.

While the background information material is based on the consensus reached by the IPCC, it also seeks to reflect some contrasting views. A Scientific Advisory Board has been established to review whether the information provides the background knowledge necessary to form opinions on the questions, to avoid misunderstanding and to ensure a relevant balance of information. In addition, the composition of the material was tested at an early stage of its development in citizen focus groups in different parts of the world.

It is important that participants express their own views at the event, regardless of whether they agree or disagree with anything in the background information material.

The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) is the leading body for the assessment of climate change, established by the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP) and the [World Meteorological Organization](#) (WMO) to provide the world with a clear scientific view on the current state of climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic consequences.

Who is the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC)?

The IPCC is a scientific body. It reviews and assesses the most recent scientific, technical and socio-economic information produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of climate change. It does not conduct any research nor does it monitor climate related data or parameters.

Thousands of scientists from all over the world contribute to the work of the IPCC on a voluntary basis. Review is an essential part of the IPCC process, to ensure an objective and complete assessment of current information.

Differing viewpoints existing within the scientific community are reflected in the IPCC reports.

The main conclusions of the IPCC are approved by scientists and government representatives. Membership of the IPCC is open to all countries which are members of the World Meteorological Organisation and the UN Environmental Programme.

Because of its scientific and intergovernmental nature, the IPCC embodies a unique opportunity

to provide rigorous and balanced scientific information to decision makers. By endorsing the IPCC reports, governments acknowledge the authority of their scientific content. The work of the organization is therefore policy-relevant and yet policy-neutral, never policy-prescriptive.