

28th session of the Human Rights Council (2-27 March 2015)

Full Day Discussion

Human Rights and Climate Change

6 March 2015

Statement by Ireland

Panel 1

Mr President,

Ireland thanks the panellists for their contributions and valuable insights. We appreciate the practical focus of today's discussion on measures and best practices. Such focus is much needed to assist States in identifying specific measures which can ensure the promotion and protection of human rights in climate change policy.

Ireland was pleased to sign the *Geneva Pledge for Human Rights in Climate Action*, led by Costa Rica, at last month's UNFCCC ADP meeting. This pledge highlighted the importance of integrating human rights in climate action and fostering greater contact between human rights and climate change experts. We believe this is crucial if we are to ensure the full and effective enjoyment of human rights while addressing climate change. The integration of human rights into climate policy can be achieved through participation, sustainability, transparency, accountability, education and access to information. This is particularly important at local and national level, to empower those most vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change on their human rights.

An example from our own national experience is the consultation process that underpinned the preparation of our new climate legislation, which is currently before the Irish Parliament. In 2012, the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government conducted an online public consultation exercise in respect of national climate policy and legislation, in anticipation of proposed climate change legislation.

An extensive process was then undertaken, involving parliamentary scrutiny and civil society consultation, on draft legislation on *Climate Action and Low Carbon Development*. In particular, the relevant Parliamentary Committee, the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Environment, Culture and the Gaeltacht, conducted an extensive public consultation process with civil society, including through written submissions and public hearings. This process informed the further development of the draft legislation, which was revised and published in January this year.

We would like to ask the panellists if they can point to examples of education initiatives taken at local level that have been effective in encouraging greater public participation in mitigation and adaptation planning.

Thank you Mr President.