

# Copenhagen 09

## Creating mass public engagement on climate change

*The purpose of this document is to outline an approach to building large scale public engagement around the lead up to the Copenhagen 09 climate change conference (CCC). The purpose of this initiative is to create public understanding of and demand for the policy options under discussion at the CCC, through undertaking large scale public engagement.*

*This project has emerged as a consequence of the OECD conference on open and inclusive policy making in Ljubljana in June 2008 and through research funded by the UK Ministry of Justice and undertaken by Involve, AmericaSpeaks, and the BBC into mass public engagement contained in the recent report, Teleparticipation.<sup>1</sup>*

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*This proposal is premised on our belief that in 2006 a tipping point was reached in public awareness that climate change is now recognised as a significant 'problem' by a majority of people. There however exists very little consensus politically or amongst various publics over what the solutions to this problem should be.*

*This project will generate mass public awareness of and support for these solutions.*

*This paper should be read in conjunction with:*

- **'Teleparticipation'** by Richard Wilson, Alice Casey, (Involve) Susanna Haas Lyons, Joe Goldman (Contributing Editors, AmericaSpeaks)
- **'Climate Change: the state of the debate'** by Alex Evans and David Steven

## **1. Context**

In 2012 the Kyoto Protocol to prevent climate change and global warming runs out. There is, therefore, an urgent need for global commitment to renewal. In November 2009, the Copenhagen Climate Conference (CCC) will bring all parties of the UNFCCC together for the last time at government level before the climate agreement needs to be renewed. It is heralded by many as vitally important to agreeing a global solution to climate change.

Since the signing of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 progress towards agreeing a global political solution to climate change has been disappointing and carbon emissions have reached record levels

One of the reasons underpinning the lack of progress has been politicians' fear of the public backlash in their nation states against climate change 'solutions' policies<sup>3</sup>. One of the great challenges of international deal making is the pace at which decision-makers can move ahead of their populations, which is often not very far as can be seen in the recent Irish referendum on the Lisbon treaty or French and Dutch referenda

on the EC constitution. If Copenhagen is to be a success it is therefore vital that the public are brought along as part of the political conversation.

## 1.1 Public Attitudes : The Tipping Point

This section has been adapted from ‘Climate change: the state of the debate’ by A.Evans and D.Steven.

2006 is widely regarded as the moment when climate change moved into the mainstream of political debate and public consciousness. In 2006 *Business Week* reported that “the year global warming went from controversial to conventional for much of the corporate world”<sup>4</sup>. The *Observer* newspaper termed it “the year the world woke up”<sup>5</sup>. Momentum continued into 2007. The IPCC declared that warming was undoubtedly happening, and that there was a greater than 90 per cent chance that most of this warming was due to human activity. Climate change was reported to be the hottest topic of the 2007 World Economic Forum meeting in Davos. Just before the June G8 meeting, President Bush announced that the US recognised climate change as a ‘serious problem’. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon convened an unprecedented head of state level summit to discuss climate change, and to cap it all, Al Gore and the IPCC shared the Nobel Peace Prize.

The policy level acceptance of the issue was mirrored by the public opinion data collected by GlobeScan polls shown in Figure 1 and 2, where we can see that by 2006 19 out of 30 countries had more than 90 per cent of their population considering climate change a serious issue. Only in the USA, Kenya and South Africa is the figure less than 80 per cent.

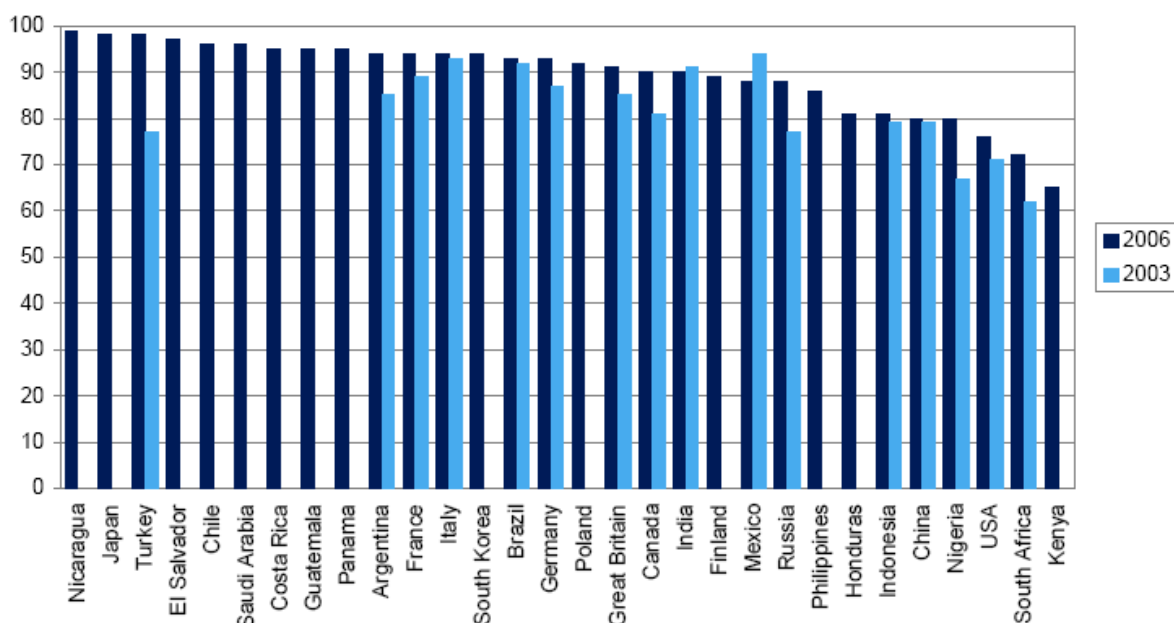
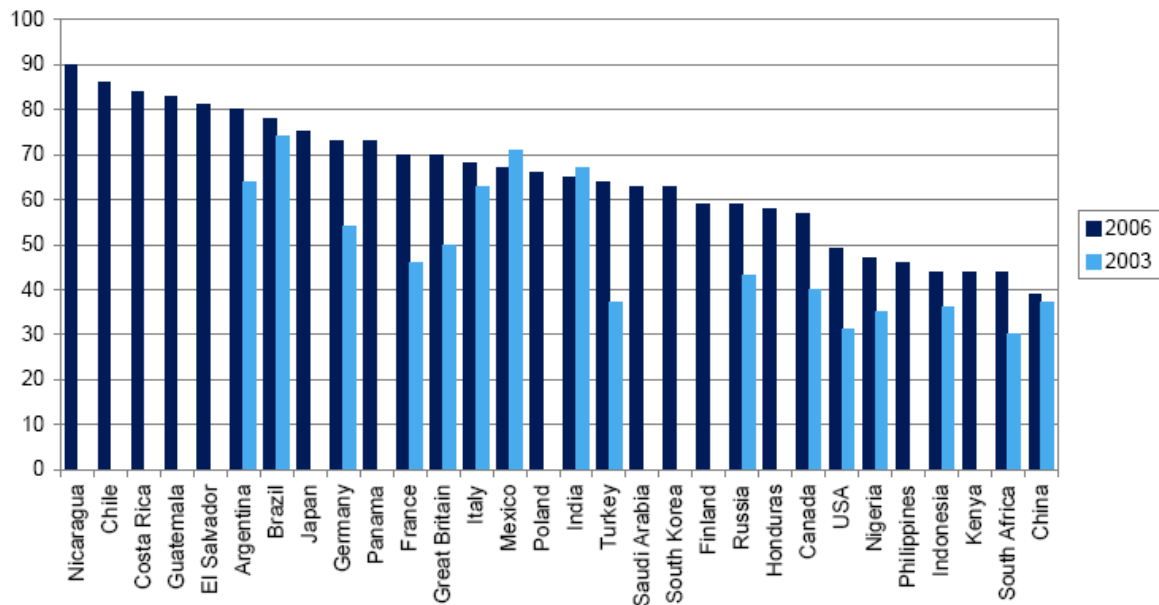
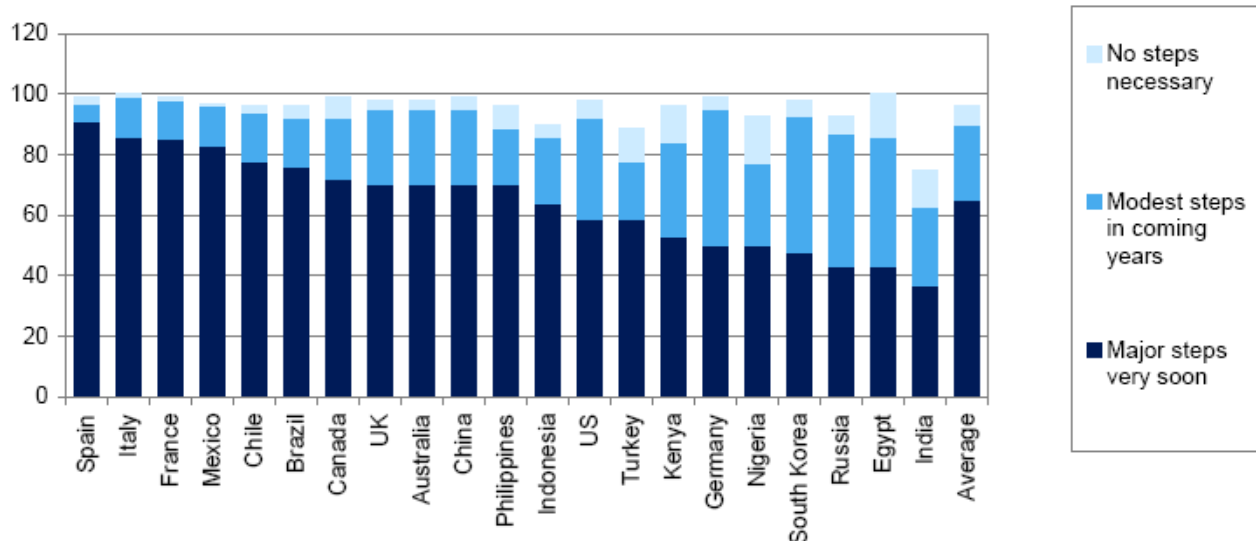


Figure 1 – Climate Change as ‘Very Serious’ and ‘Somewhat Serious’ (Source: GlobeScan)<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 2 – Climate Change as ‘Very Serious’ (Source: GlobeScan)**

Figure 3, below, helps us start to unpick how people feel about taking action on the problem. We see that there is a global average of 65 per cent of people who thought it was ‘necessary to take major steps very soon’ and just 6 per cent who think it is ‘not necessary to take any steps’.



**Figure 3 – Views of actions necessary to address climate change (per cent)**  
(Source: BBC World Service/PIPA/GlobeScan)<sup>7</sup>

So it would seem clear that there is a global majority in favour of taking ‘major steps very soon’. But what might those steps look like in practice, and who should be taking these steps? There is limited international comparative data on this subject so here we take the UK as a case study. In 2007 the *IpsosMORI* social research institute published the report ‘Tipping Point or Turning Point? – social marketing and climate change’.

The report found that:

*“The public continue to externalise climate change to other people, places and times. It is increasingly perceived as a major global issue with far-reaching consequences for future generations – 45 per cent say it is the most serious threat facing the world today and 53 per cent believe it will impact significantly on future generations. However, the issue features less prominently nationally and locally, indeed only 9 per cent believe climate change will have a significant impact on them personally.”<sup>8</sup>*

So although the BBC and GlobeScan data demonstrate that people recognise that climate change is a real and a serious problem, it would seem according to the IpsosMORI report that they see it as a problem happening elsewhere, affecting other people, and it is those others who will have to act to tackle the problem. This disjuncture is backed up by a YouGov poll for the Daily Telegraph in November 2006<sup>9</sup> which found that while 85 per cent of respondents felt that global warming was happening, and 71 per cent feared that “the lives of future generations will be blighted by unchecked climate change”, it also found that:

- 65 per cent opposed an increase in tax on petrol and diesel;
- Only 27 per cent would “definitely” be willing to take fewer holidays abroad;
- Just 25 per cent were willing to drive less; and
- Only 26 per cent were prepared to use fewer electrical appliances around the home

A similar picture is presented by the UK Government’s own figures about public action on climate change, which find that:

- Less than 1 per cent of the population has switched to an energy company supplying renewable-sourced electricity;
- Under 0.3 per cent has installed a form of renewable micro-generation such as solar PV or thermal panels;
- Purchases of highly-efficient cars represent less than 0.2 per cent of new cars sold; and
- Just 2 per cent of people claim to offset their emissions from flying.<sup>10</sup>

So although we do appear to have reached a tipping point in terms of recognising climate change as a serious problem few of us are willing to change our behavior or want our government to introduce policies which would change our lifestyles.

## 1.2 Policy Development

The CCC takes place in November and December 2009. At present there is no defined deal on the table, this it is hoped, will emerge through the precursor processes such as at the Poznan conference in 2008. At present the results of the process as a whole is highly uncertain.

This project will be working closely with the Centre on International Cooperation and E3G to both ensure this process feeds into and is embedded in the negotiations as they emerge. Despite the uncertainty inherent in the global negotiating rounds we can take an educated guess at the policy proposals that will be tabled at Copenhagen and what will follow it. A key discussion point at Copenhagen is likely to be finance, and specifically the amount countries are prepared to pay to tackle climate change, and it is possible that the CCC discussions will come down to a negotiation between 2 broad options:

- **Option 1:** \$1-2Trillion (with some immediate investment) = 2 degree temperature rise
- **Option 2:** \$0.5 Trillion (delayed investment) = 4-5 degree temperature rise.

Between these two headline options there are a myriad of technical mechanisms and trade-offs; many of which will be critical to translate into publicly accessible language so that the publics seeking to engage do not feel shut out by technical terms.

It will also be crucial to maintain engagement following on from the Copenhagen conference as much of hard work will begin in the selling of the global deal back to the national constituencies. In many ways this project seeks to harness the interest generated by Copenhagen as the catalyst to supporting on-going public engagement particularly at the nation state level whereby electorates have a better understanding of what deal they have been signed up to and why. A key outcome of this project is both better quality national public debates on the delivery of Copenhagen agreements as well as a public understanding of the impacts on others around the world.

### 1.3 Public Engagement

In recent years, a great deal of experience has been gained in running large scale citizen events to influence the policy processes; evaluations<sup>11</sup> have shown that for the processes to create political traction they must involve a critical mass of the population, between 1-4 %. We must therefore seek to engage a significant proportion of the population in any state in order to provide politicians with the mandate they need to make decisive change. In this instance this means seeking to engage millions in the target countries.

Involve has spent the last 18 months undertaking research and development across the world into how to engage a critical mass<sup>12</sup> of the population in tough policy issues and received a grant from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) in April of this year to develop this work further. The main findings of this work are contained in the Teleparticipation Report by Involve, AmericaSpeaks and the BBC and funded by the UK Ministry of Justice.

In the run up to Copenhagen there are three other key processes taking place:

**WorldWideViews (WWVs):** is the Danish Government's official public engagement process, which seeks to provide demographic public opinion data as an input to the CCC. This process will not involve mass engagement but be focussed on high quality demographic deliberative opinion generated through a series of citizen meetings (1 meeting per country, 100 delegates per meeting). This could serve as an excellent control group to compare with the mass engagement undertaken by our partnership. Involve are delivering the UK arm of this process.

**University of Alberta/Deliberative Democracy Consortium Workshop:** from 25 - 29 September 2009 an international workshop is being held in Edmonton Alberta to design and test a global process for engagement around Climate Change. Hosted by the University of Alberta and the Deliberative Democracy Consortium the conference we will raise the process proposed in this document as a topic for debate, development and testing. Involve are actively engaged in planning this deliberative process.

**Road to Copenhagen:** River Path are currently co-ordinating a wider stakeholder engagement process aimed at broadening the reach of climate discussion and deliberation into civil society, business and media. Involve are working with River Path to maximise the impact of the engagement strategy in the run up to Copenhagen09.

## 2. The Project

### 2.1 Purpose

The primary objective of this process is:

- To create public demand for and deeper understanding of the policy options being tabled at Copenhagen and the subsequent negotiations and to impact upon shaping future policy.

Secondary objectives include:

- creating greater clarity amongst the public of the existing knowledge base
- stimulate citizen behaviour change
- improve policy makers' awareness of informed citizen opinion both nationally and globally
- deliver 'people's recommendations' to key decision makers involved in climate policy
- create a better understanding of how to engage large numbers of citizens in international politics
- create a global infrastructure legacy for future global engagement processes
- improve communication pathways between citizens and civil society on a global scale
- create a sense of the power of large scale citizen mobilisation

### 2.2 Principles

There are eight principles underpinning the project's process:

1. **Non dogmatic:** it is critical we are not tied to any particular public participation approach or method but that we draw upon a wide spectrum, and have flexibility to use what works best
2. **360 degree:** we will need to draw upon a range of approaches harnessing online, face-to-face and broadcast tools
3. **Open source:** enabling organic growth, promotes inclusivity and low barriers to entry,
4. **Independent:** the initiative must be non partisan and be *seen* to be non partisan
5. **Targeted:** we must not lose our ambition but nevertheless be realistic of what can be achieved in the tight timescale
6. **Evidence based:** synthesising disparate information sources
7. **Creating a legacy:** this must be an exercise in learning through doing, continually reflecting and improving the practice whilst overtime creating systems for future global public engagement work
8. **Locally determined:** processes should be owned locally, and designed with local delivery groups to suit local circumstances

### 2.3 Process

The process proposed in this section is based upon the experience of the authors and the research contained in Involve's *Teleparticipation* report. In this section we outline the components and stages of the process itself. This process is in draft form for comment.

#### 2.3.1 Process Components:

The process will consist of seven key components:

1. Global Steering Group: consisting of the global ambassadors and global delivery leads.
2. Regional Steering Groups: consisting of the regional ambassadors and delivery leads.
3. Online Hub: the fulcrum of the process will be the website which will provide access to information, social networking and community meeting support.
4. Community events: will be supported through local NGOs (e.g. CIVICUS & Avina Networks) and other local partners (e.g. British Council).
5. Leveraging global networks through existing pathways and partnership approach
6. Global Secretariat: supporting the regional secretariats, managing the online hub, supporting global partners and building partnerships with media/agency partners.
7. Regional Secretariat: managing the regional element of the online hub, supporting regional partners and building partnerships with media/agency partners.

### 2.3.2 Process Stages

*Below, we outline the four overarching process stages<sup>13</sup> to be addressed in order to make global deliberation effective. The stages below are designed to fit both with the Copenhagen process itself, and with two existing engagement processes that involve is already linked to: The WWViews<sup>14</sup> project, and Road to Copenhagen<sup>15</sup>.*

#### Stage 1. Issue framing, process design & policy liaison

From the outset this process will be dominated by the interplay between information, politics and the public.

A balanced team of CC advisers (led by E3G & CIC) will be formed to ensure that the information made available to the public is balanced, best available and appropriately presented.

The process leads (see Section 3.2) will ensure that the process is designed as well as possible.

We propose that an initial multilingual web presence should be set up as soon as possible and that the coalition's activities are openly documented online to ensure transparency and encourage trust in the process. Impartial observers or 'critical friends' should also be invited to hold the process to account, and ensure that it does not favour or lobby for any particular groups or value system.

#### Stage 2. Stimulating Participation

*The stimulation of participation and a general atmosphere of interest and public profile, should be undertaken as early as possible. This is particularly important when seeking to:*

- i. Build the consciousness of the process in the wider public's view, and to enable outreach work to underrepresented groups to take place as quickly as possible given the tight timeframe.
- ii. Engage key pundits and commentators in the process from the early stages of its development in order to involve them in an active relationship with the process as it unfolds, and to encourage transparency.
- iii. Gather a large core group of engaged web-activists from across the globe who will be involved from the outset in spreading the word to their own networks and encouraging public participation through their own example and encouragement.

**iv.** Establish this project as being different from traditional institutional or top down engagement processes – demonstrating impartiality, relevance, citizen voice aspects, global nature and engaging and innovative approach.

We acknowledge that the limitations of this online approach necessarily mean that not everybody will have equal access to the discussion.

However, four key points have led us to believe that this approach is still the best option:

**i. Timing:** We cannot afford to wait in terms of beginning a process. If we choose to wait until internet access digital literacy and penetration reach across the globe, the issues that we seek to act upon will not be addressed in a timely manner.

**ii. Cost:** The costs of running a global conversation on a mass scale without the web are prohibitive.

**iii. Building a legacy online:** If we begin by setting up a mechanism to capture voices and encourage deliberation on the web, this will build the legacy of the process and enable greater outreach to take place at the next event, thus snowballing involvement.

**iv. Building a legacy offline:** Involving civil society and outreach organisations specialising in voice for underrepresented groups will enable those groups to start feeding in via the web mechanism when given support to do so. We would aim to grow this outreach strategy exponentially.

In addition to this, we recognise that a feasible target for the mix of participants who we hope to engage in the process could work well as being 50% from already engaged groups, 20% from business or industry, and 30% from elsewhere. This goal would help to ensure a more representative process.

### **Stage 3. Input into Copenhagen Conference**

*The citizen discussions will take place prior to the Copenhagen conference as a series of networked deliberative conversations that link into a central hub through opinion expression activities such as voting and petitioning. There would be two main ways of participating in the central conversation process:*

**i.** Community discussions: multilingual, downloadable community discussion kits would be available on the web. These would consist of materials for meeting hosts to hold meetings, but also information in the form of downloadable video, information packs, games etc. Each individual would then be able to express their opinion through website or mobile phone.

**ii.** Individual contribution: when impossible to be part of a community conversation we would support individuals to be part of individual online deliberation or web conversations. After participating in online discussions each individual would then be able to express an opinion.

**To enable a unified approach to the conversation three key elements are required:**

**i.** Standardised, impartial information provision: Broadcast media, web hub, film

**ii.** Timed citizen discussions: community and household events, web based, social networking

**iii.** Centralised hub for opinion expression: e-petitions, voting (mobile phone/online/postcard)

## Stage 4. Voice and Legacy

*The conversations and citizen deliberation that will take place as part of the process will provide a mandate for innovation and change as by the time the discussions are complete, and in the run up to Copenhagen 09, citizens from across the globe will have signed up to support specific solutions for future development around climate change. There will be positive, solutions-focused, mobilisation on a mass scale.*

It is hoped that such well-timed mass-scale participation would impact upon the conversations taking place at the UN Conference and at nation state governance level. The process would not end with the presentation of results of citizen discussion to the world's media and decision makers. The public responses from key decision makers would be one key output of the process itself.

**Individuals and groups who participated will be provided with the opportunity to:**

- i. Sign up to take part in pilot solutions
- ii. Donate money to mobilise a favourite solution
- iii. Match groups with global partners to create a global citizen network
- iv. Bid for funding to take new ideas forward with the support of global funding organisations
- v. Contribute to and access a central web hub which will feature with the activities of the various active citizens, decision makers and campaign groups until the next global conversation
- vi. Link up with local organisations through searchable online mapping tools

## 2.4 Phases

The project consists of four key phases.

### **Phase 1 – Planning, Development & Pilot (Sept 08 - Feb 09) Poznan Pilot**

- Poznan Pilot – produce a beta website in the short term to trail some of the mechanisms with control groups of public in the run up to Poznan.
- Build Relationships: Media, NGO, Government
- Beta website development
- Edmonton Conference
- Process Design
- Online data bank updating
- Getting support of major trusts

### **Phase 2 – Process launch & Interest Development (Feb – Sept 09)**

- Website go live
- Develop community kits
- Online data bank updating
- Regional & global process launch

### **Phase 3 – Copenhagen 09 Community Events (Sept - Nov 09)**

- Hold community events
- Feed into the UNCCC
- Feedback to participants

### **Phase 4 – National Ratification (2010)**

- Regional level engagement on trade-offs
- Civil society relationship building between disparate groups
- Feed into follow up negotiations

## **2.5 Deliverables**

- Public voice on climate change expressed nationally and globally
- Increase in deep public understanding
- Trusted, publicly available information resources
- In depth data on public preferences
- Better informed global policy
- Tested model on global public engagement
- Delivery coalition for global public engagement
- Report on global public engagement in climate change
- Better understanding of varying publics' views

## **3. Partners**

### **3.1 ADVISORY GROUP & PROJECT AMBASSADORS**

Mark Easton, Home Affairs Editor, BBC, (TBC)

Jan Corfee Morlat OECD (TBC)

Jonathan Porritt, Sustainable Development Commission (TBC)

IPCC (TBC)

### **3.2 Delivery Partners**

#### **Policy Leads**

Nick Mabey, E3G

David Steven, River Path

Alex Evans, Centre in International Cooperation

Michael Christenson, Danish Government (TBC)

#### **Public Engagement Leads**

##### ***Global:***

Carolyn Lukensmeyer, AmericaSpeaks

Paul Hilder Res Publica/Avaaz

Richard Wilson, Involve,

Lars Kluver, Danish Board of Technology (TBC),

**EU:** Lead Partners: Involve, European Dialogue Consortium & La Netscouade

**India Lead Partners:** TBC

**North America:** AmericaSpeaks (TBC) & TakingITGlobal (confirmed)

**Civil Society Leads:**

Katsuji Imata, Deputy General Secretary, CIVICUS, (TBC)

Pedro Tarak, Avina,

Martin Kirk, Head of Campaigns, Oxfam (TBC)

Dr Lloyd Anderson (TBC) British Council

**Media Leads:**

Mark Easton, Home Affairs Editor, BBC (TBC)

Peter Bazalgette, Chairman, Endemol

**Online Leads:**

Diogo Vasconcelos, Cisco Systems (TBC)

### **3.3 Core Project Delivery Partners**

**Involve** is a world leading public participation agency based in London.

**E3G** works as a change agent for sustainable development

**America Speaks** lead pioneering citizen deliberation events on a host of issues (TBC)

**Center on International Cooperation** works on global issues through multilateral institutions

**For further information please contact Alice Casey [alice@involve.org.uk](mailto:alice@involve.org.uk) 0044 207 632 0119**

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12 "Critical Mass" Broadening the Reach of Public Engagement Across Society, People and Participation, Involve (2007)

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15 River Path project which aims to engage key stakeholders from industry, civil society and media in order to feed into the Copenhagen conference.