



United Nations  
Climate Change



**UN Climate Change Conference**  
2-13 December 2019



# ***Broadening engagement at a critical time***

## *Virtual bridges to the COPs*

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# *Agenda*

- *The challenges*
- *The virtual bridge concept*
- *PDX Virtual Bridge to COP25*
- *Outcomes of the PDX Bridge*
- *Questions and possibilities*



# *The Challenges*

- *Climate disruption is a global issue having local consequences*
- *Dealing with it requires an “all hands, minds, and hearts on deck” approach requiring participation from all segments of global society.*
- *Physical venues for international meetings are limited.*
- *Events like the current pandemic presents unique challenges and lessons.*
- *There exists a large volume of online content produced by the UNFCCC and observer groups that is vastly underutilized.*



## ***The virtual bridge concept***

*Local watch parties that enable local people to be virtual citizen observers by providing them with opportunities to do the following...*

- *Directly communicate with observers at the COPs and other international events.*
- *Hear from local climate actors linking the local to the international.*
- *Communicate their ideas and concerns to UNFCCC staff and negotiators.*
- *Network with others like themselves.*

# ***PDX Virtual Bridge to COP25***

## *Who was involved*

- *The key organizers - Greater Portland Sustainability Education Network, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, and Lewis and Clark College*
- *A constellation of local partners*
- *Two major international efforts providing online content from the COP25 Open COP and #VIRTUALBlueCOP25*



**#VIRTUALBlueCOP25**

Reducing emissions and increasing ambition

# ***PDX Virtual Bridge - Outcomes***

- *The two public gatherings involved nearly 200 people and nearly two dozen local, national, and international organizations.*
- *An on-line gateway to bridge and UNFCCC events was put in place.*
- *The attendees all participated in a Talanoa style dialogue thus contributing to a visioning document produced by GPSEN.*



[Talanoa Dialogue: Pulse of Portland](https://gpsen.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Talanoa-Dialogues_Pluse-from-Portland-Dec-2019.pdf)

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## *Questions and possibilities #1*

# *What did the Bridge to COP25 accomplish?*

- *A group of local partners was assembled who are interested in moving to the next phase.*
- *A group of national / internal partners was assembled to provide a liaison between the local and the international.*
- *Three of the four opportunities listed on the Virtual Bridge Concept slide were realized.*
- *The fourth opportunity (communicating local concerns to UNFCCC leadership) is still a hurdle.*



## *Questions and possibilities #2*

# *What's next for the local bridge?*

- *Expanding the number of participants.*
- *Expanding the number of local partners and including a more diverse group of organizations.*
- *Expanding the number of gatherings during a COP to attract a more diverse group of participants.*



## ***Questions and possibilities #1***

# ***How do we encourage other bridges?***

- *Identifying and encouraging other communities*
- *Producing an organizing kit based on the PDX experience.*
- *Identifying observer groups and UNFCCC staff who can be resource people for communities establishing their own bridges.*



# Questions?

## Contact

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