**Malawi at COP26 Planning Meeting**

**10.30 – 12.00, Friday 7th February 2020**

**Mandela Room, Edinburgh City Chambers, 253 High Street, EH1 1YJ**

**ATTENDEES:**

**Andrew Dickie**, 2050 Climate Group

**Ben Wilson**, SCCS, SCIAF

**Cathy Ratcliff**, EMMS International

**Cecilia Stephens**, Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM)

**Craig Docking**, Scotland Malawi Partnership

**David Hope-Jones**, Scotland Malawi Partnership

**David Hughes**, Balmore Trust

**Hebe Nicholson**, University of St. Andrews

**Ian Dunn**, SCIAF

**Joyce Davidson**, Balmore Trust

**Katie Finn**, University of Edinburgh

**Kirsty Elwell**, George Watson’s College

**Lewis Ryder-Jones**, International Development Alliance

**Megan Harvey**, Scotland Malawi Partnership

**Nigel Milne**, Smileawi

**Sally Rae**, George Watson’s College

**Steve Taylor**, Ideas Ltd

**Stuart Brown**, Scotland Malawi Partnership

**Thomas Echlin-Harradine**, Whitfield Echlin & Company LLP

**Vicky Milne**, Smileawi

**MINUTES:**

**Welcome and context setting**

On Friday 6th February, the **Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP)** welcomed members and partners for an initial meeting to discuss **Malawian involvement at COP26**. **David Hope-Jones (DHJ)**, **Chief Executive Officer** of the **SMP**, chaired the meeting. The objectives of the meeting were introduced as follows:

* To create a space to bring together those interested in Malawi’s involvement at COP, to support:
  + Networking
  + Sharing of plans
  + Collaborative working
* To agree the principle of the SMP’s engagement of COP26 engagement
* To agree the outline objectives of the SMP’s engagement of COP26 engagement
* To agree a plan of action

**Roundtable introductions & sharing of initial plans:**

All attendees were then given an opportunity to introduce themselves and their reason for attending the meeting.

**The UK COP Alliance, SCCS, and SCIAF COP plans:**

**Ben Wilson (BW)**, who is **Policy Officer** at[**SCIAF**](https://www.sciaf.org.uk/), **Chair** of[**Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS)**](https://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/) and was representing the **UK COP Alliance**, discussed the plans of these three organisations for COP26. He prefaced this by highlighting the key issues discussed at COP25, including ambition, loss of damage and Article 26, the latter two of which saw inconclusive results and have been carried over to COP26. He emphasised that those involved with COP26 must prevent loss of hope among the public regarding the Conference’s success. He also noted the concerning trend of the least developed countries being given little to no platform at COP. He then gave a brief overview of SCCS’s work and their objectives for COP26, which are as follows:

* Influence global action
* Support civil society
* Support existing members
* Host and welcome international partners

The UK COP26 Alliance is working on creating a **website**, with the aims of ensuring collaboration and reducing duplication of efforts.

**The Alliance’s COP plans:**

**Lewis Ryder-Jones (LRJ)**, **Policy, Advocacy and Communications Officer** at [**Scotland’s International Development Alliance (Alliance)**](https://www.intdevalliance.scot/), discussed Alliance’s plans for COP26. It is their hope that these activities carry up to two years beyond COP26. There has been a breadth of interest from Alliance’s membership, with **51 individuals across 34 different organisations** being **engaged** with two **COP26 planning meetings** so far. They have applied to the [**UNFCCC**](https://unfccc.int/) for COP26 observer status and they are now a full member of SCCS, aligning their activities to support. Initial enquiries have been made about venue hire during COP26 for an Alliance **‘hub’ and exhibition** in October 2020. A **position statement** has been drafted, outlining Alliance’s role in COP26 and some planned activities. These activities include:

* Ongoing – monthly planning meetings (next 17th Feb)
* March – photo and film competition launch. Theme: ‘The Climate Crisis from the frontline’
* May/June – COP26 themed CPG at Holyrood
* 24th September – Alliance Annual Conference
* October – Photo and film exhibition
* 9th-19th November – COP26 itself – plans at this stage include linking to SCCS civil society hub
* 2021 – A ‘roadshow’ type of event

Alliance hopes that their presence and activity at COP26 will help them to influence Scottish and possibly UK Government going forward. Alliance invites others to get involved in the following ways:

* Keep an eye on their [upcoming events](https://www.intdevalliance.scot/events/upcoming-events) and attend their COP26 planning meetings
* Write a blog for them on a climate related issue
* Enter their photo/film competition when it launches in March
* Lead a session at their annual conference
* Help them develop new policy asks for the Scottish Government
* Feed into developing plans for the two weeks of COP itself
* Talk about climate justice with friends and family and raise awareness

**The 2050 Group’s COP plans:**

**Andrew Dickie (AD)**, [**Malawi Climate Leaders Project**](https://2050.scot/malawi-climate-leaders/) **Officer** at the [**2050 Climate Group**](https://2050.scot/) **(2050)**, discussed the Project’s plans for COP26. After disappointment at Malawi representation at COP25, The Young Leaders hope that COP26 will present an opportunity to ensure that their projects in Malawi are heard about in Scotland. It is important to find out exactly what the Young Leaders hope to gain from COP26 and how both 2050 and the SMP can support this. Their peers in Scotland **(2050’s** [**Young Leaders Development Programme**](https://2050.scot/yldp/)**)** are assisting them, and a **Steering Committee** meets regularly to help coordinate.

**Principles of SMP COP26 Engagement:**

DHJ then proposed six draft Principles to guide the SMP’s COP26, which are to:

1. Be member-led
2. Be focused on Malawi-related matters
3. Be strategic and outcome-focused
4. Work within our PARTNERSHIP Principles
5. Not duplicate what others are doing
6. Support wider-collaborative efforts, within our means

Members were invited to feed in to and edit these Principles. BW asked if these Principles fully captured the Malawi-led nature of the SMP’s approach. **It was unanimously agreed that Principle No. 4 would be changed to: “Work within our PARTNERSHIP principles, ensuring active Malawian leadership”**

**With this amendment, these six Principles were unanimously agreed by those in attendance.**

**Main Strategic Objective:**

DHJ then consulted members on the draft Main Strategic Objective with regards to the SMP’s engagement of COP26:

*“Giving meaningful voice and visibility to Malawi at COP26 and, in so doing, raise awareness of Scotland’s links with Malawi, and support our Members’ work.”*

Members were keen this Main Strategic Objective included a reference to supporting Climate Justice. It was agreed that this would be added in to the wording.

**With this amendment, this Main Strategic Objective was unanimously agreed by those in attendance.**

**Branding and Communications:**

DHJ presented the draft Malawi at COP26 logo and members in attendance were in unanimous agreement that it was useful to have a logo like this which those who wished to could use in their related communications – it helps create a shared identity specific to COP26.

ID suggested we look at option of having the globe black and white in the logo.

It was agreed that our branding and profile must make it clear that this is a ‘welcome mat’ for Malawian visitors, and does not seek to speak on Malawi’s behalf.

**It was agreed we will work up a version of the logo with a monochrome globe but that the SMP office was given authority to make the final design decision. Members were wholly supportive of the draft logo.**

It was proposed that the hashtag the SMP plans to use for COP26 **#ClimateChangeMalawi** should use a more powerful term than ‘Change’. Several others agreed with this, and suggestions included:

* # ClimateActionMalawi
* # ClimateChaosMalawi
* #ClimateCrisisMalawi
* #ClimateEmergencyMalawi
* #ClimateJusticeMalawi

**Following a vote, by a clear majority, it was decided that the hashtag would be changed to #ClimateCrisisMalawi.**

**Operational Objectives:**

DHJ talked the meeting through the six proposed operational objectives within the SMP’s draft COP26 engagement plan: Listen, Amplify, Coordinate, Support, Partner and Act. More detailed information on these objectives can be found [here](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/download_file/4993/).

An open discussion then took place, where attendees could give feedback and suggest changes to the SMP’s strategy. Each point was discussed individually and then agreed with the membership:

**1 Listen**

It was noted that the SMP would work closely with MaSP and the 2050 Group on this objective.

DHJ noted that the SMP will likely have a professional videographer in Malawi in the first weeks of April and that, if deemed useful by members, it may be possible to fund an additional day of the Videographer’s time so he could capture 4K, broadcast quality, succinct video clips of Malawians talking about the impact of climate change locally and what they want to see come out of COP26.  **There was strong support for this proposal.**

DHJ noted conversations with Malawi are currently in their early stages. BW advised that he has a contact within Malawi Civil Society whose guidance may prove useful. **All were in favour of the SMP establishing contact with this individual and the Malawi Government and others across Malawian civic society who are engaged with COPs**.

It was suggested that wording be added to address concerns of who is involved and where responsibility lies. For example, where does the Malawi Government stand.  **It was agreed that the start of the second bullet point to be expanded to: “To engage partners in Malawi, across civil society and Government, in an open an transparent way, to collect a range of Malawian perspectives on:…**”.

**It was agreed that the SMP will look to try and collect information from Malawi about Malawian perspectives of COP25 and other recent COPs.**

**With the above edits, this operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

**2 Amplify**

It was agreed that our communications narrative should capture both:

1. The particularly strong Malawi links which exist in Glasgow, and their relevance to the story of COP26; and
2. The diverse range of civic Malawi links right across Scotland, from Orkney to Dumfries.

To achieve (b), efforts should be made to reach out to distinctive and diverse communities, instead of only focusing exclusively on the Central Belt. The Alliance and SMP were keen to support this point. It was hoped this approach would help gain local as well as national (and international) media coverage.

DHJ noted there is *some possibility* of the University of Strathclyde being able to offer space for a Malawi-specific event, co-hosted with the SMP, during COP26. While the idea of an event during COP26 had not been in the SMP’s original plan, good to be responsive to this opportunity, so a rough proposal was quickly developed. DHJ emphasized this was at a *very early* stage and there was no commitment from either side.

There was a discussion about the opportunities and risks of hosting a Malawi-specific event during COP. Some felt it might risk flaring sensitivities between LDCs at COP26, others felt it would be good to have a space to set out the Scotland-Malawi stall, providing a welcoming space for the Malawian delegation. It was noted that there will be hundreds of similar events during COP26, each with its own particular focus (whether thematic or geographic), a little like the Edinburgh Fringe – having one event focusing on one topic, is not to the exclusion of other topics at different events.

**It was agreed that the SMP should continue discussions with the University of Strathclyde but a Malawi-specific event should only be committed to if:**

1. **A venue is provided without very significant costs to the SMP**
2. **There is clear Malawi buy-in to the idea**
3. **We are happy that it will not cause serious harm to the balance and sensitivities between nations represented at COP26 – in keeping with the core mantra ‘do no harm’.**

DHJ noted the SMP’s 2020 Youth Congress, which is also scheduled to take place in November, will likely also have a strong COP focus.  **This was strongly supported by Members and will be added to the objectives.** It was noted that the Pre-COP in Italy will have a specific focus on youth engagement.

**With the above edits, this operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

**3 Coordinate**

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a webspace for members to be able to share what they are doing in/around COP26, as well as amplifying Malawian perspectives.

Members valued the opportunity to come together, and feed into this SMP planning.

**This operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

**4 Support**

All were in favour of the SMP providing support and encouragement to Malawian delegations attending COP26, within capacity. It was agreed we should work with/through Stop Climate Chaos Scotland systems if looking to offer practical accommodation support.

It was proposed that the SMP should also be using its positioning and leverage within Parliament to support Malawi’s involvement at COP26. DHJ noted he would be tabling this as an item to be discussed at the [**Malawi APPG**](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/get-involved/malawi-appg/) meeting in Westminster on Monday 10th February.  **It was agreed that this be added to the operational objective.**

**With the above edits, this operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

**5 Partner**

It was agreed that it is essential the SMP works through partnership, helping to support wider cross-sector efforts and the agreed mass mobilisation, while -for its own work- remaining studiously focused on Malawi.

DHJ noted the SMP has been accepted as a formal member of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland and is actively engaging the UK Cop26 Coalition and the Alliance-led work (the SMP is providing meeting space for the Alliance’s next COP meeting).

**It was agreed that if the Scottish and/or UK Government showed interest in working with the SMP to achieve these objectives, without challenging the agreed principles, the SMP would be responsive to such opportunities while being clear its main focus was on the civic space.**

**This operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

**6 Act**

DHJ note that for the SMP to be credible in engaging COP26 it must set down its own ambition to reduce its carbon footprint. DHJ shared a draft of the SMP’s Climate Commitments for 2020-23 which will be put out for full member consultation. **This was welcomed by attendees.**

**It was agreed that this should be expanded to not just the SMP looking to reduce its own carbon footprint bit also offering support, advice and encouraging to assist members to reduce theirs.**

**With the above edits, this operational objective was unanimously agreed.**

DHJ summarised the agreements and actions from the meeting and thanked Members for all their input. The SMP now has a strong member-mandate to take this plan forwards.

The meeting concluded with a final round of networking over tea and Mzuzu coffee.