



Attendees: Clara Axblad, Steve Bass, Emily Benson, Aline Brandstatter, Oliver Greenfield, Kamal Gueye, Peter Poschen, Juha Siikamaki, Steven Stone, Zeenat Niazi, Andy Norton.

Joining for 'Building the Coalition' – Stuart Worsley, GEC Dialogue and Country Director

Apologies: Mike Wilson

Agenda 31st March 2021:

1. January minutes for approval.
2. Building the coalition
3. Reporting
4. AOB – website and membership notices

1. Draft – Jan Minutes – attached

- **SG approved. The minutes to be posted on GEC website.**

2. Building the coalition – SG brainstorm and ideas – Stuart Worsley (GEC Dialogues and Country Director)–

Building the coalition is the fourth pathway under our [10 year strategy](#). A global network of collaborating organisations, champions and convenors of green economy, is the foundation of our work, and our central asset. Growing and strengthening this asset supports the achievement of the other three pathways (Telling new stories, Building critical mass, Influencing policy). It is therefore of critical importance to our successful impact. However, our success to date has been built by a strong UK hub leading and governing.

- Moving to distributed and empowered network structure has benefits and risks. It is also difficult and resource intensive. This importance and complexity demands a clear role for the GEC steering group.
- In addition, since its inception, GEC has been project funded, and through this project funding it has built, sustained and managed its network. So whilst coalition building has always been a central ambition, it has not been a project in itself and so it has been under resourced. Therefore, across all of our ambitions and plans for coalition building, one question must run – how are we going to resource this?

Progress and actions to date:

1. SB led a process of interviews with members and stakeholder in the creation of our 10 year strategy.
2. We commissioned the MAVA network consultancy experts (ODS) to review our network and consider its development.
3. The conclusions of both studies formulated the direction of travel articulated in our 10 year strategy under '**building the coalition theme**'. This has the following five interconnected work areas described below.
4. We have established a hub network development team and drafted a TOR for this group (attached).
5. We have developed prototype hubs: Amazon launched. East Africa agreed and will be launched soon.

SG debate and advise - Before this network development team's work starts, we would appreciate:

- 1. SG guidance on some key questions relating to this work.**
- 2. The importance and leadership of this work to be held by steering group, to be championed and articulated by them – including specifically a short SG statement in the TOR.**

Building the coalition – 5 themes of work:

1. **Transition to a distributed and empowered network structure** – where autonomous hubs can build their membership base and connect with relevant stakeholders in their own geographies.
2. **Expand our global presence** – aiming for 25 low and middle-income country national hubs and five regional hubs collating their work, and building new networks in the US, Europe, and China.
3. **Create an adaptable and effective global hub** – the London hub will act as a collaborative think-tank on new policy and leading collaborative advocacy.
4. **Improve organisational effectiveness** – with better monitoring, evaluation and learning to assess and evolve our approaches.
5. **Secure more resources to further collaborative interventions** – seeking funding from institutions, foundations, donors and governments supporting the green economy.

Some SG questions as a starter:

- What does a successful self-mandated network look like and how do we manage these and ensure synergies?
- What are the main trade-offs between a centralised versus decentralised GEC network?
- What can only be done, or is best done by the UK hub?
- What implications of these changes do we envisage for the GEC Steering group?
- Are there other considerations or implications – such as to our hosting model or transition to independence?
- How do we sell and to whom the expansion and improved effectiveness of the network as a change outcome and therefore a fundable project?

Finally, we would welcome SG edits on the TOR and to include a SG statement paragraph of importance of this work, SG's support and perhaps clarity of SG role in the work.

SG discussion headlines:

- *SG Support for Building the Coalition:* Strengthening the GEC network is critical. GEC has already evolved considerably, from a loose alliance towards organised action.
- *Building should be evolution, organic and go with the energy.* This proposed evolution process is sensible but requires caution. Beware of making changes that are disruptive and prevent action. Evolution of GEC should be organic as opposed to quantum leaps. Evolution should be organised around energy and enthusiasm. The measure of success is that hubs grow, sustain themselves and have impact. Find a structure that guides growth and do not rush. GEC is now better engaged in political economy, and organisational form will need to reflect this.
- *Focus on impact, incentives and funding as drivers for expansion.* Be clear on principles and standards. Lead with a focus on impact (as opposed to desired structure) and ensure that incentives stack up across the network for all actors involved. People will want to come to us because we are the people to be associated with these ideas. The evolution conversation should be about what we are trying to accomplish. Today, social issues are vital, and there is a fiscal cliff coming up triggering a massive debt repayment event. This brings opportunity for debt swaps for greener recovery. This is an example of what we should be talking about and what attracts others to us. Be careful in choosing the basis of relationship. With knowledge as the basis, dynamics are different to where funding is the basis. Consider seeking funding that comes from making the evolution of GEC as an outcome in itself – the expansion of the network to many distributed champions.

- *Decentralisation is the right direction:* Decentralised structures are complex and resilient, but they also bring issues of coherence and coordination. Decide how decentralised should the coalition be, and how quick do you want to get there. Decentralisation takes time so there is room to learn. Look to different models to learn from these. Ensure the overall value added of franchising is clear. Ensure that the evolving model is attractive to all involved, and with low transaction costs.
- *Geographic hubs is the right way to go but...* Be careful of hub autonomy and maintaining collective integrity. (e.g. How to handle a hub spin that does a green washing partnership). There needs to be collective networked capability. Allow for hub differences but be clear about boundaries. Hubs have grown together around a shared narrative and are aligned. As hub and secretariat roles evolve from research to advocacy, look at how such roles be undertaken and determine what is best done at local, national and global levels. Each country's evolving pathway will be different. Be careful to define the process, not the end structure. Consider starting with regional hubs first before opening new country hubs. Define regions according to ECOSOC criteria (because they speak on behalf of different constituencies), and then build around this. Create programmes for youth, farmers and women. EC are favour of empowering hubs, (regional or national). EC are reviewing its 2021 – 2027 financing framework with new instruments that build around Neighbourhoods (geographic units).
- *We will still need a global hub (secretariat).* Think through the role of the secretariat and GEC UK. They are not one and the same. The secretariat can be global. 80% of IUCN's secretariat work are distributed around the world.
- *GEC Governance will need to evolve.* Develop a governance structure over time and consider different governance arrangements as the model evolves. As we work through, there will likely be an interim pathway before reaching maturity where governance would need to change. Think through the role of SG. Maybe SG will become redundant. If not, it will need more hub representation. Consider the structure of a trade association, which involves a secretariat with rotating chair.
- *Rename the "task force" to be a "reflection and learning group."*

Action: OG and SW to take these points into the renamed 'reflection and learning group'

3. GEC reporting - SUMMARY – STATUS OF FIVE STRATEGIC 2021 PRIORITIES

The reporting framework has been updated to reflect the agreed 2021 priorities (agreed at SG Jan 2021)

	Strategic Theme	Status Update	Status	Planned activities
1	Capitalise on Green recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green recovery resources secured • Core team in place (E4N plus, country hubs) • <i>COVID recovery debates and themes</i> • Tracker update • China – ecocivilisation paper launched– to guide our China influencing work • <i>COP and CBD 2021</i> 	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Green recovery campaign</i> • Deployment of COVID Tracker
2	Build a GEC inequality approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNRISD partnership • Researching legal approaches, citizen's assemblies and social contract – all of which is starting to define an social movement approaches • Engaging with social movements is an action learning activity. Past engagement focused on youth movements. 	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an inequality team for new programme • Developing funding relationships for Inequality approach

	Strategic Theme	Status Update	Status	Planned activities
3	Develop SME approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New GEC SME policy network established EC finance for SME, Network SME, Funding pitch in place and in discussion with foundations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting global policy work with national hub work
4	New funding pipeline strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81.5% of funding secured for April 2021 – March 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracker expansion in development under E4N collaboration 43% of funding secured for April 2022 – March 2023 GEC funding strategy (2023 onward) and team in place New pitches for SME, Inequality and Dialogues, and Brazil Hub developed 	GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of ‘inclusion paper’ on the value of dialogues to Government development funders Expansion to US foundations being scoped
5	GEC Building the coalition: network function co-defined with hubs and being implemented. Partnership growth enabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is amber because the team to take forward the work has delayed its start – due to contractual and Covid related impacts. We wish to use the SG debate today to kick start the work. East African regional hub TOR agreed – based in Uganda and serving Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda Brazil hub piloting the new approach Future hub work funding will most likely need their leadership from country – this necessitates a more balance approach to shared UK and hub funding. 	AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a shared funding approach To deliver the EC funded hub process

4. AOB

4.1 The GEC website has new pages – purpose etc. Please have a [look](#), and encourage you to sign up to our newsletter. It is only every 2 months and will help keep you informed.

4.2 Membership notice – we have received a recent flurry of applications. In accordance with our agreed [membership process](#), they have been screened and none of them fulfil the criteria for escalation for Steering group discussion, but they will be sent around in email to the Steering for ‘no objection’ approval. OG to send as them in a pack shortly.

NEXT GEC Steering group MEETING: Wednesday, 26th May 2021, 12.30pm-2pm, UK.

Appendix: GEC Forward calendarⁱ that maps above agenda items to a year of SG activity:

December: Annual review of strategy and partnership. - Global meeting agenda

Jan/February: Annual plan – calendar of events – priorities and targets for the year

March/April: Building the coalition – including funding

May/June: Big programme reviews and sign-off

August/Sept: Influencing, Tracker, E4N review, other policy areas

October: Telling the story and Barometer - context

December: global meeting strategy, partnership, annual plan review

Each meeting could have 5-minute standing agenda item on ‘horizon scanning’ – to identify big strategic issues

Individual SG members could volunteer to take the lead for particular items in the calendar. The advantage of a forward calendar is this should enable members’ forward planning.

ⁱ Forward calendar for SG meetings approved in December 2019