

Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development

19-20 July 2018

Conference Room 12, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Introduction

The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* offers a universal plan of action for people, planet and prosperity through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are integrated, indivisible and global in nature, and balance the three – economic, social and environmental – dimensions of sustainable development. If fully implemented, these SDGs promise to usher in a new era of peace and prosperity, where everyone has an opportunity to fulfil their potential and enjoy the benefits of a healthy environment.

Central to the full implementation of the SDGs is the promotion of integrated approaches to policy and planning processes for sustainable development, which are strongly founded on environmental sustainability. According to the 2014 synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet: Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda (A/69/700)*, integration optimally provides “the basis for economic models that benefit people and the environment; for environmental solutions that contribute to progress; for social approaches that add to economic dynamism and allow for the preservation and sustainable use of the environmental commons; and for reinforcing human rights, equality, and sustainability.”

Promotion of integrated approaches essentially requires that the interlinkages, trade-offs and synergies among the SDGs are well understood by national governments and relevant stakeholders who play a role in the SDGs implementation. In addition, within each SDG, which may cover one dimension more than others– for example, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth has a greater economic dimension, while SDG 14 on life below water has a greater environmental dimension – it is important to uncover the interactions among the three dimensions to ensure that the efforts to achieve the specific SDG and its targets are undertaken in a holistic, integrated and balanced manner. It is not always easy to fully understand and operationalize these complex interrelations, including how the environment underpins or can be promoted through actions primarily addressed at enhancing economic

prosperity or social inclusion; but strong reliance on data, good practices and decision support tools can help advance in this direction.

In this inception Experts Group Meeting organized jointly by the UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Environment Programme (UN Environment), representatives of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the UN system are expected to explore integrated approaches to sustainable development, with specific focus on the crosscutting environmental dimension, at two levels: 1) across all the SDGs, taking into account the complex web of interactions among the SDGs in a systemic manner; and 2) within each SDG, considering the implications of taking action in one dimension on other dimensions. It is premised that better understanding the interlinkages and interactions among the SDGs and within each SDG, underpinned by the knowledge shared on the importance of having a healthy environment, will pave the way for effective integrated approaches, while enhancing the capacity of policymakers to prioritize and make more coherent implementation strategies.

The recent report of the Secretary-General on “Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet” (December 2017) has highlighted that there are significant gaps in the environment-related SDGs, namely SDG6 on water and sanitation, SDG 7 on energy, SDG12 on sustainable consumption and production, SDG 13 on climate, SDG 14 on oceans and SDG 15 on terrestrial ecosystems. Special attention will be devoted to addressing these gaps, taking into account, among others, the contributions of the multilateral environmental agreements in which global environmental goals are embedded. In addition, some of the pathways or policy tools available to strengthen the environmental foundations for integrated approaches – such as policy coherence and integrated financing for sustainable development– will also be considered.

Modality: 2-day moderated meeting immediately following the 2018 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (taking advantage of the presence of delegates already in New York for the Forum). This meeting is conducted in English only.

Outcomes: Participants develop a practical understanding of integrated approaches to sustainable development, based on enhanced knowledge of the system of interlinkages and interactions among and within the SDGs with specific focus on the environment. This understanding is expected to enable participants to develop more effective and resource-efficient policy planning, implementation and monitoring processes for the SDGs. The meeting will result in a summary of the discussion with concrete take-away messages for participants.

Participants: 40 delegates attending the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, primarily from those countries that have already conducted or plan to conduct the voluntary national reviews. 10 UN system and stakeholder representatives.

Tentative Agenda

Day 1	
Time	Session
09:00	Registration
09:30	<p><u>Opening</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to by moderator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Adil Najam, Professor of International Relations and Earth & Environment, Boston University • Welcome remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Jong-Soo Yoon, Head of the UN Office for Sustainable Development - Ms. Elizabeth Mrema, Director of Law Division, UN Environment • Tour de table
10:00	<p><u>Session I</u></p> <p>Setting the context: How do participants define an integrated approach? Why is the environment important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Integrated approaches to achieving the SDGs: Challenges and some successes” by Mr. Shantanu Mukherjee, Chief of Policy and Analysis Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs - “The experience of the Poverty-Environment Initiative as precursor of an integrated approach to environmental mainstreaming for sustainable development” by Ms. Victoria Luque, Programme Management Officer, UN Development Programme-UN Environment Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) - Mr. Servus Amo Sagday, Assistant Director, Poverty Eradication Division, and National Coordinator for the SDGs, Ministry of Finance and Planning, United Republic of Tanzania, on its experiences with taking an integrated approach
10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion to promote a common understanding of integrated approaches to achieving the SDGs
11:00	Coffee break
11:20	Session I continues

13:00	Lunch break
14:30	<p><u>Session II</u></p> <p>A system view: Interlinkages and interactions among the SDGs and within each SDG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Environment as an enabler to deliver on the SDGs: from institutional framework to policy implementation” by Ms. Luminita Ghita, Head of Sustainable Development Unit, Directorate of Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Romania - “UN Environment Management Group nexus approach – Showcasing the work and perspectives of the UN system in addressing the environment in an integrated approach” by Mr. Hossein Fadaei, Head, Secretariat of the UN Environment Management Group - “Advancing the 2030 Agenda through Integrated Signature Solutions and Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) for the 2030 Agenda” by Ms. Rosemary Kalapurakal, Lead Advisor for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UN Development Programme (UNDP)
15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on the multiple synergies and trade-offs inherent in implementing the SDGs and their targets, with a view to enabling participants to better assess policy implications and impact
16:00	Coffee break
16:20	<p>Session II continues</p> <p>Summary of Day 1</p>
18:00	Conclusion of Day 1
18:30	<i>Cocktail reception to launch the Poverty-Environment Action for the SDGs 2018-2022, a joint project between UN Environment and the UN Development Programme succeeding the Poverty-Environment Initiative (@Millennium Hilton Hotel)</i>

Day 2	
09:30	<p><u>Session III</u></p> <p>Policy coherence for sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The framework for policy coherence for sustainable development – A tool to promote, implement and track progress on mutually supporting policies for the SDGs” by Mr. Ernesto Soria Morales, Senior Policy Analyst for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Ms. Mathilde Bouyé, Associate, Climate Program, World Resources Institute - “National experiences on the 2030 Agenda implementation and coherence building” by Mr. Rilli Lappalainen, Secretary General, Finnish Non Governmental Development Organizations platform to the European Union - “Challenges and progress towards policy coherence at the junction of the 2030 Agenda and the post-conflict process in Colombia” by Mr. Felipe Arango Garcia, International Development Advisor, Transforma
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on ways to foster policy coherence at different levels of government and across different sectors
11:00	Coffee break
11:20	Session III continues
11:50	<p><u>Session IV</u></p> <p>Group exercise: Opportunities and challenges to taking an integrated approach and promoting policy coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group discussions on the way forward in taking an integrated approach to the SDGs in a holistic and coherent manner, including among others, the role of UN regional offices and country teams as “accelerators” for integrated approaches facilitated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms. Eunhae Jeong, Senior Development Management Expert, UNOSD; and - Ms. Diane Klaimi, Programme Management Officer, Law Division, UN Environment • Group report back to the meeting
13:00	Lunch break

14:30	<p><u>Session V</u></p> <p>Addressing the gaps in environment-related SDGs, including through the implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and their goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Ms. Camille Robinson-Regis, Minister of Planning and Development, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago - Mr. Alf Wills, Deputy Director General, Environmental Advisory Services, Department of Environment Affairs, South Africa - “The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and their contribution towards the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda” by Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions - Mr. Suh-Yong Jung, Professor of Korea University, on the Korean national experience with implementing the MEAs and SDGs
15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on how to leverage the implementation of the MEAs to address gaps in the environment-related SDGs, as identified in the report of the Secretary-General on the reform of the UN development system.
15:45	<p>Wrap-up: Where do we go from here?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take home messages <p>Concluding remarks by UNOSD and UN Environment</p>
16:00	<p>Conclusion of meeting</p> <p>(Coffee and snacks are available by the Vienna Café.)</p>