

Expert group meeting on optimizing SDGs implementation in the framework of integration and policy coherence

Friday and Saturday, 12-13 July 2019, New York

Introduction

The implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 requires strategic policy prioritization, resource allocation and political investment by national governments, in close consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Making these decisions in turn requires careful analysis of the interlinkages, nexus areas, synergies and trade-offs among the SDGs, with the aim to identify areas of intervention that would maximize the SDGs achievement. The expert group meeting aims to bring government policymakers and representatives from the civil society and the UN system to identify tools, institutional mechanisms and strategies to effectively analyze and address these interlinkages and trade-offs with a view to developing most optimal policy interventions for the SDGs in the framework of integrated approaches and policy coherence. This year's meeting builds on the outcomes of the *expert group meeting on promoting integrated approaches to sustainable development* held in July 2018 in New York, which explored the concept of integrated approaches in-depth, uncovering their opportunities and challenges for sustainable development.

Multiple efforts are already underway in various sectors to better understand the interlinked nature of the 2030 Agenda and implement the SDGs in a synergistic manner. The recently held *Climate and SDGs Synergy Conference* (1-3 April 2019, Copenhagen), for example, focused on strengthening the linkages between climate action and the SDGs and realizing synergistic implementation on the basis of these linkages to maximize co-benefits. The Regional Forums on Sustainable Development also underscored "the need to accelerate efforts and adopt coherence and integrated policies that looked at the interlinkages between the Goals... together with good governance and appropriate and effective investments which were vital for the development and implementation of policies to lead countries to a truly sustainable future."¹

The present meeting on optimizing SDGs implementation seeks to expand and systematize these efforts to 1) better understand and properly analyse the interlinkages among the SDGs; 2) discuss emerging best practices and innovative approaches in cross-sectoral implementation of the SDGs, taking stock of existing measures applied for individual SDGs and, where relevant, identify how these can be combined to achieve maximum impact; and 3) share views on effectively communicating the policy implications of trade-offs where they exist.

¹ Report of the Sixth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/RFSD/2019/3), paragraph 57.

These discussions will be anchored in the framework of “integrated approaches” and “policy coherence” for sustainable development, which are essential enablers for streamlining policies and effectively mobilizing the means of implementation to achieve results. Particular attention will be given to showcasing the draft methodology for SDG indicator 17.14.1 “Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development” (designed to measure SDG target 17.14 “Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development”).

Modality

Co-organized by the UN Office for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Environment Programme and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Directorate for Public Governance, the meeting will consist of five moderated sessions, with a view to facilitating interactive dialogues among some 50 participants. Most participants will be drawn, on a first-come, first-served basis, from national delegations to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Other participants will represent the UN system, international organizations, and major groups and stakeholders. The meeting will be conducted in English only.

Outcomes

Participants develop a practical understanding of the system of interlinkages and interactions among and within the SDGs within the framework of integrated approaches to and policy coherence for sustainable development. 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 detailed report with concrete take-away messages for participants, and feed into the development of a toolkit for assessing the SDGs interlinkages, interactions and tradeoffs, with focus on the environmental dimension.

Proposed programme

Day 1 – Friday, 12 July 2019	
Time	Session
14:30	Registration
15:00	<p>Introduction to the workshop by moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lucilla Spini, Senior Science and Policy Officer, International Science Council <p>Welcome remarks by co-organizers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Alexander Trepelkov, Director of Division for SDGs, UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) • Mr. Jamil Ahmad, New York Office, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) • Ms. Sara Fyson, Head of Sustainable Development and Policy Coherence Unit, Public Governance Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) <p>Tour de table</p>
15:30	<p><u>Session I – Assessing SDGs interlinkages and trade-offs</u></p> <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Ivonne Lobos Alva, Research Fellow, Stockholm Environment Institute • Ms. Senida Mesi, Member of the Parliament and Deputy Chair of the European Integration Committee, Albania • Ms. Adriana Castro González, Advisor, SDG Commission, National Planning Department, Colombia • Ms. Doljinsuren Jambal, Director, Development Policy and Planning National Development Agency of Mongolia <p>Guiding questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we raise political and public awareness about SDGs interlinkages and avoid silos? 2. What are some of the tools available to effectively assess SDGs interlinkages and tradeoffs that would enable governments to take most cost and resource-efficient policy action? 3. What are countries’ experiences with SDGs prioritization – would an exercise on interlinkages assessment impact how SDGs are prioritized? For example, a country that ranks SDG 1 on no poverty as its top priority may, upon conducting an interlinkages assessment, realize that lack of clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) is the greater contributing factor to rural poverty, subsequently investing more to SDG 6 then to SDG 1.

16:30	Coffee meet and greet
16:45	Session I continues
18:00	Summary and conclusion of Day 1
Day 2 – Saturday, 13 July 2019	
09:00	Morning coffee
09:30	<p><u>Session II –Building integrated approaches to SDGs implementation: How to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderated by Mr. Fabien Tondel, Policy Officer, Economic and Agricultural Transformation Programme, The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Ernesto Soria Morales, Senior Policy Analyst, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development, Public Governance Directorate, OECD Mr. Khomraj Koirala, Joint Secretary and Head of Economic Management Division, National Planning Commission, Nepal Mr. Lusanda Batala, Senior Sector Expert, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, South Africa Ms. Karin Fernando, Senior Research Professional, The Centre for Poverty Analysis <p>Guiding questions for discussion:</p> <p><i>Integrated policymaking</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to integrate SDGs into key policy planning mechanisms? What approaches and tools are yielding positive results in addressing SDGs in an integrated manner? What institutional mechanisms can be leveraged to enhance coherence across sectors and maximize synergies between actions at local, regional and national levels? <p><i>Roles of different actors</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to engage key stakeholders? What are some of the good practices and challenges encountered? How can the UN system in collaboration with other international organisations, such as the OECD, better support member States in the implementation of integrating approaches and policy coherence?
11:00	Coffee break

11:15	<p><u>Session III – Uncovering the climate and SDGs synergies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderated by Ms. Eunhae Jeong, Senior Development Management Expert, UNOSD <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Martin Garcia Acuna, Ministry of Social Development and Family, Chile Mr. Ayman Cherkaoui, Coordinator, Mohammed IV Foundation for Environmental Protection Ms. Livia Hollins, Programme Officer, UN Climate Change Secretariat Mr. Zitouni Ould-Dada, Deputy Director, Climate and Environment Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) <p>Guiding questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How best can we advance joint efforts for both the SDGs and climate action at the global, regional and country levels and help to scale up levels of ambition? What would be specific examples to illustrate the potential of synergistic and interlinked approaches towards realizing the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, including through analyses of national development plans, nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans and national risk reduction strategies, among others? What are the gaps, challenges and recommendation for strengthening synergies, increasing ambition, advancing implementation actions, maximizing co-benefits and stimulating multi-stakeholder partnerships?
13:00	Lunch break
14:00	<p><u>Session IV – Measuring the SDGs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderated by Ms. Melinda Kimble, Senior Fellow, UN Foundation <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Ronald Jansen, Chief, Data Innovation and Capacity Branch, Assistant Director, Statistics Division, DESA Mr. Huseyn Huseynov, Head of Sustainable Development and Social Policy, Ministry of Economy, Azerbaijan Ms. Brennan Van Dyke, Chief, Capacity Development and Innovation Branch, Science Division, UNEP Ms. Charmina Saili, Regional Planning Adviser, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat <p>Guiding questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where are we with the development of indicators to measure progress on the implementation of the SDGs?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What are some of the best practices that can be scaled up at the national level with respect to SDGs monitoring, data collection and reporting? What are the key challenges? 3. Which sectors (i.e. gender, infrastructure, energy) require most data-related support from the UN system?
15:30	Coffee break
15:45	<p><u>Session V – Harnessing resources for the SDGs</u></p> <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Ernesto Pernia, Minister of Socioeconomic Planning, National Economic Development Authority, Republic of the Philippines • Ms. Annika Lindblom, Secretary General, National Commission on Sustainable Development & Chief Specialist, International Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Finland • Ms. Jaehyang So, Senior Advisor, 2030 Agenda for Development, UN Relations and Partnerships, World Bank • Mr. Michael Michener, Vice President for Product Policy and Innovation, United States Council for International Business <p>Guiding questions for discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are member States financing their SDGs implementation? What are the opportunities, gaps and challenges, and how can the SDGs be integrated in the budget process? 2. How to enhance the sustainable development impact of existing and future additional resources? 3. What are some innovative approaches to financing? How can the UN system support member States in these efforts?
17:00	<p>Take home messages by the Moderator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Lucilla Spini, Senior Science and Policy Officer, International Science Council <p>Concluding remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Jean D’Aragon, Officer-in-Charge, UN Office for Sustainable Development, DESA • Mr. Mamadou Kane, Chief, International Governance Unit, Law Division, UNEP • Ms. Sara Fyson, Head of Sustainable Development and Policy Coherence Unit, Public Governance Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)