Sustainable Development in Action
Leading the way to the Future We Want

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, was an action-oriented conference focusing on implementation of sustainable development.

This newsletter aims to highlight the work carried out by Member States, United Nations system, Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders in implementing sustainable development and leading the way to the Future We Want.

Third session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

The intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) on sustainable development goals (SDGs) held its third session from 22-24 May 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The session focused on food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation, drought and water and sanitation.

The co-chairs of the OWG, the Permanent Representatives of Kenya and Hungary, stressed that “we need a common vision going forward.” They outlined this vision as “transformative change for sustainable poverty eradication and universal human development, respecting human dignity and protecting our planet, mother Earth, living in harmony with nature for the well-being and happiness of present and future generations.”

Elaborating on the key aspects of this vision, the co-chairs highlighted that it requires transformative change in which the SDGs build on but also deepen and go beyond the MDGs, surpassing business-as-usual and achieving poverty eradication that is sustainable. They underlined that this vision is human-centred, and also emphasised that in order to make poverty eradication and human development irreversible, the three dimensions of sustainable development need to be addressed in a balanced manner.

The third session of the OWG featured a combination of keynote addresses, panel discussions and interactive debates. The first hour of each of the three days was dedicated to meetings between the co-chairs and representatives of Major Groups and other stakeholders. The co-chairs described these conversations as very constructive and said that many of the concerns and proposals raised at these meetings were reiterated by Member States. A small number of side events were also held. The concluding remarks by the co-chairs that outline the main points made during the session can be found on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. Statements, presentations and recordings from the session are also available on the platform.

More information

Join the Rio+20 Anniversary Google+ Hangout

On the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo and a number of other high-level panelists will share their views on the developments since Rio+20 in a google+ hangout on 13 June from 11am - 12pm EDT. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director of the UN’s Division for Sustainable Development and Head of the Rio+20 Secretariat, will moderate the event.

The panelists will also answer questions submitted via social media in the course of a 20-minute live Q&A session. Tweet your questions for panelists to @SustDev using #SDinAction or post your questions on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform Facebook page.
The main themes for the Google+ Hangout will be the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) currently being developed by the General Assembly’s Open Working Group, the High Level Political Forum, the engagement of Major Groups and other Stakeholders in the follow up processes of Rio+20, and the Voluntary Commitments registered on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

Further panelists include Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary and co-chair of the Open Working Group on SDGs and Saba Loftus, Organising Partner, Children and Youth Major Group.

- More information

**High-level Panel report calls for eradication of extreme poverty and sustainable development.**

The High-level Panel of Eminent Persons appointed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to advise on the global development agenda beyond 2015 presented its report “A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development” on 30 May. The report sets out a universal agenda to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 and deliver on the promise of sustainable development.

The Secretary-General referred to the report as “a crucial input for the international community as it works to develop a new framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals in the next two years.”

The report calls for new post-2015 goals to drive five major transformational shifts: move from “reducing” to ending extreme poverty, leaving no one behind; putting sustainable development at the core of the development agenda; transforming economies to drive inclusive growth; building accountable institutions, open to all, that will ensure good governance and peaceful societies; and forging a new global partnership based on cooperation, equity and human rights.

The 27 member panel is co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom and includes leaders from civil society, the private sector and government. The Panel aims at having open, inclusive consultations to advance the development framework beyond 2015. A stakeholder event including an interactive panel discussion on the substance and recommendations of the report was held on 31 May. The Secretary-General will draw on the report’s recommendations for his own report to the UN General Assembly in September.

- More information

**Expert Panel on Intergenerational Solidarity**

An Expert Panel on Intergenerational Solidarity took place in New York on 9 May 2013. Organized by DESA’s Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) and moderated by its Director, Mr. Nikhil Seth, the event aimed at creating a dialogue among stakeholders on the issue of intergenerational solidarity and future generations.

Among the issues discussed were the conceptual framework and institutional arrangements for intergenerational solidarity and justice. The discussion will inform continued consideration of this issue, including the Report on Intergenerational Solidarity that the Secretary-General will present to the General Assembly at its upcoming session.

Mr. Seth opened the panel discussion by stressing that “intergenerational solidarity is deeply embedded in the concept of sustainable development.”

In the run up to the event, the Division for Sustainable Development had asked the public to submit questions and comments via its social media channels. The response was overwhelming, with over 80 questions and comments received. Some of these were raised at the panel discussion and a number of them were addressed in a video message by the Chief of DSD’s Policy Analysis Branch, David O’Connor. The video can be seen on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (SDKP).

The panel consisted of Professor Ian Goldin, Director of the Oxford Martin School at the University of Oxford; Professor Edith Brown Weiss, Francis Cabell Brown Professor of International Law, Georgetown University Law Center; Dr. Martin Evans, social policy specialist from UNICEF; and Ms. Kate Offerdahl, thematic expert on the UN General Assembly and Sustainable Development from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). The event was attended by representatives of Member States, UN.

- More information

**Disclaimer: Fraudulent emails on DESA conferences**

Fraudulent emails are currently being circulated, inviting individuals or groups to a “UN DESA Conference 23-26 July, 2013 @ London, United Kingdom” or similar conferences. Please be aware that the United Nations is not involved in the arrangement of such conferences, and the use of the name of the UN or DESA in this instance is not authorized. Accordingly, we suggest that you do not respond to the email or take any further action in relation to the invitation.

- Calendar of Events

United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform

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