

## Science Technology Innovation

The world-changing innovators of tomorrow may not be who you think

Our world is moving fast. We need smart, workable solutions to the world's biggest problems and we need them, urgently, to keep up with our rapidly changing societies. More investment in science, technology and innovation (STI) is needed, but so is more investment in a wider range of voices from outside the traditional STI powerhouses of academia and the private sector. Solutions can come from—and already are coming from—young people, community-based organizations, civil society organizations, indigenous groups and more.

From 14 to 15 May, the United Nations will welcome experts from all these diverse groups to its Headquarters in New York for two days of stimulating discussions on how STI can generate new solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The annual *STI Forum*, organized by UN DESA, will also look at the impacts that new technologies are having on communities around the world.

This year's Forum will look in detail at the innovative solutions that can push the needle on the critical issues of education, decent jobs and economic growth, inequality, climate change, peaceful and just societies, and partnerships for the goals.

These are also the topics and Goals that will be reviewed by this year's *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*. The *STI Forum* will look at the links between these goals through the lens of creative, real-world examples of STI in action. Additionally, a session on youth, innovation ecosystems and development will show how young people help drive SDG implementation through their unique networks. For the first time, the Forum will also include a special ministerial segment entitled "Strengthening capacity and policy for the development of STI roadmaps."

For the third year in a row, the STI Forum will highlight 10 inspiring projects from across the world that are already helping to implement the SDGs. The innovative entrepreneurs in charge of these projects will be featured in an Innovators' Showcase in the UN General Assembly lobby. They will also have the opportunity to pitch their innovations to the Forum audience in hope of building new support networks.

This year's winning innovators, selected from more than 350 entries in a global competition organized by UN DESA with the support of the Global Innovation Exchange, are working on the ground to reduce food waste, improve access to legal services, build sustainable housing and achieve other big goals.

Other highlights of the Forum will feature the contributions of indigenous and traditional knowledge towards improving scientific knowledge and providing practical solutions for the SDGs, as well as a special exhibit on the contributions of women scientists to the SDGs, to be held in the Visitors' Lobby. A dedicated session will examine how to attract, retain and enhance the contribution of women and girls to STI for the SDGs.

The STI Forum is a part of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) envisioned by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The Forum is supported by the the Inter-Agency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT) currently comprising 42 UN entities, as well as the Secretary-General's 10-member group of experts to support the TFM.

For more information:

4th Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

## HIGHLIGHTS



### Alec Baldwin joins call to protect indigenous activists

Accomplished American actor and environmental activist, Alec Baldwin, spoke out at the UN Headquarters in New York against violence perpetrated on indigenous activists that defend their lands and forests from exploitation. Speaking on the sidelines of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Mr. Baldwin said that, on average, four environment defenders lost their lives every week in 2017. Most of them were

indigenous people. "The people who are protesting on behalf of the greater good of all the people (...) are criminalized and the people that murder them roam free," he said.

Calling on governments to persecute these atrocities, motivated by certain companies' pursuit of profit, Mr. Baldwin stressed that people everywhere can also make a change through informed and responsible consumer choices.

"I still believe that the greater number of people around the world want to do the right thing," he said. "How many people would choose to murder indigenous people to increase how much meat they eat or how much oil they burn?"

Mr. Baldwin was at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to moderate a UN Environment-hosted side event on indigenous forest defenders. Another speaker at the event, indigenous activist from Indonesia, Rukka Sombolinggi, made a heart-wrenching plea for responsible consumer choices to “stop eating from [indigenous peoples’] blood and tears.”

Ms. Sombolinggi believes that the security of indigenous peoples can be improved by establishing better communication channels with the consumers and by divesting from companies involved in violence against indigenous peoples. “We have to make sure that there is no more investment for companies that kill us,” she urged.

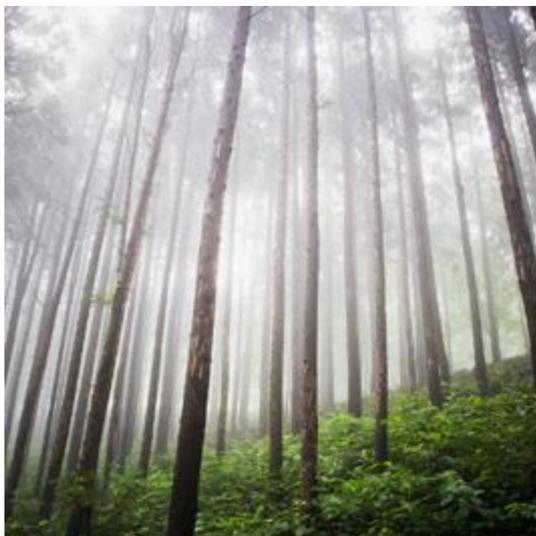
The indigenous peoples “never oppose development,” Ms. Sombolinggi explained, but they expect the companies involved to respect their rights to free, prior and informed consent. Otherwise, development projects risk becoming an aggression.

The 18th session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which focuses on the protection of traditional indigenous knowledge, runs through 3 May 2019.

For more information:

[18th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues \(UNPFII\)](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS



Forests play vital role in empowering people, promoting economic growth and combating climate change

It is estimated that 1.6 billion people, or 25 per cent of the human population, depend on forests for subsistence, livelihood, employment and income generation. Forests provide ecosystem services, such as timber, food, fuel, fodder, non-wood products and shelter –

which are essential for human well-being. At the same time, they contribute to soil and water conservation, carbon storage and clean air. When forests are sustainably managed, they can be healthy, productive, resilient and renewable ecosystems, which can thrive while at the same time providing essential goods and services to people worldwide.

The critical role of forests for a healthy planet, was also stressed by UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin at the most recent COP24 in Poland.

“Forests are central in developing solutions both to mitigate and adapt to climate change,” Mr. Liu said. “These terrestrial ecosystems have already removed nearly one third of human-produced carbon dioxide emissions from the atmosphere. Through sustainable forest management, they could remove much more.”

From 6 to 10 May 2019, the UN Forum on Forests will hold its 14th session (UNFF14) at UN Headquarters in New York, bringing together representatives from Member States, international and regional organisations and stakeholders to take stock of the progress in implementing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030. UNFF14 will also provide a timely opportunity for the Forum to provide input to the 2019 meetings of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

The Strategic plan and its six Global Forest Goals and associated targets provide a global framework for sustainably managing all types of forests and trees, halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation, and increasing forest area by 2030. The Plan provides a blueprint to promote forest contributions in implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UNFF14 agenda includes discussions on contributions of forests in accelerating progress in achieving the SDGs and in particular the SDGs under review by HLPF 2019, namely SDGs 4 (quality education), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 13 (climate action), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships). Based on this, the UNFF14 Bureau has identified three thematic priorities for UNFF14:

- Forests and climate change;
- Forests, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and employment; and
- Forests, peaceful and inclusive societies, reduced inequality, education, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

To support discussions on these thematic priorities, a set of [background analytical studies](#) were commissioned. To promote greater awareness of the Global Forest Goals of the Strategic Plan, the UNFF Secretariat has also produced a booklet to be launched at UNFF14.

UNFF14 will also discuss contributions by the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional organisations and Major Groups in implementing the Strategic Plan; private sector engagement; monitoring, assessment and reporting frameworks; forest financing including capacity development activities of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network; and communication and outreach.

The UN Forum on Forests is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council and is composed of 197 Member States of the UN and State Members of the Specialized Agencies. Since its inception in 2000, the Forum has reached numerous forest policy milestones including the agreement on the first UN Forest Instrument in 2007, establishment of the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) in 2015, and agreement on the first UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 in 2017.

Through its work and through these instruments, the Forum and the international community continue to work to safeguard and protect our forests, which are essential to life here on Earth.

“When we reach the signpost of 2030, we hope to be able to look back with satisfaction on all that we have achieved and galvanize the next generation to grow and sustain our planet’s forests, because life without them is inconceivable,” Mr. Liu conveyed in his recent message for the International Day of Forests 2019.

For more information:

[UN Forum on Forests](#)



## Want to amplify the voices of civil society at the UN? Apply for ECOSOC consultative status!

The world is facing a number of pressing global challenges that need our urgent attention and action – from poverty, hunger, rising inequalities to the serious threat of climate change. No country nor organization can take on these immense tasks alone – we need all hands on deck. Is your NGO interested in getting

involved in addressing the many demands of our time and to have a stake in UN deliberations? Then apply for ECOSOC consultative status! Deadline is 1 June 2019.

Ever since its inception in 1945, the United Nations has been actively engaged with NGOs and has recognized the importance of partnering with them to advance the organization's ideals and help support its work. In 1946, only 41 NGOs were granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). But this number has grown and today, 5161 NGOs enjoy this status with the Council. These organizations are represented all over the world and work in many different areas including with education, health, poverty eradication, human rights, gender equality and indigenous issues.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, NGOs also play an important role as partners on the ground, helping the international community deliver this ground-breaking agenda. This fact was also recognized by UN DESA's Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin at a recent Civil Society Forum when he reiterated UN DESA's "commitment to a genuine partnership with civil society in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals".

"No one has all the answers, but one thing we do know is the importance of partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. Governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector need to work together to promote sustainable development," Mr. Liu said.

Consultative Status is a formal relationship between non-governmental organizations and the United Nations to allow NGOs to participate in the work of the UN. ECOSOC is the only main entry point into the UN system for NGOs with a formal framework for NGO participation.

So, what are the benefits for NGOs having this status? NGOs that are accredited with ECOSOC can participate in many events, including, but not limited to, regular sessions of ECOSOC, its functional commissions and its other subsidiary bodies. They may:

- Attend official meetings;
- Submit written statements prior to sessions;
- Make oral statements;
- Meet official government delegations, UN officers and other NGO representatives;
- Organize and attend parallel events that take place during the session;
- Participate in debates, interactive dialogues and panel discussions.

The NGO Branch of UN DESA is inviting all interested NGOs that are willing to work in close collaboration with ECOSOC, to apply for consultative status. 1 June 2019 is the

deadline to submit applications that will be reviewed during the following year. Read more about how to apply [here](#) .

The NGO Branch is also inviting interested NGOs to join an online [webinar meeting about the application process on 3 May 2019 from 11 am to 12:30 pm EDT](#). Register here for this session.

For more information:

[Apply for ECOSOC consultative status now in order to be considered by the 2020 NGO Committee](#)  
[How to apply for ECOSOC consultative status](#)  
[Webinar and information session on application process on 3 May 2019 \(in English\)](#)

## EXPERT VOICES



### Beyond taxes – how monetary and exchange rate policies can support sustainable development

A roadmap for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) often emphasizes the fiscal side of macroeconomic policy. The role of monetary and exchange rate policies, which are just as crucial for maintaining financial stability and external balance, are often overlooked. How can countries use them to boost sustainable economic growth and development? We ask UN DESA's Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Ingo Pitterle.

Can you explain how macroeconomic policies, and monetary policy in particular , can support progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?

“Successful development stories from all around the world show us that a sound macroeconomic policy framework is critical to deliver stable and healthy economic growth, which in turn promotes long-term sustainable development. A robust macroeconomic environment reduces uncertainty, stimulating consumption and investment.

But the role of macroeconomic policy can go beyond that. We have, for example, recently seen new initiatives for monetary policy to support the transition towards a low-carbon economy. A group of central banks and supervisors have established the [Network for Greening the Financial System](#) to enhance the financial system's role in managing climate risks and mobilizing capital for green and low-carbon investments. Proposals have also been put forward to introduce a low-carbon bias in the asset composition of official reserves and collateral.”

How do developed and developing countries differ when it comes to the impact of monetary policy on the real economy?

“Traditional monetary policy actions, such as a rise or a cut in interest rates, affect economic activity through various ways, including through changes in borrowing and lending, the exchange rate and asset prices. In countries with well-developed financial sectors, interest rate changes often have a direct and significant effect on investment decisions, the housing sector and consumer spending on durable goods. Conversely, in countries with less developed financial markets, the transmission of monetary policy is generally less effective. Corporate investment in the formal sector may respond, but the informal sector and household sector are less sensitive to interest rates, partly because people spend most of their money on essential goods, particularly on food items.”

What changes have we seen in recent months in global monetary policy?

“Since mid-2018, there has been a broad-based slowdown in global growth while, at the same time, inflationary pressures have remained mostly subdued. This has triggered a shift towards easier monetary policy stances across many developed and developing economies, including the United States, Europe and China. These moves have helped stabilize global financial conditions, supporting a recovery in capital flows to emerging economies. While we believe that short-term financial pressures have declined, there is a risk that easier monetary conditions may further fuel debt accumulation and increase medium-term risks to financial stability.”

For more information: [World Economic Situation And Prospects: Monthly Briefing May 2019](#)

#### IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



“We need more money to implement the Sustainable Development Goals”

Putting sustainable development finance front and center, more than 30 government ministers and senior officials, as well as hundreds of representatives from the private sector, civil society and the international system came together for the 2019 ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum on 15-

18 April 2019.

“2019 is a defining year for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. So far, we are not keeping pace. We face serious challenges and evolving risks,” said UN Secretary-General António Guterres, as he gave opening remarks at the forum. Painting a dire and demanding landscape, Mr. Guterres summed it up: “Simply put: we need more money to implement the Sustainable Development Goals.”

To make this happen, he made the case for the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, saying that it is “our blueprint for the global partnership to finance sustainable development. Everyone, and particularly developed countries, must meet their commitments in full.”

The high level of attendance and activity at this year’s Forum showed how development finance is moving towards the centre of discussions—and action—for SDG achievement. In addition to the Secretary-General, the meeting was opened by the ECOSOC President, the President of the General Assembly and senior executives from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group and World Trade Organization.

Keynote addresses were delivered by Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, and Raghuram Rajan, Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. At the opening, UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin also presented the recently launched Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2019.



Throughout four days of interactive discussions and dozens of side events, participants focused on current economic and non-economic trends and their impact on financing for development and the implementation of the Addis Agenda. At the end of the week, Member States adopted the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 Forum.

The event saw broad agreement that the current challenges arising from the global economic environment and climate-related disasters highlight the need for global action to achieve the global goals. Although the current context presents difficulties, it also provides opportunities for revamping multilateral arrangements in support of sustainable development and financing. At the same time, national strategies and policies to mobilize financial resources remain central. Some countries are at the forefront of designing and implementing their integrated national financing frameworks, and national demand for further analysis, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building in this area was strong.

Running alongside the Forum on 15-17 April, the SDG Investment Fair brought together more than 400 representatives from governments and the investment community, as well as from development finance institutions, academia and civil society to discuss urgent actions on closing the SDG investment gap.

In conjunction with the Fair, the Secretary-General also announced that he will convene the “Global Investors for Sustainable Development,” a CEO-driven alliance that will focus on creating long-term investments for sustainable development by addressing policy and institutional obstacles.

Participants emphasized the need for urgent action to increase the contribution from the private sector to realize sustainable development while avoiding “greenwashing”. Private sector representatives made clear that there is a growing appetite for investment opportunities that have impact in addition to returns.

“We have no time to waste to achieve the goals by their 2030 deadline and fulfil the promise we made four years ago, to build a world of dignity for all,” said Mr. Liu as he addressed the fair. “Public and private incentives need to be aligned with sustainable development so that sustainability becomes a central element of all financing and investment decisions.”

For more information:

Financing for Development Forum 2019  
Financing for Sustainable Development Report

## What makes effective governance?

SDG BLOG



By Louis Meuleman, Rapporteur for the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration



How does one know when countries have implemented good governance? Although a cornerstone of all developmental efforts and the sine qua non of sustainability, governance is often nebulous. As a concept, it is hard to decipher. As a practice, it is hard to pin down. We can debate endlessly over the different elements that can go into its conceptual foundations. We can apply all kinds of elaborate models of analysis to get to the bottom of it. All efforts will surely and squarely lead to our pure dazzlement by the richness of its multifarious applications around the world.

Principles of effective governance for sustainable development, developed by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) and endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) last July in New York, aim to tackle precisely these features of governance: how to lucidly operationalize it so that everyone can find common ground when talking about its scope and scale; and of course, how to integrate it organically into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so that no one is left behind.

These eleven Principles of effective governance are:

**Effectiveness:** 1) competence; 2) sound policy making; and 3) collaboration;

**Accountability:** 4) integrity, 5) transparency and 6) independent oversight; and

**Inclusiveness:** 7) leaving no one behind, 8) non-discrimination, 9) participation, 10) subsidiarity and 11) intergenerational equity.

The principles bring together commonly applied strategies, many of which have been recognized and endorsed over the years in various United Nations forums, resolutions and treaties. To be exact, CEPA has identified sixty-two such strategies; and its next challenge is to weave them together in coherent and cohesive ways so that the global tapestry of governance can be made more visible and legible for everyone.

Our next step in our staunch commitment to supporting ECOSOC in its vision to promote sustainable development with human dignity is to operationalize the principles so that

effective governance and public institutions can directly and vigorously feed into SDG16 and the rest of the Goals.

In its eighteenth session last month in New York, CEPA outlined a three-pronged roadmap for progress: First, efforts should be channeled towards collecting further evidence of what works and what does not, under different sets of circumstances. Second, all relevant stakeholders should be engaged in formulating and upgrading the principles. And thirdly, principles backed up with evidence-based governance indicators must form the analytical basis for assessing impact of reforms.



It is heartening to see that Member States, such as Ecuador, have expressed interest in adopting the principles towards strengthening public institutions for partnerships and effective SDG implementation. CEPA will continue its cooperation with prominent organizations in the field such as the Praia Group on Governance Statistics and The International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Development Initiative.

Governance is humbling in a way. There is no one right answer. Effective governance, on the other hand, is empowering. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is clear in its vision and objectives. Transformative pathways towards sustainability are many, but our steadfast commitment as humanity to march along them towards peace and progress is one.

For more information:

Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)

Get the latest global economic trends!

**World Economic Situation and Prospects 2019**

**Get the latest global economic trends!**

FOLLOW THE LAUNCH OF THE MID-YEAR REPORT UPDATE  
TUESDAY 21 MAY 2019 AT 11 AM EDT

Watch: [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org)  
Details: [bit.ly/wesreport](http://bit.ly/wesreport)  
#WESP2019

**DESA** | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The *World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2019* will be launched on 21 May in New York. The report updates the economic prospects for the world economy reported in January 2019.

In the mid-year update, the global growth outlook has weakened, amid unresolved trade tensions and elevated international policy uncertainty. Across both developed and developing countries, growth projections for 2019 have been downgraded. While part of the economic slowdown reflects temporary factors, downside risks to global growth remain high.

Heightened financial risks are compounded by greater frequency and severity of natural disasters, reflecting the rising effects of climate change.

Tackling the current growth slowdown and placing the world economy on a robust path in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development require more comprehensive and well-targeted policy responses, including a combination of monetary, fiscal and development-oriented measures.



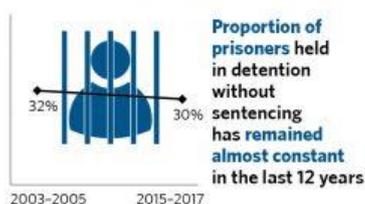
Join Assistant-Secretary-General for Economic Development and UN Chief Economist Elliott Harris and Chief of UN DESA's Global Economic Monitoring Branch Dawn Holland as they present the global and regional economic update live at 11 am EDT on May 21 via UN Web TV.

For more information: [World Economic Situation and Prospects](#)

## SDG 16 in numbers



Progress across Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions needs to accelerate. The global homicide rate has recently increased, various forms of violence against children persist and the number of detected victims of human trafficking has grown. A renewed commitment is needed to reduce levels of violence worldwide and to strengthen the participatory institutions needed for inclusive governance.



The global homicide rate ticked up in 2017 to 6.1 intentional homicides per 100,000 people, following a general downward trend in homicide rates since 2000.

Nearly 8 in 10 children from 1 to 14 years of age were subjected to some form of psychological aggression and/or physical punishment at home between 2006 and 2018.

The number of detected victims of trafficking in persons has increased, which could reflect either a

positive (enhanced efforts by authorities to identify victims) or negative (larger trafficking problem) trend. The vast majority, 70 per cent of detected victims of human trafficking are females.



Globally, 73 per cent of children under 5 have had their births registered

The share of unsentenced detainees in the overall prison population has remained largely constant at 30 per cent in recent years. Particularly high levels of pre-trial detention, over 40 per cent, exist in Central and Southern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa.



70 per cent of victims of trafficking were women and girls in 2016

Even if many regions have reached universal or near-universal birth registration, globally the average is

just 73 per cent, and fewer than half, 46 per cent, of all children under five in Sub-Saharan Africa have had their births registered in 2018.

At least 1,456 human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists have been killed in 61 countries across the world since 2015. This is equivalent to one person killed each day defending the rights of others.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

6-10 May, New York	14th session of the UN Forum on Forests
14-15 May, New York	4th Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals
21-30 May, New York	Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (resumed session)
21-23 May, New York	ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment
27-29 May, Rome	Conference in preparation for HLPF 2019: "Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies: SDG 16 implementation and the path towards leaving no one behind"

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