

CLIMATE ACTION

Runaway climate change is possibly the biggest single threat to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. UN DESA continues to advocate urgent efforts for sustainable development that go hand-in-hand with climate action in a way that leaves no one behind.

UN DESA...

- Showcased the important and intricate links between climate action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the SDG Pavilion during COP 24, which featured 38 multi-stakeholder events on SDGs with over 150 panelists and 1,000 participants.
- Supported global actions for sustainable ocean management, including support for the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference and preparations for the 2020 UN Ocean Conference.
- Led the push for sustainable forest management across the globe, supporting the realization of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030.

Climate action

The world is facing a climate crisis, threatening to derail progress on the SDGs. There is reason for hope, but humanity has only left itself a narrow window of opportunity to act. A short moment in time, which happens to coincide with the timeframe set out for SDGs implementation. The need for complementary and coherent action on both tracks - combating climate change and realizing the SDGs - is thus becoming more and more evident. UN DESA is moving the needle forward for a synergistic climate and sustainable development action.

Bringing water and energy into focus

Serving as the secretariat of both UN-Energy and UN-Water, UN DESA supported intergovernmental processes in the areas of energy and water. On the margins of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, UN DESA and its partner ITAIPU Binacional jointly organized the event Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions - Towards the Creation of a Global Network.

Ahead of the 2019 HLPF, UN DESA led the efforts to inform intergovernmental discussions on SDG 7 (clean and affordable energy) and its relation to other SDGs. On 23 May 2019, UN DESA released **Accelerating SDG 7 Achievement: SDG 7 Policy Briefs in Support of the high-level political forum 2019**.

SDG 7 was also the focus of the High-level Dialogue on the implementation of the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All 2014-2024: A Midpoint Review, organized on 23-24 May 2019 by UN DESA, the President of the General Assembly, the Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Sustainable Energy, members of UN-Energy and the

Technical Advisory Group on SDG 7.

Moreover, UN DESA lent strong support to the Water Action Decade 2018-2028, launched in the spring of 2018. The Department led informal negotiations of the draft resolution for the Mid-term comprehensive review of the Decade.

Highlighting the interlinkages between climate change and the SDGs

In 2018-2019, UN DESA and the Peacebuilding Commission jointly organized ECOSOC meetings to discuss the economic and social impact of hurricanes in the Caribbean, drought in the Sahel and devastation caused by the cyclones in Southern Africa. These meetings demonstrated the urgency to pursue a risk-informed and resilient implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, the review of SDG 13 at the July HLPF brought to the forefront the interlinkages between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



USG Liu and the UN DESA team at the COP24 meeting in December 2018 in Katowice, Poland. Photo: UN DESA/Ariel Alexovich

Working together for climate action and sustainable development

To showcase the intricate, symbiotic links between climate action and sustainable development, UN DESA participated in the 24th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 24), held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. At its SDG Pavilion, the Department featured 38 multi-stakeholder events on the SDGs that brought together over 150 panelists and a total audience of more than 1,000 actors from all regions of the world.

The Department also organized the Climate and SDGs Synergy Conference in Copenhagen in April 2019, as well as the thematic review of SDG 13 during the 2019 HLPF. The results informed the Climate Action Summit in September.



LOOKING FORWARD

The 2020 High-level UN Conference to Support the Implementation of SDG 14 (UN Ocean Conference) will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, on 2-6 June 2020. The Governments of Kenya and Portugal are co-hosting the event, which will address the theme *Scaling Up Ocean Action Based on Science and Innovation for the Implementation of Goal 14: Stocktaking, Partnerships and Solutions*.



Pahmung Krui Damar Forest, winner of UN Forum on Forests photo competition. Damar, Indonesia, 2010. Photo: UN Photo/Eva Fendiaspara

Taking ocean action

UN DESA extensively supported the Government of Kenya in planning and preparing the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, held on 26-28 November 2018 in Nairobi. In addition, the Department supports the Governments of Kenya and Portugal as they prepare the 2020 UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon, with the head of UN DESA, Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin, serving as Secretary-General of the Conference. The Department also offered steadfast support throughout the year to the efforts of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, Peter Thomson.



Ensuring sustainable forest management

UN DESA continues to lead global efforts on sustainable forest management, supporting implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and the UN Forest Instrument. In May 2019, the Department organized the 14th session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 14), which discussed forest contributions to accelerating SDG progress. UNFF14 discussions addressed issues including climate change, economic growth, inclusive institutions and societies, reduced inequality, education, private sector engagement, monitoring, assessment and reporting frameworks, mobilizing forest financing, and outreach activities.

In February 2019, UN DESA co-organized the Conference on Climate Financing for High Forest Cover, Low Deforestation Countries (HFLDs) in Paramaribo, Suriname, with the Government of Suriname and UNDP. The conference adopted the Paramaribo Declaration calling for significant increases in climate finance for HFLDs.

In March 2019, UN DESA organized a special event on forests and education to commemorate the International Day of Forests. In April 2019, UN DESA organized the Interactive Dialogue on Harmony with Nature to commemorate International Mother Earth Day.