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Feature Articles

Forest action and the post-2015 development agenda

Mr. Manoel Sobral Filho, the new Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat in UN DESA, has devoted his life to forests. In his conversation with DESA News, he highlights key challenges and opportunities for forests, and how 2015 is truly a year for global action for forests.



“I started working as a trainee in a large forest development project in Brazil,” explains Mr. Sobral, who was appointed as the new UNFFS Director by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and took office in the fall of 2014. With a background in science, he describes how his lifelong mission to sustain the world’s forests began over 40 years ago.

Early in his career, Mr. Sobral had the opportunity to live and work in the Amazon region for six years, “working in the heart of the forest”. Since then, Mr. Sobral gained extensive experience on global forest issues, from serving as the Director of Brazil’s Forest Product Research Center at the National Institute of Amazonian Research and, to more recently, as Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO).

Forests are vital for the planet’s well-being

“Forests are connected to water, energy, food security, climate,” Mr. Sobral says, as he highlights the fundamental importance of these ecosystems for the well-being of people and the planet.

Forest catchments are responsible for 75 per cent of the world’s freshwater, nine per cent of global clean renewable energy is derived from forests, 80 per cent of the terrestrial biodiversity is in forests and some 20 per cent of the world’s population depend on them for their livelihood.

“As much as we consider forests valuable, there are many services that forests provide that are public services and public goods,” he says, describing some of the main challenges that the world is facing today. “It is so difficult to make people pay for

these public goods. As a result, we have been losing forests, in particular natural forests,” he adds.

“The first challenge is how do we protect these forests, how do you avoid illegal deforestation and illegal degradation,” Mr. Sobral points out. He notes that many developing countries face pressing social and economic needs, which are often prioritized over forest issues. “This is really our main challenge,” Mr. Sobral underlines. In this regard, he stresses the importance of mechanisms to mobilize financing for sustainable forest management, to enable “payments to the ones that own them, and the ones that derive the livelihoods from them.”

2015 is the year for global action

Looking ahead, Mr. Sobral shares the main opportunities brought forward by the new post-2015 development agenda. “We are at a time where all the values of forests are being recognized,” he says. Noting the convergence of timing in various international discussions – from the post-2015 development agenda and financing for development, to the International Arrangement on Forests, and climate change; he notes that 2015 offers a “rare political opportunity to integrate forests” into the framework for action until 2030.

“One of the services that forests provide is in storing carbon. It is one of the most economical ways of doing so,” Mr. Sobral explains. “So there are already mechanisms to reward forests for that and if this is mainstreamed in the agreement that is in sight for Paris, it will be an opportunity that we have been able to seize,” he adds, pointing to the prospects of the upcoming COP21 in Paris, later this year.

Mr. Sobral also highlights how issues related to financing and means of implementation were critical issues for forests. In this regard, he notes the important opportunity presented by the upcoming Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July. “This is the year that the members of the United Nations will decide on how to progress faster towards implementation of sustainable forest management.”

Responding to the global call for action

Forests are an integral part of the proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and are specifically referenced in two of the proposed goals, notes Mr. Sobral. He shares with DESA News how the UNFF Secretariat has been working with partners in the global efforts in 2015 that will bring about the new sustainable development agenda.

The Forum is now at a crossroads, explains Mr. Sobral, describing how this year the UNFF will review the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF) and decide on “its own agenda beyond 2015”. “There is recognition that much more has to be done – much more in action, not only in dialogue and policy development,” he adds.

A recent meeting in New York brought together forest experts to discuss the post-2015 IAF, paving the way for discussions at the 11th session of the UN Forum on Forests to be held from 4 to 15 May 2015 in New York. Mr. Sobral points out that some of the key messages from the meeting focus on how to support implementation of sustainable forest policy, at all levels – international, regional and national.

“The performance of the future IAF and UNFF will be assessed years from now, and its success will be really measured against implementation targets,” Mr. Sobral says. He notes that experts also put forth various options for strengthening the current IAF, including consideration of strategic trust funds, strategic action plans, and mechanisms to facilitate greater access to means of implementation for sustainable forest management.

For more information:

[UN Forum on Forests Secretariat \(UNFFS\)](#)

Giving young people a voice in development

Youth will take centre stage at the United Nations on 2 and 3 February during the annual Economic and Social Council’s (ECOSOC) Youth Forum, exploring the role of young people in the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event will give the world’s youth a powerful platform to engage in dialogue with decision-makers on development issues most important to them.



“In order to arrive at an inclusive and people-centred post-2015 development agenda, it is more crucial than ever to explore and advocate for young people’s development priorities for the future,” ECOSOC President Martin Sajdik said, illustrating the importance of youth participation. “We cannot discuss the future development goals without bringing the voices of young people into discussions to give them the opportunity to shape the future they want”.

“In the world today, we have 1.8 billion young people. This is a ready asset that we have to put to use,” Vivian Onano, Global Youth Ambassador for ‘A World at School’ and one of the Forum’s panellists said. “We need to use youth as our champions so that they can be able to implement the SDGs into our local communities and also in our countries. The only way we can achieve this goal is making it inclusive of everyone, so young people have to be at the forefront.”

“We are going to show [...] that we are not the leaders of tomorrow, we are the leaders of today,” Marie Masson from Denmark said.

As the international community gets ready to implement a new set of Sustainable Development Goals, youth delegates from every continent are eager to weigh in with their visions for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

“In 2030, I see a world where all children have access to education,” said Xiuxiu Yan, a youth delegate from China.

Unemployment, healthcare, income inequality and the empowerment of women also rank high as development issues most important to youth. Vivian puts gender equality on the top of her list: “I want a world where each and every child has access to opportunities, regardless of their gender,” she said.

Platform to contribute with unique skills

The Youth Forum has been hosted at UN headquarters in New York every year since 2012, providing a broad platform for young people from around the world to highlight their insights and visions on development issues. With the number of young people globally continuing to grow, they need to be increasingly included in development efforts. They also bring unique skills and viewpoints to a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected.

“Young people have never been more educated or connected through social media as today,” Ahmad Alhendawi, the UN’s Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Youth said in his message calling for youth to participate in the Forum. “We need youth on board to move this agenda forward. It is our job to leave no one behind.”

Bridging MDG momentum with new development agenda

2015 will be a year of transition, when the world will graduate from the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and move onto a new development agenda based on a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals, seventeen in total, will address current development issues that range from climate change to education, healthcare and poverty. Much like the MDGs, they set clear, measurable targets for the international community to work towards.

The MDGs have been named the most successful anti-poverty push in history, reaching groundbreaking results in education, child and maternal mortality and the scaling back of non-communicable diseases. But areas remain where the targets are still out of reach. The SDGs will aim to build upon the successes of the MDGs and make for an inclusive, all-encompassing post-2015 development agenda that is action-oriented, ‘aspirational’ and global in nature. Including youth in both the drafting and implementation of the new goals is therefore vital, as they do not only bring fresh, new perspectives to the debate, but they will ultimately be responsible for a large part of its implementation.

Original approach

The Forum will shine a light on the improvements in development since the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the year 2000, as well as serve as a podium for new, original approaches to issues that affect youth and their communities.

“ECOSOC is the platform where we debate on how to bring more sustainability to this world,” Lasha Shakulashvili, a Youth Delegate from Georgia, said, explaining why the Youth forum is the perfect platform for young people to bring up their issues. “We can globally unite our efforts around great ideas”.

ECOSOC is the UN’s principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, and on 2 February, the UN headquarters in New York will be buzzing with the excitement and energy of the world’s youth, and all the insights, issues and innovative ideas they will bring to the table.

For more information:

[UN ECOSOC Youth Forum 2015](#)

The event will be broadcast live via UN Web TV:

<http://webtv.un.org/>

To share ideas or questions for the forum on Twitter, use #Youth2015

Strengthening social development in the contemporary world

Focused on the theme “Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World”, the 53rd Commission for Social Development, taking place on 4-13 February, will kick off a year of reflection and strategic planning among the intergovernmental bodies of the UN. As part of this event, a major campaign will be launched to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. For inclusion. For equality. For people.



Chaired by Ambassador Simona Mirela Miculescu of Romania, the 53rd session is expected to attract more than 500 representatives from various ECOSOC organizations attending the event in New York. This year’s priority theme, “Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World”, was chosen with attention to the proposed new global development agenda to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), currently under deliberation in the General Assembly.

2015 also marks the 20th Anniversary of the first World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, a prime opportunity to reflect on the approach to social progress and the contributions of effective social policy to wider development goals.

“The Commission provides an ideal opportunity to focus on the role of social development as a key component of sustainable development and to identify effective means of placing people at the centre of the anticipated post-2015 development agenda,” highlighted Ms. Daniela Bas, Director of UN DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) ahead of the event.

Deliberations during the Commission will take the form of general discussion as well as high-level interactive dialogues. Several scheduled side-events also promise to add to the depth of dialogue on the theme of the session.

Member States are expected to negotiate four resolutions during the Commission. These resolutions will address issues related to social development on the African continent, older persons, youth and persons with disabilities.

Civil Society Forum

As in previous years, a civil society forum will be held one day prior to the opening of the Commission. On 3 February, prominent civil society actors, representatives of Member States and officials of the United Nations will come together to reflect on key issues related to this year’s priority theme as well as the upcoming post-2015 development agenda.

The Forum provides a platform for civil society representatives to exchange views on important issues of social development and contribute to the overall outcomes of the Commission.

Relevant conclusions of the forum and a related Civil Society Declaration will be presented to the Commission during the official opening.

Emerging issues and priority theme

Three high-level discussions will inform the work of the 53rd session of the Commission. The first one, scheduled for the afternoon of 4 February, will focus on analyzing this year’s priority theme “Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World”.

Among the speakers are Honourable Baklai Temengil, Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs of Palau, and Ms. Priti Darooka, Founder and Executive Director of the Programme for Women’s Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PWESCR). The panel will be moderated by Mr. Michal Boni, Member of the European Parliament from Poland.

A panel discussion on “Emerging issues” will also be held during the Commission, focusing on the “Contributions of Social Development to the Transition from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals.” The panel will be moderated by Ms. Sarah Cook, Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and will feature speakers from other system organizations, representatives of Member States and research experts focused on issues of social development.

Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development

The third high-level event will commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, on 6-12 March 1995. The Summit's outcome, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, constituted an agreement to give social development goals the highest priority. It set an ambitious people-centred agenda aimed to promote social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition, based on full participation by all.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is expected to address the Commission during the commemoration event. A keynote address will also be delivered by Mr. Juan Somavia, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Inter-regional Policy Cooperation and Chair of the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit for Social Development.

For inclusion. For equality. For people.

To support the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, DSPD will launch a period of reflection on social progress to date and the challenges ahead. Beginning with the 53rd session of the Commission of Social Development and running throughout 2015, communication efforts of the division will give special attention to the role and contributions of social development to the process and practice of sustainable inclusive development that leaves no one behind.

The yearlong outreach campaign, "For People", will be organized under the umbrella of the United Nations '2015 Time for Global Action', and focus on the sub-theme, 'For inclusion. For equality. For people'. The campaign aims to inspire and motivate people around the world to join an ongoing multifaceted dialogue on the progress and future of social development and its role in achieving sustainable development now and in the future.

"Putting people at the centre of sustainable development is essential to the post-2015 agenda and the continued development in a broad range of areas," said Daniela Bas. "This campaign will not only strengthen the attention to this reality, but will engage the public in unpacking what it actually means to 'put people at the centre' helping to inform our work and the work of the international community from the bottom up. We don't want to just promote what we perceive as effective social policies, we want to learn how the term 'effective' is interpreted in practice, on the ground, in daily life."

For more information:

[53rd Commission for Social Development](#)
[For People campaign](#)

Global Dialogue on Development

Mobilizing means to deliver ambitious post-2015 agenda



The President of the 69th session of the General Assembly will convene a High-level Thematic Debate on Means of Implementation for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda in New York on 9-10 February.

Addressing the issue of mobilizing adequate means of implementation – financial resources, technology development and transfer and capacity-building – will be critical to delivering on and implementing a truly transformative and ambitious post-2015 development agenda.

The main objective of the high-level thematic debate will be to provide an opportunity for participants to address key issues related to mobilizing the means of implementation such as:

- What actions are needed to scale up mobilization of financial resources from all sources: domestic public financing, domestic private financing, international public financing (including ODA), international private financing (FDI and remittances), trade, and partnerships?
- What is required of the different development players/actors to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of available resources for sustainable development?
- How can coherence and a common understanding for robust means of implementation in the post-2015 agenda and the Financing for development process be fostered and agreed? How can trade contribute to renewing the global partnerships for development?
- What measures can be taken to develop a financial architecture/system that incentivizes the direction of global public and private savings towards sustainable development investments, including provision of long-term financing to fill critical investment gaps?
- Given the critical role the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies will play in achieving a transformative post-

2015 agenda, what are the best options for a technology facilitation mechanism?

- What measures and actions need to be undertaken to further build and strengthen capacities of developing countries, in particular to ensure an effective domestic enabling environment and enhance their ability to effectively implement the post-2015 development agenda?

For more information: [High-level Thematic Debate on Means of Implementation for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda](#)

Platform for dialogue on operational activities for development



The 2015 Substantive Session of ECOSOC: Operational Activities for Development Segment, will take place on 23-25 February at UN Headquarters in New York.

The segment serves as a key meeting place for stakeholders interested in operational activities for development of the UN system. The segment is mandated to provide guidance to the UN development system on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of operational activities of the UN system.

Operational activities of the UN system currently account for nearly two-thirds of all activities of the Organization. This year, discussions in the Operational Activities for Development Segment will also contribute to the recently started ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system, mandated in Council resolution 2014/14. The new ECOSOC Dialogue will take place over the next year and half with a view to informing the outcome of the next General Assembly resolution on the QCPR to be adopted in December 2016.

The Operational Activities for Development Segment provides also an annual venue for a dialogue of the Executive Heads of the funds and programmes with Member States. This year's segment will also include sessions focusing on the opportunities and challenges facing the UN development system in: (a) advancing South-South cooperation, (b) strengthening the

coherence of funding of operational activities and (c) enhancing the effectiveness of the UN system support for national capacity development in programme countries.

An important outcome of this year's Operational Activities for Development Segment of ECOSOC will be an ECOSOC resolution providing guidance to the analytical preparations of the Secretary-General for the 2016 QCPR process.

For more information: [United Nations Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#)

Making multi-stakeholder partnerships work beyond 2015



ECOSOC will hold a special event on "Multi-stakeholder partnerships: Making them work for the Post-2015 Development Agenda" at UN Headquarters on 27 February.

The half day meeting will feature two panel discussions: the first, moderated by Mr. Raj Kumar, Co-Founder and President of Devex, will aim to highlight examples of partnerships that have been successful, including especially from the viewpoint of mechanisms for their monitoring and review.

Confirmed speakers include Ms. Kathy Bushkin Calvin, CEO of UN Foundation, Mr. Martin Hiller, Director General of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) and Ms. Martha Herrera, Head of Global Social Responsibility of CEMEX.

The second discussion, to be moderated by Mr. Michael Shank, Climate Nexus' Director of Media Strategy, will consider ways in which partnerships could best be aligned to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including how and where it should be done and ways to measure results. Speakers on the panel will include Dr. Klaus Leisinger, Founder and President of the Global Values Foundation, Professor Frank Biermann of VU Amsterdam University and Ms. Hespina Rukato, Founding Director of the Centre for African Studies.

It is hoped that the main proposals and recommendations coming out of the event's discussions will help provide parameters for a possible framework for reviewing and evaluating partnerships in the Post-2015 period.

For more information: [United Nations Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#)

General Assembly embarks on historic task of finalizing the post-2015 agenda



"Today, we embark on the critical task of negotiating an ambitious, inclusive and transformative post-2015 development agenda," said UN General Assembly President Sam Kutesa as he opened the stocktaking session of the intergovernmental post-2015 development agenda

negotiations, which took place from 19 to 21 January at UN Headquarters in New York.

"We have a heavy but noble responsibility to finalize the new agenda on a strict timeline, so that our Heads of State and Government can adopt it during the forthcoming Summit scheduled for 25-27 September," he said. The President also reminded Member States that a final push would have to be made to achieve the MDGs.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recalled the overarching message of his Synthesis report: "We need a new and universal compact that is people-centered and planet-sensitive. It must encompass the fight against poverty and inequality and against gender-based discrimination; it must include those who do not enjoy full participation in society; and it must be based on safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions led by women and men from all backgrounds."

ECOSOC President Martin Sajdik outlined the key role that the ECOSOC system and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will play in the follow-up and review of the new agenda, and noted the importance of communication and partnerships of all kind for its success.

During the session, Member States commented on the possible four parts of the outcome document of the September Summit: the Declaration; Sustainable Development Goals; means of implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development; and follow up and review.

A number of distinguished speakers shared their views on these four elements, their statements can be found on the Sustainable

Development Knowledge Platform (see the link provided below). During an interactive dialogue with Major Groups and other Stakeholders, the conclusions of the Stakeholder Preparatory Forum for the post-2015 negotiations, held on 16 January, were presented to Member States. The topics discussed ranged from the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report to the review mechanism and means of implementation.

In their concluding remarks on the last day of the session, the co-facilitators of the negotiations, Ambassador David Donoghue of Ireland and Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya, noted the constructive engagement of member states and the large turnout of civil society and major groups.

Ambassador Donoghue, who presented the co-facilitator's concluding remarks, observed that member states recognized the Open Working Group's SDG proposal as far reaching and ambitious achievement with broad legitimacy. Contact had been made with the UN Statistical Commission who will present for member state's reflection a draft of indicative global indicators linked to the Goals and targets.

The co-facilitators concluded that member states favour a Declaration which is comprehensive in scope but also concise, inspirational and visionary in its terms. Many delegates would like to see the Declaration reflect the integrated and universal nature of the agenda and for it to reaffirm core values and principles.

An overriding message heard regarding means of implementation and a Global Partnership was that it will be impossible to deliver on the SDGs without an even higher level of ambition in respect to both. Many member states reiterated the importance of an open, transparent and inclusive follow up and review framework for the delivery of the post-2015 development agenda. Some thought that no target should be considered met unless met by all relevant income and other groupings, especially the most vulnerable.

The next session of the negotiations will be held from 17 – 20 February 2015 and will focus on the introductory Declaration.

For more information:

[Post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations](#)

Stakeholders stress urgency in achieving transformative change



The Stakeholder Preparatory Forum for the post-2015 development agenda negotiations, held on 16 January at UN Headquarters in New York, brought major groups and other stakeholders including the private sector together with representatives from UN member states and the UN System. Around 400 participants attended the event.

“Your views as critical stakeholders have helped raise ambitions and shaped the way we talk about post-2015 today,” said Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Interagency Affairs at UN DESA, at the opening of the Forum. He added that the representatives of Major Groups and other Stakeholders “have the critical role to keep all of us – the Member States and the international organizations – focused on our objective to transform societies and economies so as to eradicate poverty and realize sustainable development.”

Among the panellists, moderators and discussants were the president of ECOSOC, the co-facilitators of the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations, delegates from a number of UN Member States, civil society representatives from all continents, and UN officials. The Forum was held two days ahead of the first session of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, which will be adopted at the UN Special Summit in September 2015.

In the first session of the Forum, stakeholders highlighted a number of core elements that they would like to see as integral to the post-2015 agenda. There should be a profound sense of urgency to achieve transformative change to ensure the survival of present and future generations. People should be seen as rights-holders and governments as duty-bearers. And the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities to address inequalities among nations should be part of the agenda.

Stakeholders also emphasized the need to shift to a development paradigm respectful of natural, human and cultural diversities; human rights as the cornerstone of the post-2015 development agenda; and the importance of equality and overcoming all forms of discrimination.

The Forum had focus sessions on the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report, means of implementation and Global Partnership for sustainable development, and follow-up and review of the post-2015 development agenda. A summary of the discussions with messages and recommendations is available on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

The Forum was organized by the Steering Committee representing the Major Groups and other stakeholders, facilitated by UN-NGLS and the Division for Sustainable Development of UN DESA.

For more information: [Post 2015 process and MGoS](#)

Trends and Analysis

Facebook chat on world economy



A Facebook chat will be held on 12 February from 10 am to 11:30 am EST, to discuss the current state of the world economy and forecasts for 2015 and 2016 as identified in the recently released *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015*.

Oil prices: what goes down must come up? Will the EU economy hold up? How will the Russian economy fare amid the sanctions? Is the Chinese economy slowing

down?

Economists from the Global Economic Monitoring Unit of UN DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division will be on hand to answer questions on the world economy and about the findings of their latest report, the [World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015](#) launched on 19 January.

The report forecasts global economic growth to increase marginally over the next two years at 3.1 per cent in 2015 and 3.3 per cent in 2016, compared with an estimated growth of 2.6 per cent for 2014. An expected US interest rate increase, remaining euro area fragility, a further slowdown in developing economies and geopolitical conflicts pose major concerns for the global economic outlook.

"The report of the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015 contains a lot of detailed analysis not only on the global economy, but also on the regional economic outlook," says Pingfan Hong, the Director of UN DESA's, as he welcomes the online community to join the chat with his team of economists and the authors of the report.

You can post your questions at <http://bit.ly/AskWESP2015> or via Twitter using the hashtag #AskWESP2015.

For more information: [World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015](#)

To join the Facebook chat: <http://bit.ly/AskWESP2015>

Data in support of post-2015 development agenda



Expert Group Meeting on the indicator framework for the post-2015 development agenda will be held on 25-26 February at UN Headquarters in New York.

UN DESA's Statistics

Division is organizing the event back-to-back with the forty-sixth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which will take place on 3-6 March.

The Expert Group Meeting, with broad participation of representatives from national statistical systems and international and regional organizations, will discuss the development of the indicator framework for the post-2015 development agenda. The objective is to reach a common understanding of how this work will be conducted within the available time frame.

Statistical experts from civil society, academia and private sectors will also participate. The outcome of the meeting will be presented to the Statistical Commission at its forty-sixth session under agenda item 3: Data in support of the post-2015 development agenda.

For more information:

[Calendar of events of UN DESA's Statistics Division](#)

Capacity development

Towards a nationally owned monitoring system for the SDGs



The Statistical Commission will hold its Friday Seminar on “The Development of an Indicator Framework for the post-2015 Development Agenda: Towards a nationally owned monitoring system for the SDGs” on 27 February at

UN Headquarters in New York.

To be held just before the start of the 46th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which takes place on 3-6 March, this event intends to further the discussion on issues related to the development of indicators to monitor the post-2015 development agenda and hear from both data producers and data users.

The Statistical Commission, established in 1947, is the apex entity of the global statistical system. It brings together the Chief Statisticians from Member States around the world. It is the highest decision making body for international statistical activities, especially the setting of statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international level.

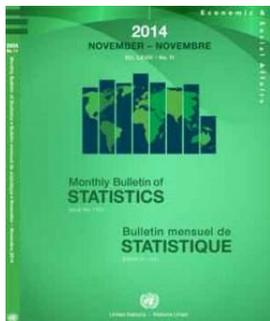
For more information:

[46th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission](#)

Publications and Websites

Statistical compilations

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online



The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or bimonthly, quarterly and annual data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport,

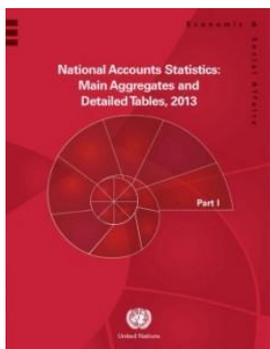
construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

Vol. LXVIII – No. 12, December 2014

In addition to the regular recurrent monthly tables, this issue includes quarterly and annual tables: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; Earnings in non-agricultural activities, by sex; Fuel imports, developed economies: unit value and volume indices; value; Indicators on fuel imports, developed economies; External trade conversion factors; Manufactured goods exports: unit value indices, volume indices and value; Selected series of world statistics.

- [For more information](#)

National Accounts Statistics: Main Aggregates & Detailed Tables, 2013 (Parts I to V)



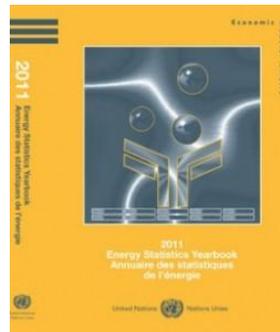
The publication contains detailed official national accounts data for over 200 countries or areas of the World for the years 2001 to 2013. It is a valuable source of information on the state and structure of economies worldwide. The data for each country or area are presented in separate chapters with uniform table headings and classifications as recommended in the System of National Accounts 1993

(1993 SNA). Each country chapter also contains a write-up on the methodology and data sources which are used to compile the national accounts. A summary of the SNA conceptual framework, classifications, definitions, is also included in the publication.

The publication contains statistics on gross domestic product by expenditure at current and constant prices and the relations among product, income, saving and net lending; value added by kind of activity at current and constant prices, and output, gross value added and fixed assets by industry; classification of consumption expenditure of general government, households, and non-profit institutions serving households according to purpose; production account through the financial account for the institutional sectors; and cross classification of gross value added by industry and institutional sector.

The time-series data can also be downloaded [here](#).

2011 Energy Statistics Yearbook



The 2011 Energy Statistics Yearbook is the fifty-fifth issue in a series of annual compilations of internationally comparable statistics summarizing world energy trends. Annual data for 224 countries and areas for the period 2008 to 2011 are presented on production, trade and consumption of energy: solids, liquids, gaseous fuels and electricity. In addition, per capita

consumption series are also provided for all energy products. Graphs are included to illustrate historic trends and/or changes in composition of production and/or consumption of major energy products.

Special tables of interest include: international trade tables for coal, crude petroleum and natural gas by partner countries – providing information on direction of trade; selected series of statistics on renewables and wastes; refinery distillation capacity; and a table on selected energy resources.

- [For more information](#)

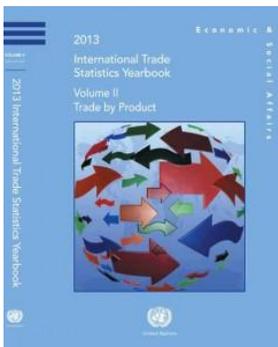
2011 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles



The 2011 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles contains energy balances for about 125 developing countries, showing production, trade, conversion and consumption in energy units for all energy products; and electricity profiles for about 180 countries, providing detailed information on production, trade and consumption of electricity, net installed capacity and thermal power plant input for selected developing and developed countries.

- [For more information](#)

2013 International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Vol. II: Trade by Product



The 2013 International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Volume II – Trade by Product contains detailed tables showing international trade for 258 individual commodities (3-digit SITC groups), for the 11 main Extended Balance of Payments Services (EBOPS) categories, and eleven world trade tables covering trade values and indices up to the year 2013. The information contained in the publication is based on data

provided by approximately 175 countries (or areas) in the world.

In contrast to editions prior to 2013 which featured only merchandise trade, the International Trade Statistics Yearbook Volume II —Trade by Product now includes integrated presentation of international merchandise trade and trade in services.

The publication is aimed at both specialist trade data users and common audience at large. The presented data, charts and analyses will benefit policy makers, government agencies, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, journalists, academics, researchers, students, businesses and anyone who is interested in trade issues. The information and analyses are presented in a way which can be comprehended by non-expert users of statistics.

The yearbook is also made available online [here](#).

For more detailed data, visit: [Comtrade](#) and [Service Trade](#)

Outreach material

Sustainable Development in Action, Volume 3, Issue 1

The January issue of Sustainable Development in Action, published by UN DESA's Division for Sustainable Development, is available online. It highlights the start of the post-2015 negotiations and the sustainable development goals among other things. The newsletter aims to feature 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.

- [Read full issue](#)

Enable Newsletter

Prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) within UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, the December issue is now available, highlighting among others the Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The newsletter features input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes, and civil society.

- [Read full issue](#)

Youth Flash Newsletter

January issue of United Nations Youth Flash is now available online including a feature story on "Water: A key for sustainable development". The newsletter is a service of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) Focal Point on Youth to help keep the public informed about the work of the UN on youth issues. It is prepared with input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes, and from youth organizations all over the world.

- [Read full issue](#)

DESA NGO News

The latest issue of DESA NGO provides the most up-to-date information on news and upcoming events of interest to civil

society at UN headquarters in New York, Geneva and elsewhere. The newsletter is published by UN DESA's NGO Branch.

- [Read full issue](#)

International Trade Statistics Newsletter, September/December 2014 Issue, Number 32

The September/December 2014 issue of International Trade Statistics Newsletter, published by UN DESA's Statistics Division, has been released and is available online. This newsletter covers recent development and activities in three broad statistical topics: International Trade and Globalization, Tourism and Big Data for Official Statistics. The contents are categorized into methodological work, capacity development to support implementation of international standards, coordination among international organizations and UNSD activities in data collection and dissemination.

- [Read full issue](#)

Discussion papers

Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 74

Prepared by UN DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, the January issue is available online with the following summary:

– Moderate global economic expansion in 2014, as post-crisis adjustments continued^f

– In 2015, developed economies to be led by a stronger U.S. economy, while downside risks remain significant in Japan and the euro area

f- Developing economies to be led by East Asia, while several large emerging economies face internal and external challenges

- [To download](#)

Working papers

Redistributive Policies for Sustainable Development: Looking at the Role of Assets and Equity

Analyses of redistributive policies often focus on income flows to examine the nexus between redistribution and economic growth. With strengthening signs of growing economic inequality in many countries, an increasing number of economists investigated the existence and nature of a hypothetical trade-off between economic growth and equity. As signs of unsustainable development are strengthening more generally, this paper proposes to look at the broader nexus between redistribution, equity and sustainable development, emphasizing its social and environmental dimensions.

- [To download](#)

Comings and Goings

Comings



Mr. Lenni Montiel was appointed as Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and took office on 16 January 2015.

With almost thirty years of experience, Mr. Lenni Montiel has held strategic positions within the Government of Venezuela and in several international organizations. Throughout his career he has been systematically involved in policy making and analytical work on issues related to economic development.

As Director in the Ministry of Planning and in the Ministry of Family Affairs, he contributed to the design of government policies in Venezuela; he was also the lead economist in the team that created the Social Investment Fund of Venezuela in the early 1990s. He also served as Counsellor to the Executive Director for Venezuela and Panama at the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Development Bank.

At the UN, Mr. Montiel has built a career as economic and policy adviser to both senior government officials at national and local levels and he has worked in several countries and in different capacities. He was UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan and provided long term policy support to national development efforts in Vietnam, Ukraine, Belarus, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Peru, Romania and the Territory of Kosovo.

At the Bureau for Development Policy in UNDP in New York, Mr. Montiel was a Senior Policy Adviser leading large teams of policy advisers working around the globe through the management of several professional communities of practice. He was the architecture and Network Facilitator of LOGOV- “Innovations in Local Governance Electronic Initiative”, that was acknowledged as a “Good Practice” in the 1998 UNCHS-HABITAT Best Practice International Award.

Since 2012, Mr. Montiel worked as Director for Economic, Social and Development Affairs in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, leading the analytical work in the area of economic and development affairs.

Mr. Montiel was trained as an economist in the former Soviet Union, where he received his first university degree and a MSc in Economics – National Planning from the Belorussian National Institute of National Planning. He strengthened his academic and research capacities by obtaining a PhD in Public Policy from Birmingham University and a MA on Legislative Studies from the University of Hull in the United Kingdom.

The following staff members were promoted in January:

Gregory Barret, Economic Affairs Officer, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Emnet Bekele, Administrative Assistant, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Garegin Manukyan, Sr. Governance & Public Admin Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Yuka Matsudaira, Administrative Officer, Statistics Division

Julie N. Pewitt, Administrative Assistant, Division for Social Policy and Development

Marco Sanchez Cantillo, Sr. Economic Affairs Officer, Development Policy and Analysis Division

Nancy R. Snyder, Statistician, Statistics Division

Harry Tonino, Economic Affairs Officer, Financing for Development office

Calendar

January

ECOSOC Youth Forum

2-3 February, New York

53rd Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD53)

4-13 February, New York

High-level Thematic Debate on Means of Implementation for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda

9-10 February, New York

Facebook chat on the world economy

12 February, 10 -11 am, EDT

Post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations (Stocktaking session)

19-21 January, New York

2015 Substantive Session of ECOSOC: Operational Activities for Development Segment

23-25 February, New York

Expert Group Meeting on the indicator framework for the post-2015 development agenda

25-26 February, New York

ECOSOC special event on “Multi-stakeholder partnerships: Making them work for the Post-2015 Development Agenda”

27 February, New York

Statistical Commission Friday Seminar on “The Development of an Indicator Framework for the post-2015 Development Agenda: Towards a nationally owned monitoring system for the SDGs”

27 February, New York

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communication Section/SPCS of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. DESA News is issued every month. Please click [here](#) to send inquiries.