



United Nations



**GLOBAL CLIMATE
& SDG SYNERGY
CONFERENCE**

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FACT SHEET

WHY SYNERGISTIC ACTION?

The complex challenges we face – climate change, SDGs, and building back better from the global pandemic – are closely interconnected.

Failure in addressing one process could undermine the success of the others. Addressing one goal effectively can make progress on the others easier. Understanding this is essential to coherent policy planning and impactful action.

Harnessing synergies is particularly critical at a time of limited financial resources. Leaders need to pursue policies that co-deliver, striking a balance between development priorities and climate risk management.

The traditional silo approach to development can be counterproductive. Institutional coordination requires complementary policies and programmes across ministries to ensure that a country's development plans align with the SDGs.

Clean action pays! The 2018 *New Climate Economy* report found that bold actions could yield a direct economic gain of US\$26 trillion through to 2030 compared with business-as-usual.

CLIMATE ACTION & THE SDGs

SDG 2 -- ZERO HUNGER

Did you know?

The IPCC estimates that between 21% and 37% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gases are attributable to food systems.

Without interventions, food system emissions are likely to increase significantly by 2050, due to higher demand

resulting from population increases, income growth and dietary changes.

What's being done

The Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture, and Food Security (CCAFS), run by the intergovernmental Consortium of Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR), works with farmers and agricultural firms to help increase agricultural productivity, mitigate GHG emissions, and adapt to emerging risks, including climate change.

Many organizations are engaged in raising consumer awareness that a transition to diets with a lower percentage of calories coming from animal sources -- especially meat from cows, goats and sheep -- can reduce GHG emissions while providing adequate nutrition.

SDG 3 -- HEALTH

Did you know?

The issues of climate change and air pollution are closely linked because some air pollutants are also potent greenhouse gases. According to the WHO approximately 7 million premature deaths annually are due to the effects of indoor and outdoor air pollution.

What's being done

In the first round of NDC reports under the Paris Agreement, about half of all reports included a reference to the interlinkages between air pollution, climate change and health.

SDGs 6 & 7 -- WATER & ENERGY

Did you know?

733 million people still lack access to electricity, and water stress affects more than 2 billion. Energy is set to

intensify in the coming years, with significant implications for both energy and water security.

By 2035, energy consumption is projected to increase by 50 per cent, which in turn will increase the energy sector's water consumption by 85 per cent. There is significant potential for energy savings in the water sector.

Achieving universal access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) would add less than 1% to global energy demand by 2030, highlighting a range of potential synergies between SDG 6 and SDG 7.

What's being done

Hydropower currently is the largest source of renewable energy in the electricity sector. The International Hydropower Association says that in the next 30 years, hydropower can fill the hole left as the world transitions away from coal. But there are many challenges to make hydropower sustainable in its impact on ecosystems and human communities.

ASAZGUA (Sugar Agroindustry Association of Guatemala) produces electricity for the operation of the sugar mills and to cover at least 30% of the electricity demand in the country during the three dry months of the year, all by using 100% of the residue biomass obtained during sugar production, which is renewable energy.

According to the World Bank, in 2020 there were a total of 61 national and sub-national level carbon pricing initiatives in place or scheduled for implementation, covering about 22% of global GHG emissions. Argentina, Chile, China, Mexico, Singapore, and South Africa are pioneers in implementing carbon pricing.

SDG 11 -- SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Did you know?

Cities occupy only 2% of the earth's surface but contain 56% of the world's population and account for more than 60% of global GHG emissions. "The fight against climate change will be won or lost in cities," says the UNFCCC.

What's being done

More than 75 countries have included urban action for climate adaptation in their national NDCs, and over 20 countries have shared urban climate mitigation policies, including building codes and sustainable transport.

The Dominican Republic is one country that has included detailed information on plans and projects in urban development and transport in its updated NDC.

SDG 12 -- SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION, PRODUCTION & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Did you know?

Globally, the waste management sector accounts for some 3.5% of anthropogenic GHG emissions. Many countries have adopted waste minimization, resource recycling and safe landfill policies to reduce environmental and climate impacts.

Organic waste is best composted locally and used as fertilizer. Organic materials decomposing in landfills without oxygen produce methane, a major GHG and contributor to climate change.

Plastics are made from fossil fuels, through extraction and production processes that contribute substantially to GHG emissions. After short-term uses, plastic products are often incinerated as trash, creating additional GHG emissions and air pollution. Tons of plastic are improperly discarded, damaging the health of oceans, ecosystems and wildlife.

What's being done

Many larger and newer landfill sites have installed piping systems to capture the methane for on-site power generation.

A number of countries are taking steps to reduce the consumption and production of single-use plastics, and a new global treaty on plastics is under negotiation.

Recycling materials before they go to a landfill can help to reduce GHG emissions by reducing the need for virgin materials.

SDG 15 -- FORESTS, DESERTIFICATION & BIODIVERSITY

Did you know?

Forests contain about half the planet's terrestrial carbon. But in many countries, the ability of forests to act as carbon sinks is under threat from acid rain, drought, forest fires, illicit logging and conversion of land use for agriculture.

Desertification and land degradation can be caused by human activities like overgrazing and cutting trees for firewood, and also by climatic change and drought.

What's being done

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement, countries agreed to conserve and enhance carbon sinks, including forests. In 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted the UN Strategic Plan on Forests (2017-2030), which includes the target to increase forest area 3% by 2030. Many countries report on forest planting and protection programmes as part of their NDCs.

The Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel project, begun by the African Union in 2007 with China, aims to restore 100 million acres of degraded soils across 21 countries, generate 10 million jobs, and sequester 2.5 gigatons of carbon.

Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate -- and climate change has become an important driver of this decline. Countries that are parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have increased protected land areas from 12.7% in 2010 to 15.2% in 2020.

A new global biodiversity framework under negotiation includes proposals that by 2030, 30% of the planet's land areas and sea areas would be protected. It also calls for ecosystem-based approaches to contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change, to reduce CO2 emissions by at least 10 Gt per year.

COUNTRIES SHOW CLIMATE - SDG LINKS

Costa Rica has increased its forest coverage more than 50% since the 1990s (SDG 15), when it established a conservation programme financed in part by levies on fossil fuels, and supported by the World Bank. This Environmental Services Payment Programme, which has also significantly increased the country's CO2 sequestration, includes measures to give women and indigenous peoples more power to protect their lands (SDGs 5 & 10).

Nepal's NDC commitment submitted in 2020 outlines an ambitious plan to reduce energy-related GHG emissions during 2021-2030 by 23% below business as usual. The country committed to rapidly increase power generation from renewable sources such as hydro, solar, wind, and from bioenergy, to boost battery-powered public and private transport; and to help install up to 500,000 more fuel-efficient cookstoves and up to 200,000 household and 500 large-scale biogas facilities. This plan will not only help the climate (SDG13), but also

boost energy development (SDG7) and sustainable transport (SDG11), while bringing health benefits from reducing air pollution and household smoke (SDGs 3 & 5).

In **Kenya's** NDC commitment submitted in 2020, climate adaptation plans account for 71% of the entire NDC ten-year budget, an estimated US\$ 43.9 billion. It will have benefits across multiple SDGs, including to promote climate-smart agriculture and boost resilience of crops, livestock and fisheries (SDGs 2, 14 & 15), rehabilitate and conserve degraded forests (SDG15), and upgrade energy, transport, water supply and sanitation infrastructure (SDGs 6, 7 & 11). It also includes measures to benefit vulnerable social groups, such as women, youth and rural communities (SDGs 5 & 10). Kenya also increased its own financial commitment from zero to 13.2% of the projected cost.

Japan's small town of Osaki has become a national example of sustainable waste management practices. With no incineration facility in its district, the town established a sorting method of 27 categories called the 'Osaki system'. Before implementing the sorting method, the town generated 4,382 tons of waste and recycled only 35 tons. However, after implementing garbage sorting, the amounts of landfill waste and recycled waste reversed. In 2017, Osaki succeeded in reducing waste down to 708 tons and recycled as much as 3,187 tons. This method has helped enormously with waste minimization, resource recycling and safe landfill policies towards achieving responsible consumption and production (SDG12). The Osaki system can also have positive climate impacts by reducing GHG emissions from landfills and incineration, and by increasing the recycling of plastics and other materials, thereby avoiding emissions from production of virgin materials. Osaki also turns food waste into rich compost that is distributed to local farms, contributing to sustainable agriculture and zero hunger (SDG2). Today, the recycling rate in Osaki is over 83%, well above the national average in Japan, which is 20.4% (as of 2017).

Social media tags

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For more information

<https://www.un.org/en/climate-sdgs-conference-2022>

[*Raising Ambition in the Era of Paris+5 and Pandemic Recovery: Synthesis Report of Climate and SDGs Synergies Learning Series*](#) (United Nations, 2021)