

6th Global Climate and SDG Synergy Conference opens in Copenhagen

*Climate and development leaders and experts
aim to identify integrated solutions*

The Sixth Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergy opened on 27 May at UN City in Copenhagen, as hundreds of Government Ministers, climate envoys, senior UN officials, experts from think tanks and civil society activists gathered with the aim of advancing integrated solutions to the climate emergency and sustainable development crisis.

At the high-level opening today, speakers acknowledged the impact of current political and economic uncertainties on the deliberations. Among them was Mr. Navid Hanif, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, who spoke on behalf of UN DESA. He stated, "with pressures coming from all sides, let's seize the opportunity to make a transformative change in how we tackle the existential crises of climate change and sustainable development."

"Climate action and sustainable development are closely linked," stated Denmark's Minister for Green Transition, H.E. Mr. Jeppe Bruus. "The agreement on a Green Denmark focuses on solving the climate, environmental and biodiversity crises while at the same time building a sustainable and competitive agriculture and food industry. Strong partnerships are essential to success. I hope this partnership approach can inspire other countries."

National climate plans and finance can achieve synergies

One focus of the Copenhagen conference is to urge countries to integrate sustainable development goals into their national climate plans. "In the new national climate plans – NDCs -- due this year [under the Paris Agreement], all nations have an unparalleled opportunity to drive forward progress right across the SDGs, including better health, more jobs, economic inclusion and equality, and rising living standards," said Mr. Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change, in a statement. He called for countries to use these new, strengthened national climate plans "to integrate development priorities and climate action, and to create the blueprints for stronger economies, healthier societies, and more resilient communities."

Also high on the conference agenda is how climate and development finance can be scaled and aligned more effectively at the global and national levels, with the aim of creating greater synergies between the climate finance targets agreed last year at COP29 and the outcome of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), in Spain at the end of June. The Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action is engaged in this effort, which is critical as investment needed to tackle both climate change and the SDGs continues to fall short.

Other issues under discussion at the conference include how nature-based climate solutions can be designed to improve sustainable food production and healthy ecosystems, as well as how cities and coastal regions can promote local climate action that benefits the health, resilience and quality of life of their people.

