



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

HLPF 2015
#5

iisd Reporting
Services

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations
Online at <http://www.iisd.ca/hlpf/2015/>

Vol. 33 No. 14

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Thursday, 2 July 2015

HLPF 2015 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 1 JULY 2015

The 2015 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) continued on Wednesday, 1 July. Moderated discussions addressed: “The SAMOA Pathway—translating vision to action”; “Reaching out to the world—communicating the agenda”; and “Reaching out to the world—training and learning for sustainable development.”

“THE SAMOA PATHWAY: TRANSLATING VISION TO ACTION”

ECOSOC President Martin Sajdik, Austria, welcomed delegates to the discussion, stating that the HLPF is tasked with reviewing the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

Moderator Ronald Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and SIDS Issues, Seychelles, said that SIDS believe strong, intelligent partnerships are imperative for them to achieve sustainable development.

Azeema Adam, Governor, Maldives Monetary Authority, cited sustainable development hurdles faced by SIDS, including a lack of funding for infrastructure and difficulties in data collection to meet international obligations.

Ali’ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative to the UN, Samoa, reiterated the importance of spreading the SIDS’ message through a strong, clear voice in relevant processes, including FfD3, the post-2015 development agenda and climate change negotiations, to accelerate the SAMOA Pathway’s implementation. He suggested holding SIDS partnership dialogues rather than SIDS days, to reinforce and create new partnerships rather than only “talking to each other.”

Andrew Downes, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of the West Indies, Barbados, noted the higher education sector has a strong role to play in meeting the challenges faced by the SIDS, such as declining rates of economic growth, high costs of energy and transport, and specific vulnerabilities such as climate change. Through, *inter alia*, training, and knowledge creation and sharing, he said, universities and colleges can contribute significantly to the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

Ben Glass, CEO, Altaeros Energies, highlighted the natural fit of mission-driven startups and small and medium enterprises to address unique challenges faced by SIDS. Supporting the proposal of a SIDS global business network, he stated that such a network is a good opportunity to connect companies around the world to provide valuable solutions.

Discussant Gustavo Fonseca, GEF, expressed the GEF’s continued commitment to the SIDS agenda, underscoring the importance of partnerships to support implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. To deliver the SDGs, he said it is important to identify gaps for partnerships, streamline the SAMOA Pathway into the post-2015 development agenda, and harmonize, *inter alia*, modalities and indicators.

Florence Pignolet-Tardan, Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, La Réunion, France, stressed the value of regional cooperation and exchange, suggesting the establishment of regional bodies that can review country-level actions. She further outlined the importance of examining what is meant by progress and the need to take human-centered approaches.

In the ensuing discussion, participants said the HLPF should be a forum for reviewing and following up on the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the SAMOA Pathway, identifying gaps and realizing the commitments made. They also urged for partnerships’ impact and effectiveness be assessed.

Delegates also discussed: SIDS as a special case for sustainable development; concrete, durable partnerships built on trust and accountability; a SIDS forum within the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP); and integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction policies.

Delegates further raised: the potential of global events as opportunities to raise awareness about the seriousness of the problems faced by SIDS; SIDS need for, and access to finance; the importance of embedding renewable energy and natural resource management in SIDS in the post-2015 development agenda; building SIDS’ disaster preparedness, risk management, and resilience capacity in the face of climate change; the Green Bridge Partnership Programme; the need for a fair and ambitious deal for future generations; the need to strengthen regional cooperation; capacity building for children and youth; and how to address the “middle income trap” issue faced by many SIDS.

“REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD: COMMUNICATING THE AGENDA”

ECOSOC Vice-President Oh Joon, Republic of Korea, opened this session, saying that the post-2015 development agenda must be communicated so that it inspires and gives hope to “all walks of life, and all creatures in all countries.”

Moderator Cristina Gallach, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, outlined the role of the UN Department of Public Information in communicating the

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Olivia Freeman, Sandra Gagnon, Ph.D., Kate Louw and Anna Schulz. The Digital Editor is Francis Dejon. The Editor is Pamela Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James “Kimo” Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the European Union, the Government of Switzerland (the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)), and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2015 is provided by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Funding for translation of the *Bulletin* into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Wallonia, Québec, and the International Organization of La Francophonie/Institute for Sustainable Development of La Francophonie (IOF/IFDD). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022 USA. The ENB team at HLPF 2015 can be contacted by e-mail at <anna@iisd.org>.



<http://enb.iisd.mobi/>

post-2015 development agenda, presenting a short video showing options available to them. She said that it is a multilingual operation using multiple channels that engages celebrities and charismatic figures of civil society to spread messages.

Francis Lorenzo, Honorary President, South South News, underscored learning from the past to communicate the agenda in the future. He highlighted the importance of media in this role, and the need to build capacity so that journalists have the necessary tools to undertake this task and ensure unified messages.

Grammenos Mastrojeni, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, called for leveraging interlinkages between the SDGs to communicate how they relate to individuals and their identified communities. He stressed the complicated agenda can be made simple by effectively communicating “what is good for me is good for my planet and what is good for my planet is good for me.”

Mitchell Toomey, Director, Millennium Campaign, noted past experiences engaging the global community at the citizen level through the Millennium Campaign. He highlighted combining direct civil society engagement and multimedia tools to generate two-way communication of global issues at local levels.

Noting constant competition for time, David Droga, Founder, Droga5, said the SDGs must be translated into something interesting and tangible for the public. He highlighted ways to create an emotional connection and rally people, noting how powerful publicity campaigns, such as the ALS ice bucket challenge, can change narratives.

Edith Lederer, Associated Press, said that of the whole, huge and complex post-2015 development agenda, the most difficult part to sell is the SDGs’ name. She urged delegates to tell a story that ordinary people can actually understand, noting the 17 goals and 169 targets will be a “very hard sell.”

Discussant Maria Melinda Ando, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, for WOMAN, stressed the need for transparency, accountability and access to information, in particular access to the internet for the four billion people still offline in the developing world. She also highlighted the importance of gender equity, inclusiveness, participation and free, prior and informed consent.

Mary-Jane Ncube, Transparency International Zimbabwe, stressed the importance of communication in simple terms so that it is understandable by all groups. She emphasized reaching youth, as this group is most able to advocate for transparency and the accountability of their leaders.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates addressed: “repackaging” SDGs; underscoring the interlinkages of the SDGs; recognizing the “global brand” is not applicable at the local level; using communication as a tool for inclusion and transparency; communicating a joint message that could include presenting the SDGs as solvable, inspiring and something that needs to be addressed incrementally; using social media as a form of communication, especially to reach youth; leveraging communication to maintain HLPF participation over the next 15 years; highlighting the successful agreement by 193 states of the SDGs; communicating the SDGs effectively, not just the agenda; and recognizing the importance of local and national ownership of communication to change mindsets.

Discussion also highlighted that the agenda should be comprehensive and understandable for youth from all backgrounds and integrated in school curricula, and underscored the importance of grassroots advocacy.

In closing, the panelists said the post-2015 development agenda is an agenda of the people and governments must find ways to turn it into local conversations. They also said that there is a need for a chain reaction towards participation.

“REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD: TRAINING AND LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”

Opening the session, ECOSOC President Sadjik said training, learning and education should ensure actions and decisions are informed, based on evidence and reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Moderator Jafar Javan, Director, UN System Staff College, noted the opportunity to deepen the understanding of the roles of education and training. He said the session would focus on ways to ensure training institutions have the capacity to build awareness on sustainable development and how interdisciplinary learning can contribute to SDGs’ implementation.

Hans Winkler, Director, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Austria, described the institution’s curricula. He noted the importance of reaching legislators and parliaments, as well as activists, and of finding the right balance between a sound academic basis and practical skills.

Romain Murenzi, Executive Director, The World Academy of Sciences, noted that science training institutions in developing countries and LDCs are inadequately equipped to support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

Marianne Beisheim, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Germany, outlined the role of partnerships for implementing the post-2015 development agenda, saying that they must be bottom-up, needs based, and engage with local communities “right from the start.”

Discussions considered: facilitating learning and training through partnerships; recognizing the importance of access to education; supporting tertiary education through south-south cooperation; using informal education; linking training programmes with green job creation, especially for youth; recommending using ECOSOC’s forum to develop criteria for partnerships; and keeping training and learning on the agenda. Furthermore, discussions addressed the role of the HLPF, including: reviewing partnerships; facilitating sharing of experiences; and providing training for partnerships.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The Wednesday morning session on SIDS saw many SIDS’ champions present, getting ready to discuss progress on implementing the SAMOA Pathway. The hope was that, in addition to assessing implementation progress, the session would also make SIDS’ case to ensure that their concerns are still addressed in a dedicated session when the HLPF functions are decided on.

In contrast to previous SIDS sessions, some SIDS’ representatives noted that the HLPF delegates present were from a wider range of member states and stakeholders. One delegate expressed hope that the general message underscoring partnerships would resonate and ensure a place for discussion on SIDS in the HLPF going forward. Others noted the ongoing negotiations and new potential fora for engagement, such as the Multi-stakeholder SIDS Partnership Dialogue and a proposed SIDS Platform under the ACP, with some cautioning against assigning specific roles to the HLPF, saying that, for now, discussions on HLPF functions should be more general.