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## Summary of the Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies Between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: 20 to 21 July 2022

Governments are at a critical point with respect to implementation of key agreements on climate and sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, are already at the mid-point of their implementation period, which goes to 2030, yet achievements are lagging. At the same time, countries have identified their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), under the Paris Agreement on climate change, which spell out what they will do to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.

In this context, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) convened this conference, which was hosted by the Government of Japan. The two days of high-level and multistakeholder talks focused on ways that action on both climate and sustainable development can be mutually supportive.

During a high-level segment, ministers and senior leaders affirmed their commitments on climate and sustainable development. Throughout the two days of talks, many speakers highlighted the urgency for action, as a heatwave in Western Europe made headlines during the week, and conflicts in Ukraine and other trouble spots continue.

The conference highlighted the wide range of actions being taken by governments, businesses, and civil society to address climate and sustainable development objectives—from ski resorts wanting to ensure snow seasons continue, to municipal authorities acting to reduce energy and food waste, as well as promote circularity in local economies. Many participants identified the co-benefits that can be derived from action to limit GHGs, such as better public health outcomes and more appealing urban environments.

Highlighting the synergies and gains to be made by tackling climate and sustainable development challenges in a coordinated manner, the conference also identified steps that countries can take in their national reporting. Countries' NDCs, submitted to the UNFCCC, and Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), presented to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable



Development (HLPF), can reference actions that are relevant across both agreements. Several speakers noted that quantifying the co-benefits can help build support for action and counter the perception that climate mitigation is somehow too expensive. They also highlighted the relevance of other multilateral processes, including the impending adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework—delayed during the global pandemic—and action on desertification and the Ocean.

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The conference was also an opportunity for participants to meet in person after a series of online events in 2021. Convened from 20-21 July 2022 at the UN University (UNU) campus in Tokyo, Japan, and joined by 2,000 online participants from more than 100 countries, the conference sparked deep discussions during multistakeholder panels and special events, as well as promoted a coordinated agenda for implementation.

### A Brief History of the Climate-SDG Synergies Conferences

The adoption in 2015 of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change established a foundation for coherent implementation of climate action and sustainable development objectives across all levels and sectors. The multiple interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement suggest that integrated and synergistic implementation of both would lead to many benefits.

Bearing this in mind, UN DESA and the UNFCCC Secretariat jointly organized a global conference on strengthening synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement from 1-3 April 2019 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Conference sought to identify specific examples to illustrate the potential of synergistic and interlinked approaches, analyze gaps and challenges, and offer recommendations for strengthening synergies, increasing ambition, advancing implementation action, maximizing co-benefits, stimulating multistakeholder partnerships, ensuring effective use of resources, and avoiding duplication.

UN DESA and the UNFCCC decided to make the conference an annual event, but the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted plans to hold a second conference in person in 2020. Instead, UN DESA and UNFCCC, with the cooperation of the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), co-convened three webinars and launched an e-learning course on the theme of “Harnessing Climate and SDGs Synergies.” The webinars and course outlined options for synergistic policy interventions in different sectors using an integrated nexus approach.

### Report of the Climate-SDGs Synergies Conference

This meeting report of the Third Climate-SDGs Synergies Conference covers the multistakeholder dialogue, high-level segment, and special events that took place on the first day, followed by a fireside chat, six parallel sessions and a summing-up session at the close of the second day.

#### *Multistakeholder Dialogue: Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned*

This session juxtaposed “eye-opener” updates on the status of implementation of global goals, with a series of brief statements or “elevator pitches” by individuals from business, civil society, and local authorities, describing practical actions they have taken toward those goals. The Government of Japan, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Fukushima Prefecture, and several UN bodies convened this session on Wednesday morning, 20 July. Mana Saza, Director, SWITCH Association of Sustainability, moderated the session.



Koichiro Matsumoto, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Shinji Onoda, IGES, noted that, at the current pace, the SDGs cannot be achieved before the 2060s or 2070s. He said the 2.7°C temperature rise projections for this century have dimmed hopes of achieving the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C goal.

Koichiro Matsumoto, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, kicked off the meeting by condemning Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which, he said, has exacerbated the food and energy crisis, making it impossible to achieve the SDGs. He expressed Japan’s readiness to host the 2023 G7 Summit in Hiroshima. He also reported on Japan’s efforts to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

**Eye-Opener High-Level Talks:** Kaoru Nemoto, Director, UN Information Centre, discussed the power of strategic communication for social transformation. She reported that recent surveys have shown that though 90% of Japanese are aware and understand the SDGs, 41% are “lukewarm” with respect to implementation. She said doom and gloom messaging is making people numb and leading to loss of interest in the possibilities for action. To counter this, she urged efforts towards engagement for action. She highlighted the [SDG Media Compact](#), which seeks to leverage media organizations to accelerate progress towards achieving the Goals.

Kazuhiro Yoshida, Mayor of Namie, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan, reported that the city’s reconstruction after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake has involved a transition to renewable energy. He drew attention to the Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field, which has been the world’s largest hydrogen



Kazuhiro Yoshida, Mayor of Namie, Fukushima Prefecture, Japan



Sheila Oparaocha, Director, ENERGIA Network

production facility since 2020. He also highlighted introducing fuel cell vehicles as official vehicles for Namie city.

Sheila Oparaocha, Director, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy, said countries' current NDCs show climate action has concentrated on economic sectors with little effort on the social pillar of sustainable development. She proposed a people-centered, multistakeholder approach such as that of the SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy) Technical Advisory Group, which, she said, is creating energy interlinkages and producing relevant policy briefs on progress.

**Elevator Pitch on Climate-Driven Actions:** Chikako Miyata, All Nippon Airways, discussed how her airline works with the entire aviation industry toward decarbonization and use of sustainable aviation fuel, and zero waste, while promoting biodiversity conservation.

Goro Komatsu, Executive Director, Protect Our Winters Japan, discussed how his organization brought together skiers and snowboarders to promote climate action and education while engaging local communities in Japan's skiing and snowboarding, areas such as Hakuba Nagano.

Josephine Opoku Boateng, United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), discussed how climate change and biodiversity can be tackled at the grassroots level through sustainable procurement initiatives.

Wei Chin Teoh, IGES Bangkok, provided specific examples from the pilot stage of the [Association of South East Asian Nations \(ASEAN\) SDGs Frontrunner Cities Programme](#) to illustrate how cities can drive climate action while promoting green, clean urban development and the SDGs.

Kazuhiko Takemoto, President, Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan, made concluding comments, underscoring the important role of cities in addressing climate change and promoting the SDGs.

**Elevator Pitch on SDGs-Driven Actions:** Hideki Akimoto, Hakuba Happo-One Winter Resort, highlighted his company's actions to prevent degradation of the ski environment, for example, by allowing cattle grazing on ski slopes, composting tourism-related food waste, electric vehicle charging areas, and procurement of local products.

Hitomi Asashi, Executive Director, SDGs Picture Book Promotion Association, explained that the books published by the

Association are not only for children, but can inspire action by anyone.

Mirus Ponon, Founder and CEO, ASEAN Youth Advocates Network, described his work in promoting ecological solutions and encouraging young people to "make advocacy a lifestyle." He noted his organization has impacted 200,000 ASEAN youth, has 250 volunteers, and is working towards a "One ASEAN" Youth Community.

Simon Olsen, IGES, noted the Asia-Pacific region is likely to achieve only 10% of the SDGs by 2030, and that the international community overall is on track to achieve the SDGs by 2065, not by 2030. He called for increased efforts toward sustainability, saying this is still treated as an add-on, rather than a priority. He said the countries that currently rank high in the global SDG indexes, such as Japan, Republic of Korea, and Scandinavian countries, may be doing so based on consumption intensity, which, in turn, has an impact on climate; thus, he called for consumption-based accounting across both rural and urban supply chains.

Kazuhiki Takeuchi, IGES President, called on participants to "localize and materialize" the ideas presented in the session, and to consider how to engage the younger generation.

**Elevator Pitch on Nature-Driven Actions:** Hans Joosten, Greifswald Mire Center and an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advisor, presented on the role of peatlands and their influence on climate. He explained that the draining of peatlands for agriculture has negative impacts for carbon emissions, and called for recovery measures to include "rewetting" of peatlands.

Mitsuyo Toyoda, Sado Island Center for Ecological Sustainability, Niigata University, highlighted the successful reintroduction of the toku, the Japanese crested ibis, through a community effort to restore the coastal areas of Sado Island.

Anais-karenin, visual artist and researcher, Brazil, recounted her efforts to recover the traditional knowledge of her ancestors, through a study of medicinal herbs and learning the practices of forest communities in restoring ecosystems, noting these may help change humanity's current situation.

Kotoko Yadomaru, President, Change Our Next Decade, cited findings of the Fifth Global Biodiversity Outlook on the importance of enhancing sustainable use to achieve biodiversity conservation and, consequently, the SDGs. She reiterated the need to strengthen climate-SDGs synergies through effective involvement of youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Imelda Dada Bacudo, Co-chair, Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA), made concluding remarks, saying there is a need to step back and realize the potential of solutions from nature.

**Harvesting Session:** Summing up, Kazuhiko Takemoto said governments play an important role in providing direction for multiple stakeholders, who in turn should provide feedback on implementation. Kazuhiko Takeuchi reported that multistakeholder participation ensures intergenerational equity. He further noted that a sense of urgency and hope is needed in



**Maimunah Mohd Sharif**, Executive Director, UN Human Settlements Programme

addressing climate-SDG synergies. Imelda Dada Bacudo urged supporting coordination and removal of bureaucratic barriers in different sectors and agencies. She further called for efforts to ensure agri-food systems are not left behind.

### **Welcome Ceremony and Special Events**

On Wednesday evening, biwa player Tomoyoshi Kakushin opened the ceremony with a musical performance. Sawako Shirahase, Senior Vice-Rector, UNU, and UN Assistant Secretary-General, welcomed participants, noting the conference is taking place near the midpoint of implementation of the 2030 Agenda while the world faces multiple global challenges threatening the achievement of both the SDGs and Paris Agreement goals.

**Launch of the First 26 “Decarbonization Leading Areas” in Japan:** Tsuyoshi Yamaguchi, Minister of the Environment, Japan, introduced the Ministry’s sponsored initiative, noting he had asked two mayors to discuss their activities as good examples of the initiative.

Kazumi Inamura, Mayor, Amagasaki City, Japan, discussed efforts to create a zero-carbon park for the city’s popular baseball team and to use it to promote decarbonization to its citizens and as a model for other Japanese sports complexes to emulate.

Mitsugi Takenaka, Mayor, Kamishihoro Town, Japan noted his small town has used livestock waste to generate power since 2019 and more recently has promoted solar power generation, the use of electric vehicles, and other decarbonization efforts, which he hopes other Japanese municipalities will follow as a model.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN Human Settlements Programme, noted that while cities are large carbon emitters, they are also hotbeds for innovation. She said the 2030 Agenda cannot succeed without more actions to decarbonize cities, and “the battle to achieve the SDGs will be won or lost in cities.”

Mahadi Che Ngah, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, described how his city’s partnership with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and IGES since August 2019 has spurred several low-carbon development initiatives, including solar power projects, a bicycle and pedestrian network, new neighborhood

parks, improved waste management, and general encouragement of a low-carbon lifestyle.

Kobie Brand, Regional Director, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability – Africa, congratulated Japan for the Decarbonization Leading Areas initiative, saying ICLEI believes the most successful approach to sustainability is to engage local governments.

### **Conference Opening and High-Level Panel**

This high-level segment, which took place on Wednesday and was moderated by Yuka Tanimoto, Editor-in-Chief of Forbes JAPAN Web, convened under the theme, “Advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and accelerating the transition to a carbon-neutral economy.”

**High-Level Statement:** In opening remarks, Tsuyoshi Yamaguchi, Minister of the Environment of Japan, reported that Japan is strengthening climate action to create a decarbonization domino effect that will extend beyond its borders. He further reported on green transition bonds worth USD 157 billion to support finance investment to achieve a carbon-neutral society.

**Co-Convenors’ Statements:** Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said achieving climate-SDGs synergies can yield direct economic gains of USD 26 trillion through 2030. He highlighted, among others, the need to invest in renewable technologies to increase jobs and bring about social and economic benefits of clean energy.

Ibrahim Thiaw, Acting Executive Secretary, UNFCCC, reported on ongoing extreme weather, particularly drought in Europe due to climate change. Strengthening synergies, he emphasized, will require collaboration among relevant multilateral environment agreements, particularly the UNFCCC, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

**Special Messages:** Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, highlighted that 2022 marks the seventh anniversary of both the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. She said climate resilience requires digital connectivity to spur economic growth, and urged speeding up technologies, and maintaining a sense of urgency to realize the SDGs.



**Tsuyoshi Yamaguchi**, Minister of the Environment, Japan



**Abdulla Shahid**, President of the 76th Session of the UNGA

Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, said resilience to climate change is key for sustainable development. He called for addressing bottlenecks that are hampering successful intergovernmental negotiations by using the SDGs as a common binding thread for all joint actions for the environment.

Alok Sharma, UNFCCC COP 26 President, reported that the historic [Glasgow Climate Pact](#) took global decarbonization efforts a step further by driving an agreement to revise and strengthen UNFCCC parties' emissions targets to align with the Paris Agreement by the end of 2022. He highlighted G7 leaders' commitment to kick off a new partnership on infrastructure investment to support global green energy growth, including support for high-quality financing for vital infrastructure.

Jayathama Wickramanayake, UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, said climate justice is important for tackling inequalities in SDG implementation. She said youth are not just the future but the present, and called for their involvement in the formation and implementation of actions, as well as creating spaces for amplifying youth voices in the climate-SDGs synergies.

**Moderated Panel Discussion with Distinguished Stakeholder Representatives: Raising Ambition on Climate Action and the SDGs:** Hoesung Lee, Chair, IPCC, summarized key messages from the IPCC's three most recent reports. He said we know how to halve global emissions by 2030, but, to do so, we have to act now and close the gap in financial flows, provide clearer signals from governments, and strengthen regulatory instruments. "There is no time for half measures and lip service," he added.

Sandra Wu, Chairperson and CEO of Kokusai Kogyo Co. Ltd., and UN Global Compact Board Member, described the Compact's [Science Based Targets](#) initiative on emission reductions by companies. She noted that over 3,000 companies have set targets, half of which have been verified, but said this is "just a drop in the bucket" given the number of companies globally.

Vibha Dhawan, Director General, The Energy Research Institute, India, reviewed India's efforts to provide 50% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030, and to convert 25% of



**Kazuhiko Takeuchi**, IGES President

its fleet to electric vehicles. She urged making the technologies involved more accessible, and ensuring human resources are available to aid deployment and service those technologies.

Sheila Oparaocha, Director, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy, said studies have shown that the interlinkages between SDGs have yet to be fully addressed. She called for a people-centered, multistakeholder approach to planning for SDG and climate actions, more focus on building resilience, and translating official development assistance and climate finance pledges into real-time grants and investments that are inclusive.

Mirus Ponon, Founder and CEO, ASEAN Youth Advocates Network, introduced his work and urged all present to be "ready to reimagine and hope for the best."

Kazuhiko Takeuchi, President, IGES, presented the Institute's work in supporting both the IPCC and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and collaborating on technology transfer with India and the Philippines. He called for further developing science-based discussions.

**Remarks of Distinguished Leaders: Climate and SDG Synergies – Charting a Roadmap Towards 2030:** Costas Kadis, Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Cyprus, highlighted Cyprus' climate action plans and a vision for cooperating with other countries in the region.

Adrián Peña, Minister of Environment, Uruguay, also presented his country's actions.

Mohamed bin Mubarak bin Daina, Special Envoy for Climate Affairs and CEO, Supreme Council for Environment, Bahrain, highlighted Bahrain's goal of reaching net zero emissions by 2060. He expressed hope the pandemic recovery period will be an opportunity to drive progress.

Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN and Chair of the Group of 77 and China, said strengthening synergies will require significant transformation in agriculture, energy, and industry. He highlighted involvement in the Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative, which is supporting SDG implementation by enhancing finance, technology, and capacity building.

Walton Alfonso Webson, Permanent Representative to the of Antigua and Barbuda to the UN and Chair of the Alliance of

Small Island States, said synergies should focus on phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, which would lead to a 10% reduction in global emissions. He also urged the UNFCCC to create a facility to address loss and damage, noting SIDS should no longer face consequences of GHG emissions that they have not produced.

Iordanca-Rodica Iordanov, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Moldova, urged discussions on financial mechanisms to promote sustainable development. She called for collaboration and drew attention to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which recognizes voluntary cooperation in implementing NDCs. She also reported her country's involvement in the Clean Development Mechanism.

Yūji Kuroiwa, Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, discussed application of the principle of *inochi*, which means life, in order to promote societal wellbeing. He noted the goal is not to create a society where no one dies or gets sick but a society where people smile, support each other, and laugh. *Inochi*, he said, can be achieved by addressing medical care, food, energy, and a sustainable environment, all which align with the SDGs.

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, said countries in her region have made achievable carbon neutrality targets. She urged speed and scaling up of actions including through synergies with all SDGs.

Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Europe, reported that SDG 13 on climate action is not on track to achieve any of its targets, and called for stepping up climate resilience measures.

Qu Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), noted the need to transform agri-food systems to achieve resilient sustainable development. He called for investment in science and innovation as key accelerators of sustainable development and drew attention to the FAO's Science and Innovation Strategy, which can support this endeavor.

Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), said climate change is part of the triple planetary crisis that also includes pollution and biodiversity loss. Deploying nature-based solutions, she noted, can contribute to cutting emissions, reducing zoonotic diseases, and increasing

food security, among others. Solutions to the triple planetary crisis, she added, underpin achieving the SDGs.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary, CBD, said the global biodiversity framework set to be launched at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 15) at the end of 2022, is a script for transforming society's relationship with nature and ensuring living in harmony with nature by 2050. She described the framework as a roadmap that is both supportive of and complimentary to the Paris Agreement, as each target addresses drivers of biodiversity loss, including climate change.

Pointing out that the world is increasing, rather than reducing, carbon emissions, Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Acting High Representative, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States, said the cost of that failure is life-changing and life-threatening for the world's most vulnerable countries. She called for the international community to deliver finance, science and technology, and capacity building to these countries.

Woochong Um, Managing Director-General and Officer-in-Charge, Vice President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development, Asian Development Bank, noted the Bank's ambition to provide USD 100 billion in cumulative climate finance between 2019 and 2030, and its commitment to support just clean energy transitions and Paris Agreement alignment that leaves no one behind.

Mami Mizutori, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), said its [Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022](#) projects that disasters could increase 40% by 2030 if the Sendai Framework on DRR is not implemented, which would also impede achievement of both the SDGs and Paris Agreement goals. She urged "courageous, transformative" steps to implement the Framework.

Sanda Ojiambo, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Global Compact, said the private sector has a vital role to play in climate action, and businesses, especially those in the G20, must take the lead. She said the Global Compact offers the tools companies need to play such a



**Qu Dongyu**, Director-General, Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN



**Elizabeth Maruma Mrema**, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity

role and urged more firms to join the Compact and set ambitious science-based reduction targets.

Keiji Nishizawa, Chair, Keidanren Committee on Responsible Business Conduct and SDGs Promotion, and Chairman, Keidanren Committee on Nature Conservation, recalled past efforts of Keidanren to promote integrated approaches to climate change, biodiversity protection, and sound material cycles. He highlighted the 2021 Carbon Neutrality Action Plan, the May 2022 proposal on Green Transformation, and Keidanren's "Society 5.0 for SDGs" initiative to guide investments toward achievement of the SDGs.

### ***Fireside Chat: Main Messages from the Conference Background Note***

On Thursday, participants resumed their discussions, beginning with this session in an interview format as Sheila Oparaocha, Executive Director, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy, posed questions to Junichi Fujino, IGES.

Discussing the process of compiling the conference background note, "Building the evidence base for synergistic action in support of raising climate and SDGs ambition," Fujino reported inputs from a 30-member technical committee covering a wide range of areas. He noted the task taken up by IGES was to ensure the content reflects the issues and provides preparatory information on the objectives, outcomes, and focus.

Oparaocha expressed appreciation for the note's content, saying it is comprehensive and expresses some of the most important issues regarding the urgency for SDG action, and the need for boldness, partnerships, and multistakeholder collective actions.

### ***Parallel Sessions***

Following the fireside chat, six sessions convened on Thursday afternoon, running three at a time in parallel.

**Implementing a Nexus Approach Across Key Sectors and Policy Areas:** Bahareh Seyedi, UN DESA, moderated this session.



Moderator **Bahareh Seyedi**, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs



**Maria Neira**, Director, Public Health and Environment, World Health Organization

In her keynote statement, Mamphele Ramphele, Co-President, Club of Rome, said transformation is not possible in a world based in competition and divisions between the haves and have nots. She urged using existing knowledge to make choices based on truth, freedom, justice, respect for life, love, and peace.

During the panel discussion, Somya Joshi, Stockholm Environment Institute, highlighted [Trase](#), an online toolkit and platform for supply chain transparency, which enables traceability of consumption and ecological footprints.

Jan Vapaavouri, former Mayor of Helsinki and senior advisor on urban development, Finland, said city planning for sustainability entails delivering promised land to citizens, and ensuring it is "smart," resilient, safe, and functional.

Maria Neira, Director, Public Health and Environment, World Health Organization, said solutions for clean energy, urban planning, and consumption and production patterns can generate immediate benefits for human health.

Hitesh Vaidya, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs, India, noted climate action is viable only when it supports economic development. Building capacity, he emphasized, is a crucial element to ensure integration, synergies, and engagement of practitioners at all levels.

Chioma Agwuegbo, Executive Director, TechHerNG, Nigeria, said building women's and girls' capacity for entrepreneurship, including training in digitization, is essential to ensuring they are not left behind in sustainable development.

Imelda Dada Bacudo, Co-Chair, GACSA, said the promotion of affordable practices in agri-food systems has various levels of success, but measuring the benefits is a challenge.

Wataru Suzuki, International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative Secretariat, on behalf of the CBD Secretariat, emphasized the need to address biodiversity alongside energy management in production landscapes. He cited the Satoyama Initiative's focus on socioecological landscapes as a beacon for progress in this area.

**Ensuring Just Transitions, Enabling Empowerment and Enhancing Knowledge and Skills:** Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi, Director, UNU-IAS, opened this session by noting the lack of social dimension coverage in most NDCs and climate mitigation plans. He highlighted existing evidence gaps on synergies and trade-offs in sectors such as transport, industry, and agriculture.



Parimita Mohanty  
Parimita Mohanty, United Nations Environment Programme

In a keynote presentation, Debora Ley, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Lead Author of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, discussed how the IPCC assessed synergies and their impact on mitigation and adaptation options in its Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C.

María Antonia Gwynn Ramírez, Member, Governing Council, Itaipú Binational, discussed how the Itaipú Dam generates clean energy, while the binational management company promotes electric vehicles, sustainable water management, and reforestation of the Atlantic Forest.

Moustapha Kamal Gueye, International Labour Organization, stressed that climate and SDG ambition is about people, not numbers. He urged social dialogue that includes workers and trade unions in decision making about climate change, SDGs, and energy transition.

Parimita Mohanty, UNEP, urged:

- mapping stakeholders and their interests and capacity needs;
- “hand holding” target groups that need encouragement and support to ensure their voices are heard and that they have opportunity to participate in decision making;
- creating cross-sectoral platforms that spread best practices and promote peer-to-peer learning and learning-while-doing; and
- ensuring all relevant stakeholders are included in all policy- and decision-making processes to create buy-in to the resulting outcomes.

Yasuko Kameyama, University of Tokyo and National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan, cautioned that each country must find its own balance in addressing synergies and trade-offs that fit their own unique national circumstances. She also called for more public discussion of intergenerational equity aspects of climate action and the SDGs.

Kulwant Singh, President, KSS Institute of Spatial Planning and Environmental Research, and CEO, 3R Waste Foundation, India, discussed successful and unsuccessful examples from India's efforts to implement the SDGs. He urged special efforts to empower weaker sectors, particularly the impoverished, to participate in decision making and implementation.

Kelly Takaya King, Council Member, Maui County, Hawai'i, US, called for greater effort to define climate action and the SDGs in ways that help citizens understand how they affect daily

life. She also urged a dialogue on circular economy and how it ties to climate action, and the long-term socioeconomic benefits it can bring.

Kathy Nothstine, Nesta Charity Foundation, UK, discussed Nesta's efforts to engage technology developers with municipal stakeholders, including affected communities, to ensure innovation for “smarter” cities will match identified needs and take into account any security, privacy, and trust concerns. She urged development of more platforms that help cities share knowledge with each other about new technological applications.

**Forging Partnerships for Synergetic Action:** Vibha Dhawan, Director-General, The Energy Research Institute, India, moderated the session.

In a keynote address, Hans Olave Ibrekk, Special Envoy on Climate and Security, Norway, warned of climate security risks, noting that climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities, especially in a fragile context. He called for a greater emphasis on “the climate transition,” including shorter-term targets by 2030, in addition to long-term 2050 or 2060 net zero targets.

Todd Litman, Executive Director, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, Canada, highlighted the need to correct existing planning distortions and highlighted the possibility of win-win solutions, citing co-benefits, such as reduced traffic and parking congestion, public health, and improved mobility for non-drivers.

Ana Rovzar, Renewable Energy Solutions for Africa Foundation, emphasized the importance of an enabling environment for working with stakeholders.

Doris Edem Agbevivi, Energy Commission of Ghana, noted less than 2% of funding and investment in renewable energy goes to African countries, and highlighted her organization's partnership with C40 Cities and its circulation of almost half a million energy-efficient fridges. She called for climate action plans to be paired with strategic implementation plans that consider national contexts.

Christine He, Global Forum on Human Settlements, China, cited some pre-conditions for successful partnerships, including that they should be equal and sustaining, and result in policy integration.

Parisa Kloss, Executive Director, Resilient Urban Planning and Development, Germany, highlighted the need for nature-



Kathy Nothstine, Head, Future Cities, and Coordinator, Climate-Smart City Challenge, Nesta Charity Foundation, UK

based solutions and action plans at the grassroots level to resolve barriers, including institutional, resource and technology barriers.

Dhawan concluded that solutions are not “either/or,” and that different modes of transportation will likely persist as infrastructure development is a long process. She called for technology sharing, noting technology needs to be indigenized for use in local conditions.

**Overcoming Barriers: Financing, Technology and Innovation:** Yasuo Takahashi, Executive Director, IGES, moderated the session.

In a keynote address, Venkatachalam Anbumozhi, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, noted policy barriers, long-term capital recovery periods, and instability of consumer markets are the main obstacles to mobilizing private-sector finance in sustainable development initiatives.

Kumi Kitamori, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, highlighted that member countries’ spending on pandemic recovery with positive environmental impacts amounted to 33% of all recovery spending, but that public spending on environmentally-harmful activities, such as fossil fuel subsidies, canceled out some of the gains.

Alisher Mamadzhonov, Green Climate Fund, estimated that the Paris Agreement’s goal of mobilizing USD 100 billion for climate action is likely to be met by 2023. He mentioned the Fund’s work in: promoting an enabling environment for climate action; investing in innovative technologies; mobilizing financing at scale; and aligning finance with sustainable development.

Baysa Naran, Climate Policy Initiative, UK, argued that climate finance, taking into account both public and private sources, is still lower than environmentally-harmful subsidies and must increase by at least 600% to adequately address the issues.

Jane Burston, Executive Director, Clean Air Fund, UK, highlighted the benefits of climate action for air quality and public health, noting that air pollution has a disproportionate impact on children and people living in poverty.

Other speakers highlighted action on biodiversity by companies, investments in renewable energy and support for youth as the leaders who will design solutions, and the potential for the technology sector to reduce its own carbon footprint.

In concluding remarks, Eric Zusman, IGES, drew attention to Japan’s “circulating ecological sphere” approach to embracing circularity at the local level, noting its strong potential.



Rohini Kohli (UNDP)

Rohini Kohli, UN Development Programme



Jim Skea, Co-Chair, IPCC Working Group III

**Harnessing Climate-SDG Synergies and Co-Benefits While Closing the Ambition Gap:** Moderator Leena Srivastava, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, opened the session, noting that linkages between climate action and the SDGs are recognized by governments, but the institutional mechanisms to ensure their operationalization remain weak. She said the perception of trade-offs is usually stronger than that of synergies, whereas in most cases both are relevant to setting policy.

Sergey Kononov, UNFCCC, said the Glasgow Climate Pact recognized that the climate and biodiversity crises are linked and have contributed to the implementation of several SDGs. He called for more coordination at the national level of policies on degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change consistent with the SDGs.

Alexander Dyukarev, Ministry of Economic Development, Russian Federation, cautioned against pursuing climate action that may undermine other SDGs, such as energy access.

Jim Skea, Imperial College London, and Co-Chair, IPCC Working Group III on Mitigation of Climate Change, noted:

- reduced fossil fuel use will bring many co-benefits, especially for human health;
- better land use will bring many SDG benefits, particularly relating to food systems; and
- ensuring a just transition is important, but a broader conversation is needed to define what “just transition” means.

Rohini Kohli, UN Development Programme, said governments need to demonstrate that climate action is central to development, and can do so through their NDCs and adaptation planning exercises. She also highlighted the huge funding gaps for realizing NDCs.

Kazuhisa Koakutsu, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, noted the Glasgow Climate Conference decision on guidance on cooperative approaches, referred to in Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, requires biennial reporting on environmental, economic and social impacts, and on how nations promote and consider obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women, and intergenerational equity.



Yukari Takamura, Professor, Institute for Future Initiatives, Japan

Deo Gabinete, NDC Partnership Support Unit at the UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Center in Bangkok, Thailand, described how the NDC Partnership is enhancing NDCs and accelerating implementation in nearly 80 developing countries, and helping many of them set long-term strategies.

Stephen Dräxler, German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ), described his agency's participation in a joint programme, the [NDC Transport Initiative for Asia](#), which is seeking to cap GHG emissions in the region's transport sector while addressing additional co-benefits. He said such co-benefits must first be clearly identified, and a process developed to involve diverse local stakeholders in defining roadmaps for the Initiative.

Yukari Takamura, Institute for Future Initiatives, University of Tokyo, suggested the World Bank and regional development banks could lead the way to model how climate and SDG synergies can be accounted for in projects they fund, and how best to mobilize public participation in defining policies to promote such synergies.

**Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV):** Chun Kyoo Park, Head, UN Office for Sustainable Development, moderated this session.

In a keynote address, Zitouni Ould-Dada, Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment, FAO, provided perspectives on scaling up climate action in land use sectors. He said the MRV process needs to enable collaboration that goes beyond data collection and measurements, and, for example, balances food production and environmental sustainability.

Via video message, Héctor Arce Benavides, Director, National REDD+ Strategy, National Forestry Finance Fund, Costa Rica, said forests must deliver real benefits for emission reductions, as well as economic benefits to communities to address poverty and other SDGs.

Kanako Morita, Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute, Japan, noted that even though MRV is mostly used in the context of GHG emissions, it has application for the private sector to track progress, and address trade-offs, while avoiding greenwashing.

Paulina Rebeca Cárdenas Moreno, National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change, Mexico, urged enhancing communication among sectors to break silos. She reported

successes in involving multiple stakeholders and applying diverse indicators in Mexico's VNRs to the HLPF.

Mozaharul Alam, UNEP, said although climate action is embedded in the SDGs, showing progress is hindered by the fragmentation of data and information systems.

Miriam Medel Garcia, UNCCD, said MRV should incorporate multiple land uses, including agriculture and forests. She reported on PRAIS4, developed by the UNCCD, that incorporates geospatial data in reporting.

### ***The Way Forward: Profound Transformation Is Needed, Possible, and Beneficial for All***

During this session, participants heard take-away messages from the six parallel sessions, including: considerations of how "imagining an integrated approach" can help design real-life steps; the value of short- to medium-term targets, rather than waiting until 2050; and the need for partnerships to benefit all parties.

Youth representatives then presented their proposal to delegates on "Designing a New Norm for a Sustainable Society Through Synergistic Strategy," and requested its inclusion among the major outcomes of climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development conferences and meetings.

**Conference Summary:** Bahareh Seyedi, UN DESA, reported that the meeting was attended by about 2000 participants from over 100 countries. Presenting key messages from the conference, she highlighted that:

- ramping up action on synergies between climate action and the SDGs is needed now more than ever;
- win-win outcomes for these synergies can be achieved through deliberate action;
- engaging a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, and integrated planning with local governments, would catalyze progress;
- a just transition to net-zero emissions and leaving no one behind is critical, and must include women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and youth; and
- enhancing capacities to identify opportunities and overcoming barriers, such as financial and technical challenges, are prerequisites for action.

**Closing Session:** Hiroshi Ono, Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, reported that Japan would continue to disseminate the conference outcomes, including at the upcoming G7 Summit in 2023 in Hiroshima, Japan, and at the third "SDG Moment" of the Decade of Action during the UN General Assembly in September.

Shen Xiaomeng, UNU Vice-Rector in Europe and Director of the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, noted that concepts such as *inochi* in Japan, *buen vivir* in Latin America, and *ubuntu* in Africa are fundamental in understanding our need for harmony with Mother Nature. She said hope is important as it gives us the power of imagining a utopian future.

Takeuchi Kazuhiko, President, IGES, urged accelerating efforts to achieve ambitious biodiversity goals for a nature-positive future by 2030. In parallel, he said actions to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 must be prioritized. These initiatives, he

added, should not force societies into hardships but rather they should provide opportunities for resilience and prosperity.

Minoru Takada, UN DESA, urged decisive and transformative action to address planetary crises with urgency and ambition. He concluded by saying “we all need to step up and play a part,” and closed the meeting at 18:07 JST.

## Upcoming Meetings

**Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Fifth Intergovernmental Conference:** This session will continue to negotiate, and possibly agree on, an international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. **dates:** 15-26 August 2022 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** [un.org/bbnj/](http://un.org/bbnj/)

**SDG Moment:** The third SDG Moment of the Decade for Action to deliver the Global Goals will convene as part of the 77th session of the UNGA. **dates:** September 2022 (TBD) **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** [un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdg-moment](http://un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdg-moment)

**Transforming Education Summit:** The UN Secretary-General will organize this event as part of the 77th session of the UNGA. **dates:** 19 September 2022 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** [un.org/en/transforming-education-summit](http://un.org/en/transforming-education-summit)

**2022 World Bank Group/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meetings:** These Annual Meetings will include the meetings of the joint World Bank Group/IMF Development Committee and the IMF International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC). The Development Committee and the IMFC advise the Boards of Governors on issues of global concern, including the world economic outlook, poverty eradication, economic development, and aid effectiveness. **dates:** 14-16 October 2022 **location:** Washington, DC **www:** [worldbank.org/en/meetings/splash/about](http://worldbank.org/en/meetings/splash/about)

**Seventeenth Group of 20 (G20) Summit:** The 17th Group of 20 (G20) Heads of State and Government Summit will take place under the Indonesian Presidency, focusing on the theme “Recover Together, Recover Stronger.” **dates:** 30-31 October 2022 **location:** Bali, Indonesia **www:** [g20.org/g20-presidency-of-indonesia/](http://g20.org/g20-presidency-of-indonesia/)

**UN Climate Change Conference 2022:** The 27th session of the COP (COP 27), the 17th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, and the fourth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement will convene during this conference. **dates:** 7-18 November 2022 **location:** Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt **www:** [unfccc.int/cop27](http://unfccc.int/cop27)

**Plastics INC-1:** The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, is tentatively scheduled to begin its work. **dates:** 28 November – 2 December 2022 (TBC) **location:** Uruguay **www:** [www.unep.org/events/unep-event/Intergovernmental-Negotiating-Committee-end-plastic-pollution](http://www.unep.org/events/unep-event/Intergovernmental-Negotiating-Committee-end-plastic-pollution)

**Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:** This meeting will take place just prior to the CBD COP to continue negotiations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. **dates:** 3-5 December 2022 **location:** Montreal, Canada **www:** [cbd.int/meetings](http://cbd.int/meetings)

**UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP 15):** This meeting includes the 15th meeting of the COP to the CBD, the 10th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the 4th meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing. The meetings are scheduled to take place to review the achievement and delivery of the CBD’s Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. It is also expected to take a final decision on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as well as decisions on related topics, including capacity building and resource mobilization. **dates:** 7-19 December 2022 **location:** Montreal, Canada **www:** [cbd.int/meetings](http://cbd.int/meetings)

**HLPF 2023:** The 11th session of the HLPF will take place to review implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. **dates:** July 2023 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **www:** [hlpf.un.org](http://hlpf.un.org)

For additional upcoming events, see [sdg.iisd.org/](http://sdg.iisd.org/)

## Glossary

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
GACSA	Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture
GHGs	Greenhouse gases
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IGES	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MRV	Monitoring, reporting and verification
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UN DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNU	UN University
UNU-IAS	UN University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability
VNR	Voluntary National Review