

Fifth Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda: 7 and 12 July 2022

Gathering in New York City for the first time in person, following almost three years of the COVID-19 pandemic, participants attending the Fifth Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) Forum reflected on the impacts of interconnected crises: the global COVID pandemic; climate change; and wars, including in Ukraine, resulting in food, energy and supply chain disruptions, and forced migration. Since LRGs have been at the forefront of responding to these crises, they have also developed innovative ways to protect the most vulnerable members of society to recover from these multiple crises through, among others, implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In his opening remarks during the Ministerial Segment of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), Abdulla Shahid, UN General Assembly (UNGA) President, noted “there is hope.” Part of that hope lies in the role that LRGs can play to bring about practical solutions. LRGs can help “steer the ship away from the harmful practices that have put us on a self-destructive path...and to fully seize the historic opportunity for a profound transformation, renewal and reset...” as called for by UNGA President Shahid.

Fittingly, this special high-level event took place alongside the 2022 HLPF and stressed the importance of localizing action towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a particular focus on the SDGs in review in 2022: SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 14 (life below water), SDG 15 (life on land), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The theme of the Fifth LRG Forum on the 2030 Agenda was: “Fostering the achievement of the SDGs from the ground up towards the 2023 SDG Summit.” The forum showcased actions taken by LRGs for the SDG implementation, while also pointing to challenges and potential solutions and highlighting recommendations.

The event highlighted actions taken by LRGs to accelerate SDG implementation by emphasizing the link between local public service provision and education as a lever to address inequalities, the key role women play in local leadership, and the importance of LRGs in protecting nature and biodiversity. It also emphasized how, as the closest level of government to the people, LRGs have been playing a key role for many years in fostering peace and building bridges between communities and guaranteeing that their perspectives are reflected within policymaking at all levels.

The sessions were delivered in a hybrid format, the first session on 7 July took place online and featured panels on: voluntary local reviews (VLRs) and voluntary subnational reviews (VSRs) as key policy tools for the SDGs; and multilevel governance and multi-stakeholder collaboration. The second session took place in person on 12 July at UN Headquarters in New York, US. It featured panels on: local public services and policies fostering achievement of the 2030 Agenda; and localization at the forefront in the context of the SDG Summit 2023, where the mid-term review of the SDGs will take place.

Many participants noted local governments have been facing the effects of multiple global crises, from the global COVID-19 pandemic to climate change and wars, including in Ukraine. They also pointed to lessons learned from supporting the most vulnerable segments of the population, such as children, women, elders, people with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples, while pointing out that the latter also hold knowledge that is key to sustainable development. Others stressed the importance of driving forward the SDGs at the local level, and emphasized

In This Issue

Brief History of the UCLG Congress and LRG Forum . . .	2
Report of the Fifth Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda.	3
Opening of the Forum.	3
VLRs and VSRs as Key Policy Tools for Achieving the SDGs.	4
Moving Beyond Reporting: Multilateral Governance and Multi-stakeholder Collaboration	4
Opening of In-Person Meeting	5
Local Public Services and Policies Fostering Achievement of the 2030 Agenda	6
Looking Towards the SDG Summit with Localization at the Forefront	7
Closing	7
Upcoming Meetings	8
Glossary.	8

that cities have become platforms for the future of sustainable development.

Many referred to the importance of VLRs and VSRs as essential tools to measure progress towards achieving the SDGs, urging their integration with monitoring and planning processes. Participants also considered how the disaggregated data in VLRs can help increase focus on SDG implementation gaps that may have been overlooked by national authorities. Others discussed the value of VLRs in shaping local budgetary and urban planning policies to better align them with the SDGs and the HLPF cycle, and how increased public participation could hone local budgets to citizen needs.

Participants stressed the importance of engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders, including women, youth, and the private sector, to develop tailored strategies and plans for local implementation of the SDGs according to these stakeholders' needs and priorities. Participants provided examples of local service delivery effectively integrating the SDGs and many welcomed hearing local success stories to help inspire and accelerate best practices among LRGs. Others urged interaction between multiple levels of government and with the UN, including using the upcoming SDG Summit in 2023 to reflect on what has been done and what needs to be done.

Participants considered how action at the local and regional levels can serve as a catalyst for SDG implementation. Some pointed out that LRGs are the first line of defense in times of crisis and are at the forefront of SDG implementation, which is why their practical experience integrating different aspects of SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) with other SDGs could inform national and global decision makers. Many called for LRGs to have a place at the table in national and global decision making on the SDGs.

The event was co-organized by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN-Habitat, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, and the Local 2030 Coalition.

Brief History of the UCLG Congress and LRG Forum

UCLG was founded in 2004 to ensure subnational and regional governments and other local authorities have a voice in the international processes that are defining the sustainable development and climate change agendas. Since its creation, UCLG has been bringing together city and local government representatives around common issues affecting subnational jurisdictions and defending the interests of local governments on the world stage.

UCLG Founding Congress: In May 2004, mayors, councilors, and elected city, local, and regional representatives gathered in Paris, France, to establish the UCLG Congress. The final declaration of the founding Congress addressed sustainable development, globalization, decentralization and local democracy, cooperation, diplomacy, and world health.

Second UCLG Congress: At UCLG's second Congress, held October 2007 in Jeju, Republic of Korea, participants discussed

the consequences of urbanization, cooperation with regions, and challenges of tomorrow's city. The final declaration lays out commitments on global warming and environmental protection, human rights, peace and development, and the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, a policy paper on local finance was approved.

Third UCLG Congress: First World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: In November 2010 in Mexico City, Mexico, the first World Summit convened in conjunction with UCLG's Congress, adopting a document titled, [The City of 2030 – Our Manifesto](#). The Manifesto lays out the common goals of local leaders and their determination to make the urban world a better place.

Fourth UCLG Congress: Second World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Held from 1-4 October 2013 in Rabat, Morocco, the second World Summit celebrated the centenary of the international municipal movement and allowed participants to debate and exchange views on the most vital issues for subnational authorities and partners. The Summit's outcome document, the [Rabat Declaration](#), recognized the need to address change, innovation, and the issue of just societies by reinforcing bottom-up governance under the leadership of inclusive LRGs.

Fifth UCLG Congress: Third World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: The third World Summit convened from 12-15 October 2016 in Bogotá, Colombia, under the theme, "Local Voices for a Better World." The Summit approved the [Bogotá Commitment and Action Agenda](#), which provides a guide for LRG actions in the follow-up to the third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). It contains recommendations on: subnational contributions to achieving the SDGs and other global goals; reforming national legal, institutional, and policy frameworks; and securing LRGs' rightful place at the global table, especially in terms of global governance, international financing, and decentralized cooperation.

First LRG Forum: The first LRG Forum met on 16 July 2018, on the sidelines of HLPF 2018, in New York, US, to discuss LRG engagement in the preparation of voluntary national reviews (VNRs) and integrated territorial planning to achieve the SDGs. The Forum also promoted VLRs for city and regional levels that include the development of accountability mechanisms.

Second LRG Forum: The second edition of the Forum convened on 24 September 2019, in New York, during the [SDG Summit](#). The Forum considered the theme, "Connecting global ambition and local action." It included sessions on: triggering the transformation needed to address the climate challenge; good practices and experiences on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the local level; and commitments for accelerated SDG implementation.

Sixth UCLG Congress: Fourth World Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Held from 11-15 November 2019 in Durban, South Africa, the 2019 Summit approved the Durban Political Declaration, [Envisioning the Future of Our Renewed International Municipal Movement](#). It also approved, for the

first time at a UCLG Congress, a compendium of integrated policy recommendations resulting from a six-month consultation process with diverse stakeholders, which offered bottom-up continent- and region-specific priorities.

Third LRG Forum: The third Forum took place virtually, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 13 July 2020 on the sidelines of HLPF 2020. The event focused on the theme “The Decade of Action—bolstering change from the ground-up.” It also highlighted LRG actions to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers emphasized the importance of multilevel governance, sound local finances, decentralized cooperation, and territorial cohesion in the post-COVID-19 era.

Fourth LRG Forum: LRGs convened for LRG Day and a two-day LRG Forum on the sidelines of HPLF 2021. The fifth [Towards the Localization of the SDGs report](#), prepared by the Global Taskforce of LRGs, highlighting sustainable and resilient recovery driven by cities and territories, was presented during LRG Day. During the forum, delegates deliberated on the LRG Joint Statement to HLPF 2021, reflecting the need for a safe, green, and just post-pandemic recovery that addresses inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic.

Report of the Fifth Local and Regional Governments Forum on the 2030 Agenda

Opening of the Forum

On 7 July 2022, Emilia Saiz Carracedo, UCLG Secretary General, opened the Fifth LRG Forum on the 2030 Agenda, and thanked the co-organizers of the Forum: UNDP, UN DESA, UN-Habitat, the Global Task Force of LRGs, and the Local 2030 Coalition. She highlighted the importance of localizing action on the SDGs to effectively meet the challenges of the multiple crises and to accelerate action towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director, underscored the importance of local action to provide viable solutions to global crises since their effects are felt at the local level. She said the COVID-19 pandemic is a full-fledged socio-economic crisis, requiring collective solutions and actions, particularly considering that local governments have lost 20 to 50 percent of revenue. She indicated that global crises, like



Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator

biodiversity and climate change, have forced many people to flee their homes. She stated that success depends on empowerment of LRGs and their capacity to adapt and overcome these challenges. She emphasized that progress has been made in localizing the SDGs since the number of VLRs has tripled in the past two years, resulting in transformation from the bottom up through local innovation and increased global dialogue. She urged renewed commitment and local action to make progress in the lead up to the 2023 Summit of the Future proposed by the UN Secretary-General.

Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, referred to the food, energy, and supply chain crises because of the global pandemic and the war in Ukraine, resulting in forced migration. He called for local and municipal action on multiple fronts, including the provision of basic services. He also suggested nature-based solutions for cities' challenges to meet the SDGs, including green infrastructure and alternative means of public transportation. He concluded that cities have become platforms for the future of sustainable development at UN agencies.

Berry Vrbancic, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada, and UCLG Governing President, said that, in Canada, local governments aim to be stewards of the land and, as such, recognize the value and contribution of the traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. He noted that local governments have been managing multiple global crises, emphasizing that their interconnected impacts require collective action. He acknowledged the value of the



Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director



Berry Vrbancic, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada, and UCLG Governing President

[UNGA High-level Meeting on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda](#), held in Accra, Ghana, in April 2022, the [World Urban Forum 11](#), and the SDG Summit in 2023. He highlighted the impact of the multiple crises on the most vulnerable segments of the population and the need to provide them with education and opportunities for skills-based training.

VLRs and VSRs as Key Policy Tools for Achieving the SDGs

This panel was moderated by Amson Sibanda, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, UN DESA, who stressed the need for more SDG localization and data collection.

Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay, welcomed work to ensure social cohesion and a human rights approach, including the rights of cities, form the heart of recovery from the global COVID-19 pandemic. She considered VLRs to be a basic tool at the local level to align with planning tools and indicators, and to strengthen dialogue with citizens.

Rachid El Abdi, President of the Regional Council of Rabat Sale Kenitra, Morocco, referred to the multiple crises caused by the global pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the increasing cost of living due to soaring inflation, calling for collective efforts to find innovative solutions from the ground up. He said VLRs are essential tools for work with stakeholders. He urged finding ways to enable people to live in dignity where they are, including through the provision of health, quality education, and sustainable infrastructure.

Jonan Fernández, Secretary General for Social Transition and Agenda 2030 of the Presidency of the Basque Government, Spain, said his government is committed to: planning, by engaging social contracts for the 2030 Agenda; evaluation, by aligning local indicators with international ones; and governance, by ensuring broad participation.

Belinda Gottardi, Mayor of Castel Maggiore, Italy, presented on her city's qualitative analysis, through case studies, and quantitative analysis, through local data collection systems.

Emilio Jatón, Mayor of Santa Fe, Argentina, said VLRs can help make local work visible and allow for its consolidation, by working collaboratively and learning from other experiences.



Luz Amparo Medina Gerena, Director of International Affairs at the Mayor's Office in Bogotá, Colombia

Luz Amparo Medina Gerena, Director of International Affairs at the Mayor's Office in Bogotá, Colombia, reported on her city's work on VLRs, including learning through communities of practice, and coordination with national reviews. She urged developing long-term policies for implementing the SDGs at the local level and use of participatory, democratic processes.

Lusanda Batala, Senior Sector Expert, National Planning Commission Secretariat, South Africa, said no development can happen without the local sphere of government, and that SDG implementation happens at the local level, which is closest to the people and can ensure no one is left behind. He urged learning from local responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including identifying vulnerable groups. He underscored: employing a whole of government approach; prioritization of resources; and leadership and accountability.

Veronica Hitosis, Executive Director, League of Cities of the Philippines, said VLRs can help build new relationships, between cities with aspirations to focus on the SDGs, and with national governments who can provide the necessary assistance, in terms of financial resources. She urged rational and practical prioritization of the SDGs and their further localization and awareness building.

Moving Beyond Reporting: Multilateral Governance and Multi-stakeholder Collaboration

This panel was moderated by Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat. He underlined that VLRs and VSRs have proven to be effective tools in integrating the SDGs into cities' strategies and budgets, as well as offering opportunities to revamp governance structures for more integrated multilevel governments. He noted that UN-Habitat was supporting this process in various ways, including by launching a VLR SDG dashboard that consolidates all VLRs across UN agency platforms.

Mahadi Che Ngah, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, explained that producing VLRs enables alignment of local objectives with national SDG objectives. She also referred to increased transparency through the creation of an effective platform to share information with other stakeholders.

Silvina Rivero, Minister of Coordination, Province of Córdoba, Argentina, pointed to a focus on social access and social development to address high levels of inflation and



Panel on Moving Beyond Reporting: Multilateral Governance and Multi-stakeholder Collaboration



Luisa Salgueiro, Mayor of Matosinhos, Portugal

unemployment. She said many of its multilevel government initiatives included food programmes for children and initiatives to target domestic and gender violence.

Luisa Salgueiro, Mayor of Matosinhos, Portugal, referred to the importance of nature-based solutions for development in coastal cities as highlighted during the [2022 UN Ocean Conference](#), held in Lisbon, Portugal, from 27 June to 1 July. She emphasized that community engagement was critical to adaptation measures and to promote and protect critical coastal economic sectors, such as tourism and fisheries. She said the challenge is to balance climate change with economic and social objectives through adequate planning

Victoria Alsina, Minister of Foreign Action and Open Government, Catalonia, Spain, urged improving community participation and strategic planning to engage youth and businesses towards common sustainable objectives. She called for applying the subsidiarity principle, according to which problems are addressed at the level where they have the greatest effect, and to network with other municipalities and regions.

Almudena Maíllo, Councillor of Madrid, Spain, and Secretary General of the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities, called for deepening relationships between different levels of government, from the local to the global levels due to their increasing interconnectedness. She indicated that UN agencies, including UN-Habitat and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, have recognized the importance of working together with local and national governments towards achievement of the SDGs.

Nicolás Justo, Mayor of San Justo, Argentina, spoke about the need for adequate urban planning to take advantage of synergies between different SDG objectives at the local level, including through green infrastructure and making the transportation grid more effective and efficient.

Jukka Mäkelä, Mayor of Espoo, Finland, underscored the importance of dialogue and engagement to achieve the multi-level, multi-stakeholder approach required for sustainable development. He indicated that VLRs can help create long-term engagement around sustainability objectives between people and their governments.



Emilia Saiz Carracedo, UCLG Secretary General

Alfonso Masso, Executive Secretary, International Affairs of the State of São Paulo, Brazil, noted his state has 45 million inhabitants, produces one third of the national GDP, and has the third largest consumer economy in Latin America, making its commitments with respect to the SDGs and climate change very significant. He pointed to initiatives involving the private sector resulting in environmental and socio-economic benefits and increased stakeholder involvement.

Opening of In-Person Meeting

On 12 July, UCLG Secretary General Saiz opened the second day of the Fifth LRG Forum on the 2030 Agenda, noting how LRGs are playing a key role in overcoming global interconnected crises through a multilevel government approach and multi-stakeholder network. She said LRGs have the potential to bring about innovative and practical solutions that could foster achievement of the SDGs from the local level towards the SDG Summit in 2023 and beyond.

Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th session of the UNGA, highlighted LRGs' role in providing some of the most essential services and infrastructure, all of which are critical to achieving the SDGs. He called for an urgent comprehensive response to the ongoing crises, including consolidation of multilevel governance and multi-stakeholder partnerships. He underscored the role of LRGs in achieving SDG 4 (quality education) adapted to local



Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly



Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General, UN DESA

contexts and SDG 5 (gender equality) through increased women's participation in local government. He also stressed LRGs' role in Ocean stewardship since much marine pollution originates from urban sanitation. He urged whole of society and whole of government approaches to SDG implementation to address their complexity and interconnection.

Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary General, UN DESA, urged action at the local and regional levels in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the food, fuel, and fertilizer supply disruptions caused by the combined crises. He added that one of the lessons learned at the HLPF, through VNRs, is that effective SDG implementation relies on the concrete application of policies and programmes at the local level. He said VLRs contain a remarkable collection of lessons that can be gathered and analyzed for increased understanding at the national and global levels. He explained that the UN is supporting the production of VLRs through guidelines and online capacity-building workshops and emphasized that LRGs can be formidable agents of transformation.

Berry Vrabonovich, Mayor of Kitchener, Canada, UCLG Governing President, called for a governance system based on empathy, care, and a collaborative approach, including through increased gender equality and empowerment through initiatives like the feminist municipal movement. He reported that VLRs have tripled in the past two years and VSRs have been produced in 14 countries, both of which serve as instruments for increased policy coherence and institutional coordination. He called for a true multi-stakeholder network and a multilevel governance structure to accelerate progress during the Decade for Action towards the 2030 Agenda.

Local Public Services and Policies Fostering Achievement of the 2030 Agenda

This panel was moderated by Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary-General, and UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, who stressed that local service delivery is important to achieving the SDGs. He noted that due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, human development had declined for the first time in 30 years.

Toshihiko Ota, Mayor of Toyota, Japan, urged all levels of government and business to work together. He said that in its VLR process, his city is monitoring and reviewing the SDGs based on three factors: governance, outputs, and outcomes.

Magnus Berntsson, Vice-President of the Regional Council of Västra Götaland, Sweden, welcomed the focus on local success stories to help inspire and accelerate best practices among LRGs, noting they are key to implementation on the ground.

Pablo Javkin, Mayor of Rosario, Argentina, recalled that the world's population is concentrated in cities. He said in 2020, the rate of extreme poverty increased for the first time in 30 years, making it even more important to provide services for the most vulnerable at the local level and to raise awareness of the SDGs at the local level.

Irací Hassler, Mayor of Santiago, Chile, said achieving the SDGs cannot just happen at the highest level; it must also happen at the neighborhood level, where people are returning to public spaces to reclaim their identity and to make such spaces more sustainable. She urged taking care of people living in the streets, and a new model for waste management in situ through recycling rather than sending garbage to rural areas.

Alberto Pereira Fernandez, Mayor of Campo Aceval, Paraguay, called for increased interaction between multiple levels of government and with the UN, where the international goals are being set, and to translate them back into local public policies. He said LRGs play a fundamental role in achieving the SDGs through inclusive action, based on data collection and analysis of progress made.

José Hila Vargas, Mayor of Palma de Mallorca, Spain, pointed out how public services became essential during the pandemic in meeting people's needs and urged planning for public transportation, housing, education, and health to integrate the SDGs.

Johnny Araya Monge, Mayor of San José, Costa Rica, referred to the upcoming UN Summit on the SDGs as a point of reflection on what has been achieved and what still needs to be done, considering the impacts of the global crisis over the last three years and the need to make up for time lost, by focusing on local action.



Dais during the panel on Local Public Services and Policies Fostering Achievement of the 2030 Agenda

Celeste Connors, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Green Growth and Co-Chair of the Local 2030 Islands Network, spoke about islands being at the frontlines of addressing climate change and pointed to synergies with SDG implementation. She urged political leadership, public private partnerships, and a long-term focus on implementation.

Looking Towards the SDG Summit with Localization at the Forefront

This panel was moderated by Lucy Slack, Commonwealth of the Local Governments Forum Secretary-General. She underscored the impact of LRGs in accelerating progress towards the SDG Summit and pointed to SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) as a lever for other SDGs.

Jan Van Zanen, Mayor of the Hague, the Netherlands, and UCLG Co-President, recalled the evolution of the LRG Forum, which now convenes as a special event during the HLPF. He said LRGs should be able to sit alongside key players due to their critical role as catalysts for action and change. In addition, he noted that while localization is at the forefront of the agenda, national governments also have a critical role to play and that different levels of government should be combining efforts.

Yousef Shawaeb, Mayor of Amman, Jordan, referred to urban strategies and plans as roadmaps for the development of smart cities. He spoke about the value of VLRs to identify gaps and the need to better align urban planning with the 2030 Agenda, including through increased quality of life with better public health and transportation systems aimed at leaving no one behind.

Pilar Díaz, Mayor of Esplugues de Llobregat, Spain, said strengthening municipalities' capacity to align local planning with the SDGs could increase policy coherence on strategic issues such as digital transformation and building increased resilience in vulnerable populations.

Turán Hançerli, Mayor of Avcılar, Turkey, pointed to the important lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, including that LRGs and citizen solidarity networks adapt more quickly to their context-specific situation and can respond faster than national authorities.

Sandra Pellegrom, SDG Coordinator, the Netherlands, said LRGs can contribute to finding practical means of integrating different aspects of a complex transformative agenda, because

sustainable development issues are addressed more immediately at the local level.

Valérie Dumontet, Vice-President Department of Aude, France, said LRGs are essential actors for achieving the SDGs in key areas, such as food and health, which are catalysts for social and economic development and increased resilience. She urged re-thinking the provision of food and basic services at the local level to advance human rights and wellbeing and reducing vulnerabilities.

Ingolf Dietrich, Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Germany, referred to international cooperation initiatives with the local governments of Oaxaca, Mexico, and in Georgia to integrate SDG considerations into local budgets and planning, allowing them to effectively prioritize government action.

Leendert Verbeek, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRA), stated that two-thirds of SDG targets and indicators can only be implemented at the local and regional levels, which is why capacity building and resources should be targeted to these levels. He reported that CLRA is preparing an additional protocol to the European Charter on environmental protection using inputs from LRGs.

Closing of the Forum

During the closing of the LRG Forum, UCLG Secretary General Saiz emphasized the need to develop different relationships through localization as a way of implementing the 2030 Agenda. She presented a video on Flipping the Script, showing how LRGs are making a difference.

Fabrizio Rossi, Secretary General, Council of European Municipalities and Regions, called the Fifth LRG Forum a declaration of hope and trust, reaffirming their determination as a global community to take action on the ground to face the complexities caused by the global pandemic, war, biodiversity loss, and land degradation. He reiterated the need for urgent action on the SDGs, which requires more resources, a critical assessment of current efforts, and engagement of local communities.

Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA, welcomed the guidance from LRGs on how to foster achievement



Dais during the panel on Looking Towards the SDG Summit with Localization at the Forefront



Emilia Saiz Carracedo, UCLG Secretary General; Maria-Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA; and Fabrizio Rossi, Secretary General, Council of European Municipalities and Regions

of the SDGs at the local level, including through priorities identified in VLRs and VSRs. She said by sharing information, LRGs play a crucial role in localization of the SDGs and addressing challenges. She concluded by stating that LRGs can count on support from international agencies like UN DESA. The Fifth LRG Forum was then adjourned.

Upcoming Meetings

Third Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies Between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The conference will be co-convened by UN DESA and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat and hosted by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, in partnership with the United Nations University and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies. The conference aims to build the evidence base for synergistic action to raise climate and SDGs ambition. **dates:** 20-21 July 2022 **location:** Tokyo, Japan **www:** ias.unu.edu/en/events/upcoming/third-global-conference-on-strengthening-synergies-between-the-paris-agreement-on-climate-change-and-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development.html

World Water Week 2022: Organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute, World Water Week 2022 will convene on the theme “Seeing the Unseen: The Value of Water,” and is built on a global need to not only see but also to understand the value of water. **dates:** 23 August – 1 September 2022 **location:** Stockholm, Sweden **www:** worldwaterweek.org

4th Meeting of the SAICM Intersessional Process: The 4th meeting of the Intersessional Process for Considering the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020 is expected to continue discussions on a possible post-2020 platform for chemicals and waste management. **dates:** 29 August – 2 September 2022 **location:** Bucharest, Romania **www:** www.saicm.org/Beyond2020/IntersessionalProcess/FourthIntersessionalmeeting/tabid/8226/Default.aspx

IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition—Water for smart, liveable cities: This World Water Congress and Exhibition will report on the water sector’s progress toward achieving the SDGs, with an emphasis on SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation). The event will also highlight and explore the interwoven relationship of water with all 17 SDGs. **dates:** 22 September 2022 **location:** Copenhagen, Denmark **www:** unhabitat.org/events/iwa-world-water-congress-and-exhibition-water-for-smart-liveable-cities

UN Climate Change Conference: The 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC will take place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. which will focus on implementation of the Paris Agreement and on the delivery of the various commitments and pledges made, including on the global goal on adaptation with implications for more resilient cities and human settlements. **dates:** 7-18 November 2022 **location:** Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt **www:** unfccc.int/cop27

UCLG 7th World Congress and Summit of Local and Regional Leaders: Convened by UCLG, this Congress will bring together the most influential local and regional leaders, councilors, local governments, partners, and actors involved in the decision making of city and community life. The meeting seeks to promote the values of local democracy and decentralization, support partnerships between stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, and increase alignment with the global agenda on sustainable development. **dates:** 10-14 October 2022 **location:** Daejeon, Republic of Korea **www:** www.uclg.org/en/media/events/uclg-7th-world-congress-and-summit-local-and-regional-leaders

Biodiversity Conference: The 15th meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the tenth meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the 4th meeting of the COP serving as the MOP to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization will convene face-to-face in December 2022. **dates:** 5-17 December 2022 **location:** Montreal, Canada **www:** www.cbd.int/conferences/2021-2022

For additional upcoming events, see sdg.iisd.org/

Glossary

HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
LRGs	Local and regional governments
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
VLRs	Voluntary local reviews
VNRs	Voluntary national reviews
VSRs	Voluntary subnational reviews

