United Nations Division for Sustainable Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Sustainable Consumption and Production

An expert group meeting in preparation for HLPF 2018:
Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies

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Advanced unedited version

<u>**Outcome: Key messages**</u>

Background
The Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) convened a two-day expert group meeting on sustainable consumption and production (EGM) , as part of its substantive preparations for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2018.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 on sustainable consumption and production, encompass the aim of implementing of the 10-year framework of programmes on SCP (10YFP), the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, the reduction of global food waste and waste generation, the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, sustainable practices and integration of sustainability information into companies' reporting cycles, and support for developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

This EGM aimed to contribute to the discussions of SDG12, through the consideration of interlinkages among SDG12 with other goals and topics, such as the complimentary implementation of SDGs and climate goals through, sustainable transport, ocean action, plastics and food loos and waste. It complements the extensive review process already undertaken of the 10YFP and the development of its new five-year strategy.

The meeting delivered a number of messages and recommendations for policy-makers to promote implementation of sustainable consumption and production.

Introduction:

- Progress of SDG12 is mixed. It is also one of the less developed SDGs in terms of monitoring and indicators, due to limited data availability.
- While many countries report having SCP supportive policies, tools and their knowledge base in place, there is little measurable evidence of their implementation, and, their impact.
- The goal is in many ways a microcosm of Agenda 2030. How we analyze it, and go about achieving it, will have consequences for the rest of Agenda 2030, both in terms of knowledge and direct impacts on individual goals and targets.
- The analysis of sustainable consumption and production must be based on holistic approaches, thinking through systems or product life cycles, understanding feed-back loops and spillover effects.
- It must be explicitly acknowledged and accommodated, that boundaries of our systems need not coincide with administrative, ministerial or territorial boundaries. Hence the scope of what individual actors can do is often limited, and existing governance or management structures need to adapt and become more open and collaborative.
- Within these systems, both low and high-tech technologies, can be of significant help.
- At the same time, the issues that SDG 12 is meant to address are themselves evolving and our analysis will need to be flexible and adaptable to new situations.

Interlinkages across the SDGs

- Progress has been achieved in analyzing interlinkages across goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in a more integrated and holistic way. Action must now move towards more systematic policy design, implementation and multi-stakeholder collaborations that can translate such understanding into concrete results.
- Models and scenarios that incorporate synergies and trade-offs can be useful in assessing alternative paths to the SDGs.
- All models and scenarios have limitations, but their development enables the discussion of interlinkages to become more concrete in the local context, allowing the aggregation of information from science and other stakeholders to the level of policymakers in a more transparent way. A balance between finding the 'perfect model' and one that is useful and responsive to the needs of policy makers, is important.
- Other challenges are also evident in different contexts. Some of the most common concern:
  - inadequate or poorly developed governance structures, for example in connecting across global, regional, national and local levels in the case of the food-energy-water nexus.
  - Limited motivation and a lack of practical toolkits (e.g. for valuation) to foster collaborations across sectors, departments and ministries.

- o Guidance towards the respective roles and responsibilities for public-private partnerships that incorporate learning from prior successes and failures.
  - o Aligning market-based incentives with desired investments that can effectively leverage interlinkages.
- Resolving such challenges could have transformative impacts. Some good principles to follow when analyzing interlinkages for decision making include:
  - o Relying on evidence based knowledge that draws upon empirical observation and scientific assessment. The knowledge building process itself can fuel the policy convergence process at various levels.
  - o Using this knowledge to set priorities for action.
  - o Prioritization and policy choices are context specific. Localizing our understanding of interlinkages in the unique context of each country or region is therefore important.
  - o Adjusting governance structures to reflect the interrelationships.
  - o Seek out high quality reliable data for decision making, if need be going beyond the formal global monitoring framework.
  - o Multi-stakeholder engagement to promote agency and ownership of the transformation. Different actors can contribute towards the outcome in ways that support each other.
  - o Communication, dialogue and learning are essential ingredients of working together in more effective ways.

Stocktaking of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production (One Planet Network), and the way forward

- Mainstreaming of SCP objectives into cross-cutting macro-policies are seen to perform slightly better than stand-alone macro-policies in terms of domestic investments, inclusiveness and monitoring. Prioritizing support to policy implementation is necessary to effectively achieve the shift to SCP and SDG 12.

- Fostering the application of knowledge and technical tools in support of SDG policies should include solutions such as policy toolkits, guidelines and manuals for practitioners, technical tools, trainings, monitoring instruments and examples of successful policies and practices. The One Planet can support such policy implementation.

- The adoption of new and improved practices have been primarily led by business organisations in the network. Prioritising identification of such practices and strengthening the engagement of businesses would enable the identification of further such innovations and solutions.

- Demonstrating the benefits of SCP through strengthened and strategic communications efforts is key to demystifying SCP, positioning it as an integrated approach to sustainable development and mobilizing the necessary political support for the shift to SCP.

- Ensuring coordination of country-level initiatives and efforts on SCP is key to delivering SDG12 and Agenda 2030.

- Monitoring of the shift to SCP across sectors, organizations and countries is essential to identify emerging trends and strategic gaps, demonstrate and showcase the benefits of SCP to build greater momentum for change, and to scale-up and replicate innovative and impactful practices.

- Financial resources to support actions that are transformational and at scale is a key factor in successful implementation. SDG 12 has been highlighted as the 'least well-resourced SDG' and the 10YFP has been identified as 'dramatically resource constrained'. The envisaged use by the 10YFP of a multi-partner trust fund provides a strategic entry point for channeling financial resources to catalyze and support the delivery of SDG 12.

- UN Statistics Division play a key role to play in facilitating a coordinated effort of UN custodian agencies for SDG 12, which could include streamlining methodologies, a centralized reporting system, joint awareness raising and capacity development.

- Strengthening existing partnerships for coordinated and integrated efforts towards is critical to the ambitious timeframe for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development. `

- The "One Plan for One Planet" is a strategy under the 10YFP to contribute to the shift to SCP over the next 5 years, by leveraging the diverse strengths of organizations committed to and acting on SCP for an effective delivery of SDG 12 and related Goals.

SCP and climate action
- SCP constitutes a useful lens through which to identify entry points for interventions that address both SDGs and climate goals.
- SDGs related to cities, land use, energy, manufacturing and service provide important climate mitigation opportunities linked to SCP.
- SCP activities create co-benefits mainly for energy, agriculture and water.
- Agriculture has a considerable ability for adaptation, and an important potential for mitigation, while safeguarding food security.
- Life-cycle and value chain approaches, together with sustainable natural resource management, resource efficiency and reduced use of hazardous materials, chemicals and waste generation, are complimentary approaches supporting both the climate and the 2030 Agenda.
- Reducing the impacts of cities, sustainable buildings, food losses and waste as well as rationalized fossil-fuel subsidies are areas where enhancements in NDCs could further support both agendas.
- The engagement with all stakeholders and, a strengthened engagement with the private sector is critical to SCP success, and ultimately its contribution to SDGs and climate goals.

- The private sector not only responds to market-based incentives, but also to gains in efficiency. Policies to enhance SCP for mutual climate and SDG benefits must be conducive to motivating the private sector to engage.
- Local and regional governments are important players in implementation of both agendas. Multi-stakeholder partnerships related to SCP should be encouraged and strengthened.
- The role of finance in achieving SCP while contributing to both SDGs and climate goals needs to be clearly articulated to ensure finance is leveraged to bring about an SCP transformation at scale.
- Investments should be made in circular and low-carbon economy approaches.

SCP and sustainable transport

Recommendations for the transport sector include:

- Ensure access for all through sustainable transport thus leaving no one behind.
- Develop a global plan for transport, such as the Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) initiative with its four objectives: equitable access, safety, efficiency, and green mobility.
- Address foreseen passenger traffic and freight volume increase (e.g. by 2030, doubling of air transport; running out of airspace; and, public space, are concerns), and their expected pollution levels.
- Develop quality service through multi-modal transport to move away from car use; offer multi-modal schemes in cities, alternative door-to-door solutions, all-inclusive service (car-sharing, bike etc.)
- Expand the market share of public transport, while recognizing the high implementation cost, but later savings and benefits.
- Reduce waste, recycle and reuse, in all modes of transport, e.g. tackling food waste in airplanes.
- Invest in ways to reduce environmental impacts of the transport sector (e.g. impact of infrastructure developments)

Promote SCP policies and regulations, such as through:

- Developing national programmes on SCP and connect them to incentive systems.
- Entice more countries to participate in ICAO Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation.
- Advance strategies to reduce GHG emissions related to transport (e.g. IMO GHG strategy).
- Encourage climate-friendly forms of mobility (e.g. reduce work travel, install safe biking lanes, introduce "bike highways").
- Offset air travel (carbon offsetting reduction scheme; carbon tax on flight tickets e.g.).
- Increase life span of aircraft components and strengthen the life cycle of aircrafts and their components (safety first, waste management strategy, green airport concept).

- Develop global standards for extraction of raw materials; facilitate fair access and sustainable management of mineral resources.
- Strengthen ecological responsibility of the mining sector along the supply chain (e.g. by minimizing mine inputs and waste; implementing environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes).

Enhance the means of implementation, such as through:
- Recognizing the importance of global initiatives, e.g. SuM4All or the Worldin2050, and their role in bringing different actors together.
- Exchange best practices.
- Form partnerships around carbon offsetting (e.g. Sahel region).
- Address problems caused by division of responsibility between national and local authorities, and bring actors together around solutions.
- Establish inter-ministerial working groups, networks and competence centers.
- Address lack of data for certain transport-related SDG targets and indicators (e.g. SDG 11.2).
- Include rural transport, in domestic sustainable transport initiatives.
- Influence consumer behavior (e.g. excessive car use), building where possible, on positive trends in large cities where car use has decreased.
- Recognize public transport as a public task, which requires adequate resources.

SCP and Ocean Action
- It is important to recognize the full potential of the ocean for achieving SDG 14 and other ocean-related goals, including SDG 12.

- The ocean is under pressure from existing uses, such as shipping and fisheries, as well as new and emerging activities, in combination with impacts of climate change and ocean acidification.

- To address these threats, various tools and approaches, including area-based management tools, such as marine spatial planning, for maximizing cross-sectoral cooperation, should fully be utilized.

- Many ocean actions relating to SCP have been taken, including the successful introduction of the ban on the use of plastic bags in several countries in recent years. The level of capacity in scientific, legal and policy aspects varies from one country to another. Thus, there is a need for capacity-building to ensure leaving no country behind.

- Interlinkages between many of the SDG 12 targets and ocean action are clearly recognized. Action to achieve SDG 12 assists with achieving conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, whereas action to achieve SDG 14 and other ocean-related goals also contribute to achieving SDG 12. However, information necessary for leveraging co-benefits, especially accurate data, is limited.

- Understanding interlinkages would facilitate prioritization of ocean action in each country, which should be done in a manner not to marginalize powerless people and groups, in view of potential trade-offs among goals and targets.

- The Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy, to be held in Nairobi from 26 to 28 November 2018, provides a good opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable blue economy, including SCP, bringing together Member States, civil society, academia and other stakeholders. It was suggested that a session on sustainable value chain on blue economy would contribute to generating synergies between action for SDG 12 and one for SDG 14.

- The importance of public-private partnership has been recognized, including collaboration between legislators and the private sector. However, engaging diverse stakeholders, such as large companies and small-scale fishers, simultaneously presents a major challenge. It is also important to engage consumers to influence their behavior.

- Consider how to enhance potential benefits of collaboration between different communities of practice (e.g., coral reef protection, tourism and the fisheries sector can be linked with sustainable food production).

- The Communities of Ocean Action, launched to follow up on Ocean Conference voluntary commitments, and communities of practice related to SDG 12 should be brought together, to avoid duplication and break silos, together with the financing sector.

- HLPF provides an excellent opportunity to bring together these various communities. To maximize benefits of collaboration, it is necessary to map out various ongoing activities in related fields and seek out possible synergies.

- Since seafood production tends to be a linear supply process in view of the use of wild stocks, consideration should be given to moving toward circular economy in this field.

- It is important to give incentives for sustainable natural resource management. In this regard, certification schemes, such as standards and labels, are concrete and impactful tools.

- Efficient use of natural resources (e.g., matching production and consumption to avoid waste) is also important.

- Many of the issues related to SCP in the ocean are linked with each other. For example, sustainable tourism has an influential role to play in relation to the sustainable management of natural resources (e.g., through hotels and restaurants).

SCP and Plastic Pollution in the Ocean

- Rapidly increasing plastic production, in combination with its limited recycling, is causing grave concern about the further leakage of plastics in the ocean. Accelerated action is and impact both the achievement of SDGs and climate goals.

- Plastics in the ocean derive from various sources and pathways, such as coastal area-based, river-based and sea-based. Fishing nets constitute substantial portion of plastics in the ocean.

- It is important to ensure collaboration among stakeholders, e.g. the business community, fishers, NGOs and consumers. SDG target 14.1 is successfully bringing together communities of practice. Key elements for success include partnership, awareness-raising and advocacy, private sector leadership, incentives and ownership.

- A policy change relating to plastics in one country may have significant impact on another country. Hence, monitoring the life-cycle of production factors and products is essential.

- Measurable and actionable data is crucial. Data from small-scale communities is often missing and need further attention.

- Cost-effective monitoring may be pursued by using data from clean-up activities and remote-sensing, in combination with enhanced research and development, as well as the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy.

- Blockchain is a useful tracking tool in the context of life cycle management, and waste tracking in the ocean.

- Many useful tools are available to address plastic pollution in the ocean, covering the entire process of SCP.

- In some cases, there is a need for policy-makers to consider stringent legislative action. In some other cases, the issue can successfully be addressed through voluntary measures, rather than a legislative approach.

- There are many treaties dealing with waste, including the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, as well as non-legally binding instruments, such as UNEA resolution on marine litter and microplastics.

- As legislative action and the multilateral process take time, other action is needed in the meantime, including engaging both retailers and consumers (e.g., a plastic-free aisle in a supermarket).

- SIDS face distinct challenges in waste management. Collection of data for environmental targets, such as those for SCP, is particularly challenging. In this regard, capacity-building is critical to SIDS, as well as to other developing States.

SCP and food loss and waste

- There is an urgent need to rethink food systems and value/food chains and combat their inefficiencies (e.g. surplus). This includes:

  o Seeing food waste and loss reduction as an entry point into systems thinking.
  o Take a systemic approach to find bottlenecks.
  o Apply circular economy principles.
  o Consider shortening the supply chain (e.g. short distance to consumer of local products).
  o Tackle food loss and waste reduction at critical loss points (i.e. points in food supply chain where losses and waste are highest such as for example harvest and storage for grains.
  o Consider linkages between food loss/waste reduction and food production; consider interlinkages with other SDGs.
  o Change current food system focus (e.g. unhealthy food in developed countries).
  o Keep in mind that recovery and redistribution of food that is fit for consumption to the hungry, must not be equated to feeding food waste to people.
  o Consider gender perspectives.

- SCP policies and regulations in support of food systems should focus on:
  o Establishing leakage prevention policies in the food system.
  o Use labeling for consumers: recovery/recycle processes.
  o Impose taxes or bans to reduce food loss and waste.
  o Establish diversion policies - redistribute and divert waste to other useful streams.
  o Apply good harvest and post-harvest handling practices; reduce loss in farm production.
  o Install "Premium for quality" fee to be covered by consumer - not only for exports, but also staple crops (value local production: consumers advocacy).
  o Establish food loss and waste accounting and reporting standards.
  o Review product expiration date policies to facilitate food donations.

- Use data to better inform policy-makers and investors (Measurement and data of critical importance to support sharing of good practices, drive improvement, focus resources and investments to address challenges associated with food loss and waste and better inform policy development).
- Monitor impact over time, e.g. through the Global Food Loss Index and /or the Global Food Waste Index.
- Raise awareness and make consumers aware of the value of food, incl. costs associated with waste, impact on the environment and resource use in production.
- Educate citizens, in particular children, so that they think of food differently.

- Improve knowledge of farmers to minimize waste in production and facilitate access to market.
- Achieve behavior change of all stakeholders in food supply chain (e.g. producers, agri-business stakeholders, hospitality sector, consumers) through consumer campaigns, use of social media, regulatory change, etc.; influence consumer behavior by changing what is available to them; call upon the social responsibility of citizens and private sector; encourage (nation-wide) voluntary actions.
- Target the hospitality sector given its global outreach and influence (e.g. reduction of hotel buffet plates).
- Share information through Communities of Practice (e.g. FAO Community of Practice on Food Losses)
- Support means of implementation by:
    o Providing access to technologies, technical support and funding (e.g. dry and cool storage).
    o Provide affordable, reliable and clean energy sources, rural electrification, adequate transport and infrastructure; and ensure potable water.
    o Recognize the importance of market prices in justifying investments.
    o Focus technical assistance on data collection at critical loss points.
    o Consider the needs of smallholder farmers (e.g. support for logistics).