

Sustainable Development Goal 13

A Global Expert Group Meeting in preparation for HLPF 2024: Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions

Tokyo, Japan 4 – 5 March 2024

Co-convened by UN DESA and UNFCCC in collaboration with other UN partners
Hosted by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan
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Draft Concept Note

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1. High-Level Political Forum 2024

The [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) stands as the pinnacle United Nations platform for the global-level follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. Meeting annually at the UN Headquarter in New York under the Economic and Social Council's auspices, the HLPF reviews progress, challenges, and solutions for successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Every four years, the HLPF hosts an SDG Summit at the level of Heads of State and Government.

The theme for the [2024 HLPF](#), scheduled from Monday, 8 July, to Wednesday, 17 July 2024, underscores the imperative to “*Reinforce the 2030 Agenda and eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions.*” The HLPF will conduct an in-depth review of pivotal SDGs, including:

- SDG 1 (End poverty)
- SDG 2 (End hunger)
- SDG 13 (Climate action)
- SDG 16 (Peaceful and inclusive societies), and
- SDG 17 (Means of implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development)

Notably, the 2024 HLPF, following the [2023 SDG Summit](#), presents a unique opportunity to translate political commitments into tangible policy guidance and practical actions, steering the course for SDG implementation.

2. SDG 13 - Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and its Impacts

As we crossed the midpoint of the [2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development](#) and the first Global Stocktake of the [Paris Agreement](#), home to the implementation of SDG 13 on climate action, only 15% of SDG targets are on track, with no SDG 13 target making significant progress, while the global emissions are on the trajectory of a steady rise.

While SDG 13 and its related 1.5°C target are in jeopardy, the lives of over 3 billion people are deeply affected by the deadly impacts of climate change. Without deep and rapid reductions in greenhouse gas

emissions across all sectors, we risk intensifying heatwaves, droughts, flooding, wildfires, sea-level rise, and with this surging famines, inequalities, and health-related diseases.

In terms of disaster risk reduction (Target 13.1), there has been progress. According to the latest [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Report](#), the number of deaths and missing persons per 100,000 population due to disasters has steadily decreased. However, the number of persons affected by disasters has risen. It additionally reports that between 2010 and 2020, highly vulnerable regions, home to approximately 3.3–3.6 billion people, experienced 15 times higher human mortality rates from floods, droughts and storms compared to regions with very low vulnerability. In the meantime, the number of countries with national strategies for disaster risk reduction has increased substantially, with 118 countries reporting policy coherence with global frameworks.

The [IPCC 6th assessment report](#) states that the global temperatures (Target 13.2) have already surpassed 1.1°C, driven by record-high greenhouse gas emissions. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s latest [nationally determined contributions \(NDC\) synthesis report](#) finds that climate pledges under the Paris Agreement fall short, with a mere 0.3% reduction in emissions by 2030 compared to 2019 levels, a far cry from the necessary 42% cut to preserve the 1.5°C target, risking a potential warming of 2.5-2.9°C by the century's end, as demonstrated by [UNEP's latest Emissions Gap Report](#). Rising sea levels pose a severe threat, with record high GHG concentrations causing accelerated global warming. Coastal areas, home to around 900 million people - 1 in 10 people worldwide - face profound risks, and relocations are already underway in vulnerable regions.

In education (Target 13.3), the 2023 SDG Report finds some concerning gaps. Almost half of national curriculum frameworks do not mention climate change, and teachers struggle to effectively explain its effects. Despite recognizing its importance, only one-third of teachers are capable of conveying the severity of climate change in their regions. Furthermore, 70% of young people can only describe the broad principles of climate change.

Turning to financial commitments (Target 13.a), the [OECD](#) calculates that developed countries have provided and mobilized \$89.6 billion in climate finance for developing countries in 2021, almost doubled over the 2013-21 period but falling short of the \$100 billion target. Mitigation finance remains the primary focus, leaving adaptation finance lagging far behind, with international flows to developing countries below estimated needs. Moreover, loss and damage costs are rising, with recent WHO estimates indicating direct health-related damage costs reaching USD 2–4 billion per year by 2030. This predicament reveals profound justice issues, as an [Oxfam study](#) shows that the richest 1% of the global population produces as much carbon pollution as the poorest two-thirds of humanity, exacerbating challenges in achieving other SDGs, including poverty eradication (SDG 1) and zero hunger (SDG 2).

Least developed countries and small island developing states face disproportionate challenges in managing climate change and its impacts (13.b). There is an urgent need for capacity building, with a focus on women, youth and local and marginalized communities, in these vulnerable countries that are also facing debilitating debt.

3. Framing the Issue – Going beyond siloed approaches to integrated Solutions

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement in 2015 established a strong foundation for coherent implementation of climate action and sustainable development objectives across all levels and sectors. In the same spirit, the Secretary-General in the address on his 2023 priorities stressed that *“Climate action is the 21st century's greatest opportunity to drive forward all the Sustainable Development Goals.”*

The 2023 SDG Summit Declaration underscores the imperative to enhance ambition in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, crucial for fulfilling the 1.5°C commitments. Integrated solutions are key for achieving sustained, high-quality results. A recent joint report by UN DESA and UNFCCC, [Synergy Solutions for a World in Crisis: Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together](#), reveals tangible opportunities for policy cohesion, showcasing concrete linkages between climate action and

80% of 2030 Agenda targets. This offers actionable pathways for impactful policies aligning climate action with broader sustainable development objectives.

With an ever-tightening timeframe to fulfill the SDGs and the Paris goals, the urgency is clear to bridge the development and climate ambition gaps swiftly, while ensuring protection of nature and just and equitable transition pathways. The alignment and coordinated pursuit of both the SDGs and the Paris Agreement not only yield multiple co-benefits but also amplify effectiveness and outcome quality. This approach additionally fosters resource efficiency, sectoral coherence, collaboration across stakeholders, and the emergence of innovative partnerships. For instance, \$26 trillion in economic benefits could be tapped by 2030, creating 65 million low-carbon jobs. Increased finance, political commitment, integrated policies, international cooperation, and inclusive governance are urgently needed for effective and equitable climate action.

4. Expert Group Meeting on SDG 13 review for 2024 HLPF

To support the HLPF review of SDG13, the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of UN DESA, in collaboration with relevant partners, is organizing an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on SDG 13. The meeting will bring together a select number of experts and stakeholders from the UN system, governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society, to review progress on commitments made at the SDG Summit and since last review of SDG13 at the HLPF in 2021.

The EGM will aim to:

1. Identify challenges and opportunities for accelerating transformations.
2. Strengthen interlinkages between SDG13 with other SDGs and opportunities to leverage synergies and minimize trade-offs.
3. Share knowledge about success stories, good practices and lessons learned.
4. Suggest ways forward in terms of policies and regulatory frameworks, finance, innovation and technology, partnerships and coordinated actions at all levels.
5. Take stock of recent commitments on SDG 13, including through intergovernmental processes such the UNFCCC COPs, UNGA Summits, annual HLPFs, UN Biodiversity Conferences, and others.

The EGM discussions will provide substantial contributions to the thematic reviews scheduled for the 2024 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and shape its outcomes. It will play a key role in suggesting resource persons for thematic sessions at the HLPF and will contribute to the preparations for the Summit of the Future scheduled for September 2024, while also influencing future collaborations and programs of work beyond 2024. The discussions held during the EGM are integral to fostering a comprehensive and impactful approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with SDG 13.

5. Key Questions

SDG 13 in focus:

- What is the current status and measured progress of SDG 13, and what deviations, obstacles, or opportunities exist since the last HLPF review in 2021, as well as recent intergovernmental processes related to climate change, including outcomes of COP28?
- What are some of the most recent successes and gaps in ensuring sufficient and equitable adaptation and resilience capacities? How can disaster risk reduction be more effectively linked to climate and development goals in national and subnational policies for better coherence?
- How can we ensure a better integration of climate targets, including those related to biodiversity protection, natural resource management, energy efficiency and other relevant issues, into national policies and planning?
- What innovative approaches can advance climate education and awareness in communities, ensuring accessibility, digestibility, and coherence across countries?

- Are there promising strategies to accelerate action by the UN and partners for SDG 13 implementation, and how can stakeholders be mobilized to contribute? How should the progress be monitored, considering potential new data sources?

Tackling the interlinked crisis of climate, nature, and development:

- How can societies better prepare for interconnected crises, including those of climate change, nature, biodiversity, inequalities, conflicts, food energy security and health, to enhance resilience?
- In what ways can we ensure a just and inclusive transition towards net-zero and climate-compatible pathways, preserving the rights and supporting the needs of indigenous peoples, women and girls, youth, and other vulnerable groups, ensuring that no one is left behind?
- What are some lessons learned on vertical and horizontal integration of climate action within sectoral policies, planning and financing instruments at the local, regional, and global levels?
- How can cities serve as platforms for synergistic action on climate change and improve the achievement of other SDGs?

Means of implementation:

- What are examples of policy and regulatory frameworks that can be replicated to better align development and climate action priorities, and their joint implementation?
- What strategies can enhance access to climate finance and realignment of financial flows towards SDG 13, particularly in developing countries?
- What are the current capacity gaps and how can these be addressed to strengthen developing countries' ability to achieve SDG 13 and other SDGs?
- How can SDGs be effectively integrated into updated NDCs, ensuring a just transition towards net-zero and climate-resilient future?
- How can science, technology and innovation help reinforce the effective delivery of sustainable and resilient solutions for achieving SDG 13 and other related SDGs?

6. Participation and organization

The EGM is part of a broader review of SDG 13, including specialized reports from various agencies and think tanks. Some of these inputs will also feed into the EGM.

Participation at the EGM will be by invitation. A limited number of experts from think tanks, academia, NGOs, the private sector and Governments will be invited. Experts from the UN system and other international organizations will also be invited to participate.

UN-DESA/DSDG will prepare the event in consultation with other key UN Entities. DESA/DSDG will also coordinate across other DESA divisions.

Individual sessions at the EGM will address specific themes. The mode will be interactive, with all participants encouraged to speak openly and informally.

The EGM will be conducted in English. Presentations/papers/remarks will be made available online.

7. EGM Draft Agenda

4 March 2024 | 16:00 – 19:00 JST, 08:00 – 11:00 CET, 02:00 – 05:00 EST

Official opening

- Welcome remarks by UN DESA and UNFCCC

Key challenges and opportunities for accelerating transformations

- This session will bring together a multi-stakeholder group of experts to assess progress, challenges and opportunities for achieving SDG 13 in support of addressing the interconnected crises of nature, development, biodiversity, food-water-energy security, and others.

5 March 2024 | 16:00 – 19:00 JST, 08:00 – 11:00 CET, 02:00 – 05:00 EST

Tackling the interlinked crisis of climate, nature, and development

This session will bring together all experts to discuss how to ensure poverty eradication, food security, peace, inclusive societies, equitable finance, coherent policies in a challenging world of climate catastrophes through mitigation and adaptation measures.

- The discussion will aim to provide insights for integrated solutions, related to both vertical and horizontal policy integration, for long-term, cost-effective and participatory impacts.

Means of implementation of SDG 13: 2024 HLPF and beyond

- This session will bring all experts to provide concrete suggestions to enhance means of implementation of SDG 13 in support of climate action and other SDGs.
- This session will also summarize the discussions of the experts and provide clear inputs to the HLPF thematic review of the SDG 13 in July.

ANNEX I – SDG 13 Targets

13.1

Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

13.2

Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

13.a

Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.

13.b

Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

ANNEX II – Additional Resources

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

- Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023
<https://sdgs.un.org/gsdr/gsdr2023>
- The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition
<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/>
- Synergy Solutions for a World in Crisis: Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together
<https://sdgs.un.org/synergy-solutions-world-crisis-tackling-climate-and-sdg-action-together>

United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report Office (UNDP)

- Human Climate Horizons: latest release 2023
<https://horizons.hdr.undp.org/>
- Special Report of Human Security 2022.
<https://hdr.undp.org/content/2022-special-report-human-security>
- Human Development Report 2023-2024: collective action (to be released)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

- Nuclear Energy and Climate Change: Questions and Answers on Progress, Challenges and Opportunities
<https://www.iaea.org/publications/15503/nuclear-energy-and-climate-change-questions-and-answers-on-progress-challenges-and-opportunities>
- Nuclear Energy in Climate Resilient Power Systems
<https://www.iaea.org/publications/15557/nuclear-energy-in-climate-resilient-power-systems>
- Nuclear Energy in Mitigation Pathways to Net Zero
<https://www.iaea.org/publications/15558/nuclear-energy-in-mitigation-pathways-to-net-zero>
- Climate Change and Nuclear Power 2022
<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-power-and-climate-change/climate-change-and-nuclear-power-2022>

United Nations University (UNU)

- <https://unu.edu/publication/landscape-approaches-ecosystem-restoration>

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

- Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 2023. Financing a sustainable transition: investment for growth and climate change action:
<https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/67990-economic-survey-latin-america-and-caribbean-2023-financing-sustainable-transition>
- The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: Halfway to 2030. Goals, targets and indicators: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/68017-2030-agenda-and-sustainable-development-goals-halfway-2030-goals-targets-and>

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

- World Investment Report 2023 (in particular chapters 1 and 4 - which also includes results and recommendations relevant for SD17).
<https://unctad.org/publication/world-investment-report-2023>
- SDG Investment Trends Monitor: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/diaemisc2023d6_en.pdf
- Global Investment Trends Monitor: <https://unctad.org/publication/investment-flows-least-developed-countries-affected-disproportionally-global-crises>
- FDI in the LDCs Special Report: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/diaeia2022d1_en.pdf

UN-Habitat

- <https://unhabitat.org/about-us/sustainable-development-goals>
- <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/download/policy-brief-volume-2023-vol-1/>
- <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/>

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- Press release/summary of FAO engagement at COP28 (look in particular to FAO Global Roadmap on achieving SDG2 without breaching the 1.5C° threshold)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

- GAR Special Report 2023: Mapping resilience for the Sustainable Development Goals - <https://www.undrr.org/gar/gar2023-special-report>
- Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2023 - <https://www.undrr.org/reports/global-status-MHEWS-2023>
- Moving Back from the Edge: Changing the status quo for the most vulnerable and excluded in international climate action - <https://www.undrr.org/publication/moving-back-edge-changing-status-quo-most-vulnerable-and-excluded-international-climate>
- Closing climate and disaster data gaps: New challenges, new thinking - <https://www.undrr.org/publication/closing-climate-and-disaster-data-gaps-new-challenges-new-thinking>
- Financing disaster risk reduction in humanitarian and crisis settings - <https://www.undrr.org/publication/financing-disaster-risk-reduction-humanitarian-and-crisis-settings>
- Strengthening risk analysis for humanitarian planning - <https://www.undrr.org/publication/strengthening-risk-analysis-humanitarian-planning>
- Financial arrangements for addressing losses and damages: A disaster risk reduction primer - <https://www.undrr.org/publication/financial-arrangements-addressing-losses-and-damages-disaster-risk-reduction-primer>

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

- [https://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/Space4SDGs/Space for Climate Action_ebook.pdf](https://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/Space4SDGs/Space%20for%20Climate%20Action_ebook.pdf)
- <https://space4climateaction.unoosa.org/>
- [https://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/Space4SDGs/UNOOSA SDGs_2023.pdf](https://www.unoosa.org/documents/pdf/Space4SDGs/UNOOSA_SDGs_2023.pdf)