

Synergy Solutions for a World in Crisis: Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together

KEY MESSAGES



1 | TACKLING INTERLINKED CRISES

We must solve the climate emergency and sustainable development challenges together, or we will not solve them at all. As our world grapples with interconnected crises, the urgency of addressing climate change and sustainable development together is undeniable.

- Over **50 per cent** of SDG targets lack sufficient progress; **30 per cent** have stalled or reversed.¹
- For the first time in three decades, key areas like childhood vaccination and income equality between countries have regressed.
- Global temperatures have already risen by **1.1°C**, and we are on track to exceed the critical **1.5°C** threshold by 2035.²
- Vulnerable regions experienced **15 times higher** human mortality from floods, droughts and storms between 2010 and 2020.³

2 | EVIDENCE OF SYNERGISTIC ACTION

Pursuing the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in concert can significantly and efficiently advance both agendas. Extensive evidence suggests that implementing these intertwined agendas together can drive global progress efficiently, with gains from integrated action outweighing losses.

- Evidence links climate action to **80 per cent** of 2030 Agenda targets, providing opportunities for impactful policies.
- Aligning climate and SDG efforts could boost economic output by a staggering **USD 43 trillion** by 2070.⁴
- Implementing the Paris Agreement through transitioning to renewables and improving energy efficiency could create **24 million** jobs by 2030.⁵
- Health and agricultural co-benefits can offset climate policy costs and boost global GDP.

3 | BRIDGING FINANCIAL GAPS

Evaluating the co-benefits and trade-offs between climate action and SDGs is critical to increase the cost-effectiveness of interventions and ensure a just and equitable transition. Strategizing interconnections could optimize resource allocation and address the ongoing financial challenge for climate and developmental objectives through a synergistic approach.

- Despite climate finance almost doubling in the last decade, there remains a significant shortfall of **USD 4.3 trillion** in annual finance flows by 2030 to be able to meet a 1.5°C global climate scenario and avoid the worst impacts of climate change.⁶



Climate action is the 21st century's greatest opportunity to drive forward all the Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations Secretary-General,
Antonio Guterres

- A shift to a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy could generate **100 million** jobs by 2030 but might risk **80 million** jobs without a just transition.⁷
- Solely focusing on climate targets could put **84 million** more people at risk of hunger by 2050.⁸
- Meeting nearly **70 per cent** of SDG targets by 2030 requires adaptation measures in urban areas and vulnerable countries.⁹

- Countries with integrated frameworks for policy coherence, including **96 per cent** that involved gender equality, are advancing more rapidly in their NDC commitments.¹¹
- Synergies abound in submitted long-term low-emission development pathways (LT-LEDS), including co-benefits for economic growth (91 per cent), job creation (83 per cent), reduced inequalities (75 per cent), improved health (72 per cent), and sustainable cities.¹²

4 | INTEGRATED PLANNING

The transition from isolated approaches to integrated planning is underway but needs acceleration. More countries are integrating SDG and climate action, yet overcoming knowledge, political, institutional and economic barriers is essential for widespread policies addressing both agendas.

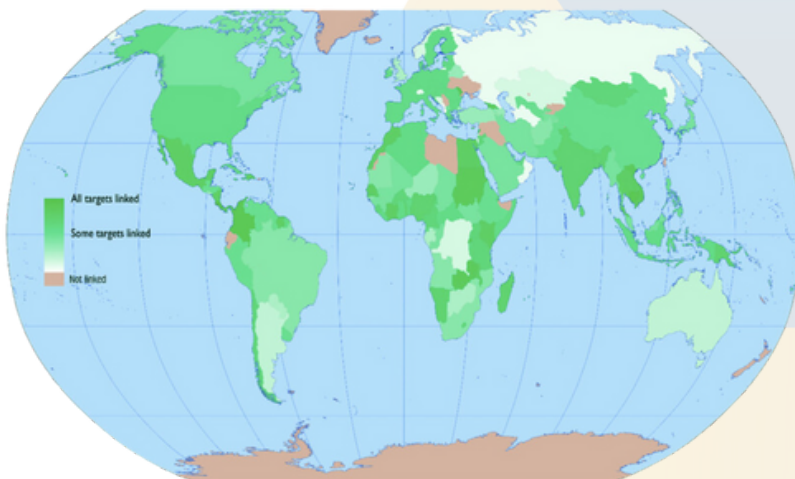
- While there is significant overlap between multiple SDGs and climate actions by governments under their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement, only **23 out of 173 NDCs** explicitly reference the SDGs.
- Simultaneous development and climate efforts can bridge investment gaps and yield **USD 4 in co-benefits for every USD 1 investment**.¹⁰

5 | GLOBAL ROADMAP FOR ACTION

A clear roadmap for accelerated synergistic action is needed to align efforts and bring the **2030 goals closer to reality**. To promote integrated action, the strategy involves mapping high-impact synergy areas and offering actionable steps to enhance synergies effectively at all levels, including:

- Establishing a **global knowledge platform** for policy makers to access best practices.
- Creating a **framework for action** for policymakers to identify, review and evaluate complex synergistic actions.
- Addressing investment gaps through **financial reform** for climate and development.
- Leveraging **cities**, with **70 per cent** of the global population expected to live in urban areas by 2050, to maximize co-benefits and reduce costs.

Figure 1: Linkage of SDGs with the countries' NDCs



Source: [Climate Watch](#)

ENDNOTES

1. Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition
2. IPCC Synthesis Report 2023
3. 2022 WMO State of the Global Climate
4. IPCC Synthesis Report 2023
5. ILO World Employment and Social Outlook 2018: Greening with jobs
6. Naran et al., 2022, Global Landscape of Climate Finance A Decade of Data
7. ILO Skills for a greener future: a global view
8. Fujimori et al. 2018, Inclusive climate change mitigation and food security policy under 1.50C climate goal
9. Fuldauer et al., 2022, Targeting climate adaptation to safeguard and advance the Sustainable Development Goals
10. Hallegatte et al., 2019, Lifelines: The Resilience Infrastructure Opportunity
11. UNDP Climate Promise
12. UNFCCC 2022, Long-term low-emission development strategies synthesis report



Full report is now available at:
bit.ly/UNSynergyReport2023

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