

# **Fifth Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:**

## **Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet**

### **Concept Note**

*(Draft as of 22 July 2024)*

**5-6 September 2024**

**“We must solve the climate emergency and sustainable development challenges together, or we will not solve them at all.”**

*UNDESA-UNFCCC Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergies,  
Synergies Solutions for a World in Crisis, Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together, 2023*

#### **Context –Crucial Two Year Ahead and Urgency of Action**

The world community is off track in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. There is some progress but the benefits and opportunities of progress are spread unevenly, with the most vulnerable impacted the most and the majority of the people left behind. The risks and threats are also unevenly felt, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable. The evidence is clear. The [Global Sustainable Developments Goals Report 2024](#) has warned that only 17 per cent of SDG targets are on track. Nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress, and progress on over one third has stalled or even regressed. Extreme poverty and hunger are currently on the rise again in many parts of the world. Global emissions are at their highest levels in human history, as are levels of human displacement. According to the [latest assessment of IPCC](#) continued greenhouse gas emissions will lead to increasing global warming, with the best estimate of reaching 1.5°C in the near term in considered scenarios and modelled pathways. Every increment of global warming will intensify multiple and concurrent hazards.

The next couple of years are of critical importance in course-correcting the current trajectory we are on. The next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – national climate action plans that every country must submit by early 2025, ahead of COP30 – will determine greenhouse gas emissions for the coming years. They must align with limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Ahead of COP30, a key focus in 2024 leading up to COP29 in November will be on finance, as a new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on finance, to succeed the “\$100 billion” climate finance goal, is expected to be agreed by countries. We need an outcome that builds trust and confidence, catalyses the trillions needed, and generates momentum for reform of the international financial architecture. Trillions of dollars are required by developing countries to support their climate and development efforts.

In September, the Summit of the Future will re-examine our collective response in addressing the interconnected crisis of climate, conflict, food security, weapons of mass destruction, pandemics and health crises, in a world where multilateral governance, designed in simpler, slower times, is not adequate to today’s complex, interconnected, rapidly changing world. The Summit calls upon all policymakers and stakeholders to present course-changing solutions for mobilizing political and financial actions to combat the climate crisis and achieve the SDGs.

## Seeking synergy solutions – Unlocking progress in a multi-crisis world

Amid unprecedented global disruption and polarization adding to the already slow pace of progress vis-à-vis the global sustainable development and climate goals, seeking synergies and integrated solutions that deliver both climate and development co-benefits is of critical importance. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement are intrinsically linked, and one cannot be achieved without the other. Profound economic, social, and environmental transitions are needed to overcome the interconnected crisis of poverty and hunger, biodiversity loss, and climate change amongst others.

The Secretary-General has repeatedly called upon countries to step up action, stressing that “*Climate action is the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s greatest opportunity to drive forward all the Sustainable Development Goals.*” He noted that with integrated planning, coherent policies, and economic stimulus investments, the achievement of the SDGs can be advanced. Trade-offs can be avoided, social disparities reduced, and the global climate can be protected at the same time.

Growing body of evidence suggests that addressing climate change and achieving the SDGs are inextricably intertwined. Co-benefits far outweigh trade-offs. By maximizing these synergies, we can also bridge investment gaps worth trillions of dollars. The recently launched report entitled “[Synergy Solutions for a World in Crisis: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want](#)” - developed by the Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy and co-convened by UNDESA and UNFCCC - assessed the enormous potential financial, economic, environmental, public health, and employment benefits achievable when acting in synergy and cooperation, as opposed to the also assessed tremendous losses that may result from lack of action and political will, fragmentation, and uncoordinated decision making when acting in “silos”. The report also highlighted the many opportunities for improvements that may arise in connection with the outcome of COP28 and the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Stocktake (GTS) under the UNFCCC and the conceptualization of the next generation of NDCs. The Expert Group emphasized that better coordination and integration of climate and SDG policies may indeed help to bridge investment gaps worth trillions of dollars, whilst optimizing resource allocation to address immense financial challenges for climate and development objectives.

Beyond science and evidence, political momentum is on the rise with clear policy signals to the global community to move towards more integrated approaches and synergistic solutions. The SDGs are at the heart of the [GST outcome at COP28](#) in Dubai, where member states agreed upon the need to address climate action in the broader context of sustainable development. Similarly, the [UNEA 6/7 resolution](#) calls for strengthened global cooperation to maximize co-benefits between environmental action and the achievement of the SDGs. The recent [G7 communique on climate, energy and environment](#) commits to pursue synergies approach towards the SDGs when addressing the triple global crisis. Many governments are adopting a proactive approach to integrated planning at both national and international levels.

## A roadmap for Action - Fifth Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergies

Since 2019, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have been leading efforts to promote climate and SDG synergies as the linchpin for addressing our current challenges and realizing an equitable future. These efforts include co-convening annual conferences to offer a dedicated platform to policymakers and practitioners on this critical agenda and to elevate the importance of integrated solutions in addressing the interconnected crisis the world is currently facing. These annual conferences are part of the capacity development efforts of the co-conveners, aiming to support member states and practitioners in their policy and action plans through the sharing of knowledge and best practices.

In 2024,, the UNDESA and UNFCCC will co-convene the *Fifth Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergies*. The Fifth Synergy Conference will be hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and will take place on 5-6 September 2024 in Rio de Janeiro at the Museum of Tomorrow.

The Conference will take place ahead of some of the major milestones over the next two years including the Summit of the Future and COP29/COP30 and presents a unique opportunity to reflect on some of the critical issues that cut across these important moments and to chart a better bath forward.

Given Brazil’s Presidency of the G20 process, this year’s Conference will also aim to connect the importance of synergistic approaches in the G20 milestones and related processes. During the first two weeks of September, the City of Rio de Janeiro will host four other thematically related meetings: i) the IV Meeting of the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy, from 9 to 11 September; ii) the IV Meeting of the Sustainable Finance Working Group, on 9 and 10 September; iii) the IV Meeting of the Global Mobilization Against Climate Change Task Force, on 12 and 13 September; and iv) the One Planet Network Forum 2024, organized by the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production of the UN Environment Programme, also on 12 and 13 September. Holding these events back-to-back aims to create an environment where the full potential of rich exchanges of ideas, experiences and best practices can be realized.

### **Expected Outcomes**

The Fifth Global Conference will convene leading policy makers and distinguished experts to discuss climate and SDG synergies. It will showcase empirical evidence and case studies on climate action and SDG co-benefits, highlighting progress and pathways for just and equitable transitions. Among other issues, the conference will review options for facilitating access to climate finance, mitigation of climate risks, and point out options for more effective adaptation and resilience. Additionally, it will promote wider public participation, with a focus on inclusivity of all relevant social groups, particularly from the Latin American and Caribbean region, and will offer capacity-building opportunities to further enhance understanding and action on these critical issues.

The Fifth Global Conference on Climate and SD Synergies will deliver:

- A concise **Conference Summary**, with a set of key recommendations for enhancing synergistic implementation of the SDGs and climate action at the political level as well as practical levels.
- A detailed **Conference Report** and other informative documentation which will be made available to delegations attending the upcoming Global Summits and Conferences in 2024 and 2025.

### **Format and Programme Overview**

The Conference is a multi-stakeholder event, with representatives from governments, business, civil society, private sector, and others. The conference will be held at the Museum of Future, Rio de Janeiro. The format of the conference will be mainly in-person. Around 500 participants are envisaged, including from countries and other stakeholders who that have substantially advanced win–win solutions for climate action and the SDGs.

The Conference will be held over a period of two days. for leadership engagement. Alongside a programme of **roundtables and thematic sessions** through the two days, the Fifth Synergy Conference will host a **high-level segment** at its opening on September 5<sup>th</sup>, featuring senior policymakers and prominent representatives from governments and from international organizations and civil society.

The Conference language will be English. The full programme with list of speakers will be developed and made available on the conference website in due course.