



Concept Note

Symposium on SDG 7 (Energy) in Preparation for the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Oslo, Norway

18-20 October 2017

BACKGROUND

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is fundamental to human development and is also a necessary investment in our collective future. Energy is inextricably linked to most of the global challenges now and in the future, including poverty, food security, clean water, public health, education, economic growth, youth's and women's empowerment, and climate change.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has set out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, which jointly constitute a comprehensive plan of action to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development. SDG7 is a first-ever universal goal on energy, with five targets on access, efficiency, renewables and means of implementation.

The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2018, with SDG7 in focus, will serve as a first critical milestone to review global progress of SDG7 toward 2030. Member States will undertake in-depth reviews, including through the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), to assess progress at the country level towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. Regional Sustainable Development Forums, convened by UN Regional Commissions, will deepen sharing of experiences and best practices at the regional level. Taken together, these processes at country, regional and global levels provide an important opportunity to take stock of progress to-date including energy's linkages with other Sustainable Development Goals, and reflect on the way forward to accelerate implementation.

In June 2017, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), with UNESCAP and UN Office for Sustainable Development, organised a symposium "*Progress on SDG 7 and its Interlinkages with other SDGs in support of First Review of SDG7 during the 2018 High-Level Political Forum,*" in Bangkok. Recognising the importance of energy for all SDGs, it called for strengthened capacity building and emphasised the need for a policy-relevant global assessment on the interlinkages between energy and other SDGs to feed into inter-governmental discussions.

Building on the discussions in Bangkok, the UNDESA, as the secretariat for the High Level Political Forum, is convening a ***Symposium on SDG 7 (Energy) in Preparation to the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*** to build capacities and discuss critical issues on the process leading up to the HLPF 2018 and its follow up action.

The Symposium is being organised in cooperation with UNDESA's UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNODS), the Norwegian Research Council, SINTEF, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway.

OBJECTIVES

This meeting will provide a platform to build capacity and discuss how best to advance SDG 7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs. By promoting sharing of experiences and best practices, it aims to contribute to building capacities of stakeholders from developed and developing countries alike. The meeting will also discuss preparation for the first global review of SDG7 at the 2018 High-Level Political Forum. Specific objectives include:

- *Assess global progress on SDG7* including on energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency and its interlinkages with other SDGs;
- *Share experiences on promoting science, technology and innovation systems*, including the sharing of best practices to enhance research and development and technology transfer, to advance SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs;
- *Discuss way forward and expectations for outcomes of the SDG7 review at HLPF 2018*, including on its interlinkages with other SDGs and means of implementation, taking into account key relevant milestones at country, regional, and global levels. This will include discussions on potential deliverables, including a potential global synthesis of SDG7 progress from VNRs and other monitoring reports at country and sub-national levels and a series of policy briefs on the interlinkages between SDG7 and other SDGs, and an updated policy-relevant global overview on energy (“Energy for SDGs report”), to inform inter-governmental discussions toward HLPF.

VENUE AND DATE

The symposium will be held at the Norwegian Research Council in Oslo, Norway, from 18 to 20 October 2017.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Wednesday, 18 October

Session 1: Setting the scene: Advancing SDG 7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs

This session will review and discuss the current situation of the progress toward SDG7 and its targets. This will also include the challenges and opportunities for advancing the interlinkages between SDG7 and other SDGs and effectively mobilizing means of implementation at country, regional and global levels, based on lessons and experiences on the ground.

Thursday, 19 October

Session 2: Advancing science, technology and innovation for SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs

This session will explore policies and actions for advancing the science, technology and innovation for SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs, through the sharing of experiences and best practices by governments, civil society, the private sector, and the scientific community. Participants will learn of potential technology transfer programmes

on clean energy technologies. Participants will engage on discussions of current critical issues that need to be assessed at country, regional and national levels.

Friday, 20 October

Session 3: A roadmap toward SDG7 review at High Level Political Forum 2018

This session will take stock of the discussions and presents the way forward to mobilize further action by all stakeholders for SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs. It will explore general expectations for the first global SDG7 review. It will also map out and discuss key milestones and related processes toward the HLPF in July 2018, including the global preparatory meeting for SDG7 review in February and Regional Forums for Sustainable Development in 2018. It will also discuss planned deliverables towards the HLPF 2018 and beyond, including a potential global synthesis of SDG7 progress based on VNRs and monitoring reports at country and sub-national levels, and a series of policy briefs on the interlinkages between SDG7 and other SDGs and an updated policy-relevant global overview on energy (“Energy for SDGs report”), to inform inter-governmental discussions toward HLPF.

Session 4: Way Forward

This session synthesizes the discussions and presents a way forward.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants expected for this meeting include: representatives of Member States, including developing countries, UN organizations, international organizations and multi-stakeholder energy experts as well as experts in other fields linked to energy and its interlinkages with SDGs. The event will aim to attract all relevant stakeholders.

About 100-150 participants are expected.