

Global SDG7 Conference

21-23 February 2018

Bangkok, Thailand

Outcome Summary

1. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 7 on energy is inextricably interlinked to almost all the SDGs, including poverty eradication; food security; clean water and sanitation; health; education; prosperity; job creation; and the empowerment of youth and women. Universal access to electricity and clean cooking solutions is fundamental to human development. Significantly increasing the share of renewable energy and doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency are also essential to the achievement of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.
2. Effective action towards a safe and sustainable low-carbon and climate-resilient energy system is essential to tackling climate change and achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Central for such action is the provision of universal access to energy, wider deployment of renewable energy, increasing resilience of energy systems and improving energy efficiency.
3. In recognition of the fundamental role of energy in achieving the SDGs, the Global SDG7 Conference was convened by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the Ministry of Energy of the Government of Royal Kingdom of Thailand, from 21st to 23rd February 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Opening High-Level Plenary and the Closing Plenary were presided over by the President and a Vice-President of the UN Economic and Social Council, respectively.
4. The Conference was aimed at preparing substantive input to the first review of SDG7 to be undertaken during the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2018, under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council. It brought together a wide range of multi-stakeholders from governments, UN system and other international organizations, the private sector, and civil society from across the world.
5. The Conference facilitated inclusive dialogues on the challenges and opportunities for furthering progress toward SDG7, its contributions to the advancement of other SDGs and the issues pertinent to respective regions and countries in special circumstances such as Least Developed Countries, Land Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.
6. Participants warmly welcomed the 27 policy briefs on SDG7 and the interlinkages of energy with other development goals, developed by the Ad hoc SDG7 Technical Advisory Group convened by UNDESA, as the main background documents for the Conference.
7. Progress toward the achievement of SDG7 remains mixed and falls short of what is needed to reach the goal by 2030. Participants noted that:
 - i. still more than a billion people, mostly in rural areas, live without the benefits of electricity, while about three billion people still lack access to clean and safe cooking fuels and technologies, with catastrophic consequences in terms

- of over 4 million premature deaths due to indoor pollution affecting primarily women and children;
- ii. while modern renewable energy is expanding rapidly in the electricity generation sector across the world, comparable progress has not occurred with renewable energy in the heat or transport sectors;
 - iii. despite advancements in reducing energy intensity globally, progress is not yet sufficient to meet the energy efficiency target under SDG7.
8. Achieving SDG7 remains feasible. Despite the challenges, participants emphasized that technological innovations, new business models and a growing number of best practices are bringing this goal within reach. To accelerate progress, they emphasized, among others, the need for:
- i. enabling environments including bold policies and stable regulatory conditions;
 - ii. concerted action by public and private sectors to overcome financing challenges;
 - iii. scaled up capacity building;
 - iv. integrated, cross sectoral approaches to break the silos and operationally realize interlinkages;
 - v. regional cooperation to promote harmonization, innovation and competitiveness.
9. Women and children bear the greatest burden of energy poverty. In order to enhance the effectiveness of actions under all SDGs, participants underscored the need for integrating gender and energy actions within all SDGs. They further stressed the need to ensure that all elements of energy planning and policy-making factor in gender dimensions and actively advance women's leadership at all levels.
10. It was underlined that the role of civil society, including the youth on whom our future depends, is fundamental in driving and sustaining change, including through advocacy, public mobilization and monitoring of public policy and business action.
11. Participants underscored the need for special attention to those countries who are lagging the furthest behind and who are the most vulnerable, namely LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. Investing in sustainable energy in these countries will have a significant positive impact across different SDGs in the true spirit of leaving no one behind, which is the aim of the 2030 Agenda.
12. Partnerships to catalyze actions at all levels are essential if we are to achieve SDG7. Participants called for game-changing multi-stakeholder partnerships and global plans of action in key areas, including clean cooking, decentralized renewable energy access, and clean energy for vulnerable populations such as refugees and other displaced populations. All stakeholders were encouraged to register relevant innovative solutions and partnerships. The annual global Partnership Exchange to be held in the margins of the HLPF will provide an opportunity for profiling and reviewing their contributions.
13. Participants emphasized the need for improved reporting, data collection systems and capacity building to ensure effective monitoring of the SDG7 targets at the country

level. They welcomed the work of the global custodians of the SDG7 indicators and encouraged them to jointly prepare an SDG7 Global Tracking Framework on an annual basis.

14. Participants urged that the 27 policy briefs prepared for the Conference, along with a Summary for Policy Makers, should be finalized as soon as possible and shared with Member States as the main technical input for the SDG7 review during the HLPF 2018. Expressing strong appreciation for the contributions of the Ad Hoc SDG7 Technical Advisory Group, the Participants encouraged the group to continue strengthening their work on SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs, toward HLPF and beyond, to enhance global alignment, coordination and outreach in support of the achievement of SDG7 by 2030.
15. It was emphasized that action to advance SDG7 should be designed to foster greater synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change. Participants encouraged UN entities and other stakeholders to scale up their global engagements in this regard, in support of a Summit-level HLPF and SG's Climate Summit. The UN Decade on Sustainable Energy for All 2014-2024 should also be leveraged to serve as a global convening platform in support of SDG7.
16. Participants encouraged the Government of Thailand, on behalf of the co-conveners of the Conference, to submit and present the outcome of this conference at the HLPF to be held at the UN headquarters in July 2018.
17. Participants also called upon governments, UN Regional Commissions, UN organizations, international organizations and all stakeholders to intensify their engagements to strengthen the forthcoming SDG7 review at HLPF, through support for Voluntary National Reviews and other outreach platforms such as Regional Forums on Sustainable Development, the Vienna Energy Forum, the Clean Energy Ministerial, Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue, the Sustainable Energy for All Forum and the European Development Days.
18. Participants expressed profound gratitude to the Minister of Energy, the Government and the people of Thailand for their warm hospitality and cooperation in the preparation and organization of this Conference, to UN ESCAP for the outstanding conference services and management and to Norway, the Republic of Korea, China, Germany, the Netherlands, the European Commission, ENERGIA and Hivos for their generous support. They reiterated their commitment to continue working on SDG7 in support of achievement of all SDGs.