

MODALITIES FOR HLPF

**A presentation for major groups, NGOs and
members of civil society**

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What is the HLPF?

**Background, content
and overview**

THE HLPF

- ▣ On July 9, 2013, during its 91st Plenary Meeting, (UNGA), in resolution 67/290 (A/67/L.72) formally adopted by consensus the format and the organizational aspects of the high level political forum (HLPF).
- ▣ The resolution also recommended to the Economic and Social Council to abolish the CSD effective from the conclusion of its 20th and last session, to be held prior to the first meeting of the forum.

The HLPF is SD and SDG

- ▣ With ten introductory and thirty operative paragraphs, the resolution on HLPF stakes out the direction of global sustainable development policies for the next twenty years.
- ▣ Unless it should be subjected to serious revisions, this construct will heavily influence SD policies until 2032 – at Rio plus 40 (or Stockholm plus 60),
- ▣ It is thought to be the most important intergovernmental mechanism in the follow-up to the Rio Summit; it will be the home of the SDGs

EXPERIENCE

- ▣ The HLPF document reflects in many ways a compilation of experience, knowledge and process understanding of more than twenty years of sustainable development deliberations at the global level. Accordingly, virtually everything one needs to be concerned about, is – at least potentially – in place.
- ▣ The HLPF has also been given a high level political standing by its Heads of State and Governments involvement every four years.

The HLPF is tasked with

- ▣ Providing leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development,
- ▣ Identifying emerging issues, reviewing progress in the implementation of related commitments and continually enhancing integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental
- ▣ In addition, every four years the HLPF will be held under the auspices of the GA at the level of Heads of State and Governments for two days, “resulting in a concise negotiated political declaration to be submitted to the Assembly for its consideration”

HLPF – a heavy agenda

- ▣ **If we add up all identified agenda points in the document, we arrive at 24 – or 29 if we allow each of the five UN regions to come in with only one agenda item**
- ▣ **Added to all this, is the discussion and number of sustainable development goals (SDGs).**

**NGOs, major groups
and relevant
stakeholders**

**Their position in the
HLPF**

Which privileges are given to MGs and civil society?

- ▣ Major groups and relevant stakeholders are referred to in 7 paragraphs:
- ▣ Paragraphs 8c; 13; 14; 15; 16; 22 and 24.

Paragraph 15 is the key

While retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, major groups, other relevant stakeholders will be allowed:

- (a) To attend all official meetings of the forum;
- (b) To have access to all official information and documents;
- (c) To intervene in official meetings;
- (d) To submit documents and present written and oral contributions;
- (e) To make recommendations;
- (f) To organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat of the United Nations;

Paragraph 8

The forum, under the auspices of ECOSOC will conduct regular reviews, (specifies content) that:

- (a) Will be voluntary, will include developed and developing countries, relevant United Nations entities;
- (b) Will be State-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants;
- (c) Will provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders;
- (d) Will replace the national voluntary presentations held in the context of the annual ministerial-level substantive reviews of the Economic and Social Council, building upon the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 61/16 as well as experiences and lessons learned in this context;

Paragraphs 13 and 14

- ▣ Paragraph 13 is on regional commissions and regional meetings with the involvement of Major Groups
- ▣ Paragraph 14: ... while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions, and in this regard decides that the forum will be open to the major groups, other relevant stakeholders and entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the General Assembly, building on ... CSD

Paragraphs 16 and 24

- ▣ Paragraph 16 is about the right to self-organise and include other groups
- ▣ Paragraph 24 is about helping to fund representatives from major groups irrespective of their country

Agenda setting, paragraph 22

“Requests the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council to coordinate with the Bureau of the Council and with the bureaux of the relevant committees of the Assembly to organize the activities of the forum so as to benefit from the inputs and advice of the United Nations system, the major groups and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate;”

Potential and challenges

Opportunities for interpretations - good or bad?

HLPF – positive potential for sustainable development and governance

- ▣ **Points in the right direction**
- ▣ **Is politically high level**
- ▣ **Is inclusive**
- ▣ **Is a new construct, a hybrid – ref wording: “under the auspices of”**
- ▣ **Focuses on science and evidence based decisions**
- ▣ **Will research and write “the Global Sustainable Development Report”**
- ▣ **Sets new governance standards**

HLPF problems

- ▣ Institutionally weak, no bureau
- ▣ Heavy agenda - 25 - 30 agenda points in five to eight days
- ▣ Has a strong policy on major groups involvement, but almost a diffuse relationship to the UNGA and ECOSOC
- ▣ Has a number of limiting caveats : "as appropriate" and "while retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum"

Areas of tensions and conflicts

- Under the auspices of ECOSOC and UNGA
Does that bring the rules of procedure of these bodies into HLPF?
- The answer is at present: NO
- The Presidents of ECOSOC and UNGA convenes HLPF, while consulting with the Bureau of ECOSOC, the UNGA Bureaux
- Can that make participation and access difficult?

Giving key words a context

- ▣ Clear contexts are always needed to give sensible interpretations:
- ▣ What does Access mean?
- ▣ What does intervene mean?
- ▣ What does participate mean?
- ▣ What do speaking rights in sessions imply?

Modalities for major groups and civil society

12 proposed areas of modalities for participation, access and work with the HLPF

Proposed Modalities

1 *Accreditation*

ECOSOC or DPI, or given 'fast track' accreditation

Access and attendance - Access and attendance to all meetings must be granted (ref § 15) - meaning:

- 2 to be present on the 'floor', be allowed to sit in on all meetings, observe, take notes and talk with delegates; not be prevented from participating in movements on the floor or relegated to sit in the observer seats at the back of the conference rooms without access to delegates;

Modalities

3 *Access to all documents, including background documents and outcome documents*

Paragraph 15: all official UN documents;

Organising Partners of the major groups should be given negotiating texts as they evolve during the HLPF meetings;

Modalities

4 Making oral statements and comments in plenary sessions of the HLPF (§15)

- A three minute opening and closing statement at all HLPF sessions
- Active and major roles in multistakeholder dialogues including organization and choosing of potential panelists (ref §16);
- Major groups' representatives sit on panels. In line with Paragraph 16 utilizing the principle of self organisation, these representatives must be selected by the major groups

Modalities

- Time should be allocated to major groups during any of the plenaries to ask questions or comment on the ongoing deliberations. .
- It will be important that the major groups be invited to speak during sessions ..
- The Major Groups would also be allowed to give these interventions in the written form to the secretariat, that in turn will post them on the official HLPF website.

Modalities

- 5 Making interventions also during the high level deliberations which shall *“result in a concise negotiated political declaration (GA-level) as well as the deliberations to result in a negotiated ministerial declaration (ECOSOC-level)”*
 - ▣ These statements from major groups should also be annexed to the report from each of the HLPF sessions.

Modalities

- 6 *Producing and presenting written documents (§15)*
- ▣ Each of the nine major groups should be tasked with researching, writing and developing background documents on the HLPF agenda themes using the CSD standard,
 - ▣ These documents should be translated into all official UN languages, sent to the UN Member States as official UN documents
 - ▣ If as with CSD, a Secretary General's report were to be written as a major official background document for the HLPF sessions, all accredited and interested non-state actors should be invited to contribute to this report.

Modalities

- 7 *Organize side events, round tables, etc. in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat of the United Nations (§ 15)*
- ▣ Organise side events, Participate in side events by Member States, UN system and all other participants in the HLPF;
 - ▣ Participate in a daily NGO administrated major groups morning information meeting;

Modalities

- ▣ MGs should organise and participate in the special policy sessions for each major group
- ▣ Secretariat should organise regular meetings between the President of the General Assembly/President of ECOSOC and the nine Organising Partners of the major groups.
- ▣ The President of the General Assembly/President of ECOSOC, if invited by the OPs of the major groups should come and address the morning information meeting;

Modalities

- ▣ Regional groups of Member States and groups of Member States should also be encouraged to invite key representatives from the major groups and organise meetings with them (such as the EU, the US and JUSCANZ/JUSSCANNZ, and G-77 and China).
- ▣ To upgrade the importance and relevance of the side events, the outcome of the side events should be annexed to the HLPF report..

Modalities

- ▣ Self-selected representatives of major groups with expert competence on the issues discussed -- should participate in organised, high level or Ministerial roundtables.
- ▣ A system should be devised so that it would no longer be mandatory that a side event organised by a major group would need an official country sponsor to organise such an event.

Modalities

- 8 *Regional meetings, self organising processes and funding*
 - ▣ In line with (§ 15 and §13) Regional UN Commissions and regional meetings should always allow regional major groups to participate by employing the same modalities or better as are used at the UN Headquarters in New York, and outlined here.
- 9 *Funding should be made available to an increasingly large amount of major groups' representatives (§24)*
- 10 *Science based approaches and the Global Report on Sustainable Development (§ 20) should always encourage input and participation from all nine major groups*

Modalities

11 Reviews

In line with Paragraph 8 major groups are given an important role in contributing to reviews at all levels.

12 Agenda setting

- ▣ In line with Paragraphs 18 and 22 the major groups should be invited to propose items and comment on the upcoming agenda for the HLPF sessions.

In conclusion

- ▣ **UNGA resolution 67/290 establishing the HLPF opens opportunities for extensive collaboration among major groups, NGOs, civil society and relevant stakeholders on one side and members of governments and the UN on the other side in a manner that the world has never seen before. It is our common responsibility to see that these opportunities are translated into meaningful collaboration**

Our future, our responsibility

- ▣ We now have the means to create a better future for all. Let us not try to predict what this future might look like. Let us create this future together and start now.**

- ▣ **Thank you for your attention**
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