



HLPF 2016 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY 12 JULY 2016

The second day of the 2016 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) continued with two morning panel discussions related to the meeting's theme of "Ensuring that no one is left behind." Participants discussed "Food security and sustainable agriculture, climate action, sustainable oceans and terrestrial ecosystems – adopting a nexus approach" and "Creating peaceful and more inclusive societies and empowering women and girls." In the afternoon, a discussion took place on "Science-policy interface: New ideas, insights and solutions."

FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, CLIMATE ACTION, SUSTAINABLE OCEANS AND TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS – ADOPTING A NEXUS APPROACH

Sven Jürgenson, Permanent Representative of Estonia to the UN and Vice President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), chaired this session.

Moderator Ronald Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and Small Island Developing State Issues, Seychelles, said no single Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), nor the SDGs as a whole, can be successfully implemented through a silo approach.

Panelist Deborah Fulton, Committee on World Food Security, highlighted her organization's efforts to include the voices of those who are least heard, such as fisherfolk, the landless and the urban poor. Noting that food producers represent the majority of the world's hungry, panelist Evelyn Nguleka, World Farmers' Organization, emphasized the role of technological innovation and the need to ensure adequate nutrition and market access for farmers.

Stressing that "leaving no one behind" should not just be a slogan, panelist Omoyemen Lucia Odigie-Emmanuel, Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research, called for the establishment of a one-stop platform for all stakeholders to meet and work together.

Panelist Jake Rice, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, called for an "Earth-wide" response integrating the management of land and oceans, and argued against "proliferating silos."

During the ensuing discussion ITALY called for greater attention to the humanitarian situation of young people in farming. The stakeholder group on older persons expressed concern over the lack of indicators for malnutrition among older persons under SDG 2 (zero hunger). The MALDIVES, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), called for investment in a climate-smart food network and fulfillment of international commitments on climate change. LOCAL

AUTHORITIES called for linkages between the HLPF and the HABITAT III process. A representative of persons with disabilities called for including the special needs of disabled persons in national and UN agency strategies.

Noting that agriculture faces a complex challenge in terms of addressing its contribution to climate change, NEW ZEALAND said present technological options were insufficient and called for collaborative research efforts. FINLAND called for policy coherence across sectors, with SAUDI ARABIA saying that coherence across the three pillars of sustainable development itself should be seen as a fundamental pillar.

PALAU, on behalf of 12 small island Pacific states, emphasized the importance of nationally led strategies and called for capacity building support at all levels. CHILDREN AND YOUTH called attention to the impacts of industrial agriculture on sustainability. WORKERS AND TRADE UNIONS called for coherence between SDG 13 (climate change) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES highlighted the role of traditional knowledge in conserving biodiversity and understanding climate impacts. KENYA highlighted the role of post-harvest storage at the farm level for food security.

In closing remarks, panelists emphasized, *inter alia*: existing limits to what oceans can contribute to solving food insecurity; being watchful for activities that shift the focus from people to profit; and the role of farmers in job creation.

CREATING PEACEFUL AND MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES AND EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS

This session was chaired by Jürg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN and Vice President of ECOSOC. It was moderated by Irene Khan, International Development Law Organization.

Panelist Lakshmi Puri, UN Women, outlined the critical link between SDG 5 (gender equality) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and listed "ten commandments" for their realization: inspiration, indivisibility, integration, institutions, implementation, investment, information, inclusion, innovation, and impact.

Panelist Robert Berg, World Academy of Arts and Science, highlighted the important role of civil society but expressed concern that it is currently under attack in many countries. Underlining the role of women as peacebuilders, he said the possibility of women leading the UN, UK and US in the near future could contribute to a significant change in the world.

Panelist Beatrice Ayuru, Lira Integrated School, called for adapting curricula to respond to the challenges facing women and girls, including through talent development and entrepreneurship activities.

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Discussant Gaia Gozzo, CARE International, urged: measuring women's representation at the subnational and local level, and in informal political spaces; assessing the responsiveness of institutions to women's needs; and disaggregating gender data to inform policies, with an emphasis on data generated by women.

Noting the need to talk "with" women and youth and less "about" them, Discussant Anca-Ruxandra Gliga, United Network of Young Peacebuilders, stressed: the importance of international and human rights law; expanding local youth-led initiatives; and the role of youth as responders and peacebuilders during crises.

In the ensuing discussion, CHINA stressed the importance of laws and regulations to ensure women's physical security. SWEDEN urged consideration of data disaggregation by sex in conflict and post-conflict societies. The LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES said women's issues were crosscutting across the SDGs. WOMEN called for attention to gender in conflict response plans. BENIN said education begins at home and identified the role of families in empowerment. DENMARK said inclusion of women in the labor market is a key prerequisite for equality. IRAQ said the SDGs must help rehabilitate victims of terrorism. SOUTH AFRICA said guaranteeing education for all is important for inclusion.

In conclusion, Ayuru urged building entrepreneurial skills of women through targeted policies. Puri noted civil society was a critical partner for women's empowerment. Moderator Khan emphasized access to justice and inclusive institutions as critical factors to empower women.

SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE: NEW IDEAS, INSIGHTS AND SOLUTIONS

This session was chaired by Héctor Alejandro Palma Cerna, Deputy Permanent Representative of Honduras to the UN and Vice President of ECOSOC.

Presenting the 2016 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, noted that it was "an assessment of assessments" prepared by 245 scientific experts through an inclusive process, to strengthen the science-policy interface for sustainable development. He described the focus of the 2016 GSDR on: ensuring no one is left behind; the nexus between infrastructure, inequality and resilience; inclusive institutions, including national sustainable development councils; technologies to meet the SDGs; the inclusion, in particular, of women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and children and youth; and the identification of new and emerging issues.

A discussion followed, moderated by Lucilla Spini, International Council for Science.

William Colglazier, American Association for the Advancement of Science, said the process of developing the GSDR is as important as the product in strengthening the science-policy interface. He highlighted Finland's Voluntary National Report (VNR) as the closest to the vision of what a VNR should be.

Guéladio Cissé, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, emphasized the need: for science to consider cultural dimensions of interventions, without which such interventions could fail; and to remain open to emerging challenges.

Patrick Paul Walsh, University College Dublin, said more needs to be done to disseminate scientific findings at the national and global levels, and recommended: encouraging more science-policy briefs from the public for the GSDR; reorienting research not just towards the economic good, but also towards inclusive and sustainable societies; and the inclusion of civil society perspectives.

Noting the need to not reinvent the wheel with every new research initiative, Aurélien Decamps, Kedge Business School, highlighted the importance of connecting people instead, and

discussed the role that higher education can play in promoting multistakeholder dialogue.

Donovan Gutteries, Global Youth Partnership for the SDGs, urged more frequent reporting on scientific developments, and the inclusion of formal and informal scientific systems to ensure no one is left behind.

Peter Messerli, University of Bern, recommended focusing on synergies and trigger points for sustainable development; targeting knowledge in terms of who is affected; and drawing from a broad knowledge base.

During discussions, CHINA described "demonstration zones" set up in the country to implement the 2030 Agenda. FINLAND said interaction between science and policy is a pre-requisite for sound policy and, with the US, stressed the bridge building role of knowledge brokers. A representative of persons with disabilities asked how persons with disabilities could be agents for change in science, technology and innovation (STI).

The International Atomic Energy Agency highlighted the role of nuclear technology in supporting the SDGs and called for greater research and exchange. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES urged exploring how the science and technology community could support indigenous knowledge systems. The MALDIVES, speaking for the AOSIS, said advances in technology should not exacerbate existing inequalities, like the digital divide. SOUTH AFRICA said countries with a strong base in science and technology are likely to develop faster. WOMEN said data collected from digital interactions should be publicly owned, and pointed to the need for ethical standards and methodologies in their collection.

SWITZERLAND called for the GSDR to focus on integrated approaches while examining policy options that balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. ALGERIA and SAUDI ARABIA highlighted national efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY highlighted their role in providing a more complete picture to help science solve "wicked" problems. NGOs said the GSDR does not adequately represent the environmental dimension, while calling for the participation of farmers and naturalists in the Report's preparation. The EU said the GSDR should move beyond a snapshot based on indicators, and be relevant to heads of state and ministers.

Together 2030, a civil society initiative, called for consideration of an annual GSDR supplement, saying a four-year gap may be too long for new and emerging issues. CHILDREN AND YOUTH underlined the need for institutions that allow youth involvement in STI.

In response to Spini's invitation to summarize their key priorities for enhancing the science-policy interface within the HLPF, panelists highlighted, *inter alia*: taking stock of the issue at every HLPF session; addressing harmful lobbying from industry; inclusion of indigenous knowledge; ensuring community ownership; understanding the needs of policy makers; introducing ex-ante and ex-post technology impact assessments; and maintaining momentum.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As HLPF 2016 discussed SDG 5 on gender equality at UN Headquarters, elsewhere in the building, in the UN General Assembly Hall, preparations were in full swing for the first-ever internationally televised "townhall meeting" with candidates for the next UN Secretary-General (UNSG). An HLPF panelist remarked that a "global sea change" could be on the cards, with women at the helm of the three "Uniteds" – the United Nations, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Six of the 12 UNSG candidates are women, and a woman finally taking the lead at the UN is a distinct possibility. While pleased with this prospect, a gender representative distributing red scarves as a symbol of women's empowerment at HLPF noted, however, that the need for concrete policies and change on the ground remains as urgent as ever.