

# Sustainable Development in Action

## Leading the way to the Future We Want



The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, was an action-oriented conference focusing on implementation of sustainable development.

This newsletter aims to highlight the work carried out by Member States, United Nations system, Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders in implementing sustainable development and leading the way to the Future We Want.

Volume 1, Issue 4 - April 2013

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## Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals holds first session



On 14-15 March 2013, the intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) on sustainable development goals (SDGs) called for in the Rio+20 Outcome Document convened its first meeting in the UN General Assembly Hall in New York.

The meeting commenced with opening remarks by General Assembly President (PGA) Vuk Jeremić and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The PGA called for a “universal transition to sustainability in a way that addresses the needs of humanity for the 21st century.” The Secretary-General stressed the urgency of the OWG’s task.

“The MDGs have united the world and inspired action,” the Secretary-General said. “We must do our utmost to focus attention and accelerate progress.” He said that the focus of the Goals, the eradication of poverty and promotion of health, education, as well as economic and social development, would retain their prime importance and would need to be addressed in the sustainable development goals. “But the sustainable development goals must go further to integrate more comprehensively environmental sustainability, he pointed out, because, “Humanity is pressing hard against the planet’s ecological boundaries.”

The OWG is mandated to submit a report containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action to the 68th Session of the General Assembly, which will start in September 2013.

Statements by the President of General Assembly, the Secretary-General, Director of DSD/DESA, Member States, Major Groups, press releases and summaries of the meeting, as well as recordings of the sessions, can be found on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

- [More information](#)

Share your Sustainable Development in Action story with us at [dsd@un.org](mailto:dsd@un.org), for consideration of upcoming Newsletter issues.

### Action networks

Sustainable Transport Partnerships and Actions for Small Island Developing States  
Sustainable Cities  
SE4All  
Higher Education  
Every Woman Every Child  
Green economy policies

## Launch of Sustainable Transport Action Network



A new Action Network on Sustainable

Transport has been launched on UN DESA's Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (SDKP).

Action Networks are action-oriented communities where stakeholders may collaborate and share information on certain sustainable development topics, such as sustainable transport. They are meant to catalyze actions among all stakeholders and their networks to implement concrete policies, plans, programmes, and projects in support of the objectives of the network.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has made transport one of the six building blocks for sustainable development in the Five Year Action Agenda for his second term, demonstrating the importance of sustainable transport as a critical enabler of development.

The creation of the Action Network reflects the need to improve access to goods and services in support of economic and social development while at the same time minimizing the negative environmental, social and economic impacts of a rapidly growing transport sector.

The network integrates different initiatives on sustainable transport including the Voluntary Commitments on sustainable transport made at Rio+20 and the Secretary General's Action Agenda. The UN-DESA hosted Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), a voluntary multi-stakeholder partnership, helps to coordinate the initiatives under the Action Network.

If you wish to add your initiative in support of the Action Network on Sustainable Transport, please register on the SDKP.

- [Sustainable Transport](#)

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## Bridging Knowledge and Capacity Gaps for Sustainability Transition: A Framework for Action

An expert consultation on knowledge and capacity needs for sustainability transition took place in Incheon, South Korea, from 6 to 8 March 2013, bringing together more than 100 experts, including 50 delegations from developing countries.

Organised by the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) in partnership with the Asia-Europe Foundation, the Korea Environment Institute, and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), the consultation highlighted that knowledge sharing and capacity building are central to achieving sustainable development goals and objectives.

The meeting concluded with the adoption of "Bridging Knowledge and Capacity Gaps for Sustainability Transition: A Framework for Action", a document containing a set of concrete recommendations. Among other things, the Framework for Action emphasizes that it is important to:

- ensure the inclusion of Knowledge Management & Capacity Building into Sustainable Development strategy and planning at all levels of governance and institutions;
- maintain catalogues and mapping of Sustainable Development actors, activities, resources and networks;
- focus on an integrated approach to sustainability challenges of climate change adaptation and mitigation, water management, food security, and sustainable energy in anticipation of the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals.

The meeting called upon the UNOSD to disseminate the above referred Framework for Action as widely as possible to all stakeholders at all levels. Further information, including the full meeting report and the outcome document, is available on the UNOSD website.

- [More information](#)



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## Google+ hang out highlights Major Groups successes at Rio+20

As part of the ongoing follow-up of the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, UN DESA's Division for Sustainable Development hosted a Google+ Hangout on 26 March that highlighted the successes of the Major Groups and other stakeholders at the Rio+20 Conference. The hang out explored the views of civil society on the positive and concrete outcomes of the conference, and the Major Groups' ongoing follow up of the conference.



Panellists at the Google+ Hangout were Corinne Woods, Director of the UN Millennium Campaign; Chantal Line Carpentier, Major Groups Programme Coordinator at UNDESA's Division for Sustainable Development; Farooq Ullah, Director of Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future; Maruxa Cardama, Former Secretary General of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD); Jeffery Huffines, Organizing Partner of the NGO Major Group. The discussion was moderated by John Romano, Social Media Focal Point for UNDESA's Division for Sustainable Development. A recording of the hang out is available here: <http://bit.ly/MGHangout>

- [More information](#)

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## High-level dialogue discusses water and the post-2015 development framework

To mark the 2013 International Year of Water Cooperation and the twentieth anniversary of World Water Day, a high level interactive dialogue of the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly was held at UN Headquarters in New York on 22 March 2013.

Taking place in the context of current discussions on the post-2015 development framework and the process of developing a set of Sustainable Development Goals, the event identified and discussed water-related challenges and key areas which in the future will require stronger political support and international cooperation.

In his opening remarks, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the high-level interactive dialogue would help the deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals, where water issues will be critical.

The high level dialogue can be viewed on [UN Web TV](#) and further information on the event can be found on [World Water Day 2013 website](#).

- [More information](#)

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