<u>Convergence of UNFCCC and SDG processes</u>

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On Thursday, November 21, 2013, environmental and other groups, including Greenpeace, WWF, Oxfam, 350.org, Friends of the Earth, International Trade Union Confederation and ActionAid, walked out of COP 19 in protest at the lack of ambition and progress in the conference. In a joint statement, the groups said "enough is enough" and that the conference "which should have been an important step in the just transition to a sustainable future, is on track to deliver virtually nothing." To be fair, the UNFCCC issued a press release at the end of conference that said that the conference has kept governments "on track" towards a universal climate agreement in 2015 and included "significant new decisions" that will cut emissions from deforestation and on loss and damage. However, given the extreme fractiousness of the UNFCCC process, the fair question on the table is: can the world really get to where we need to be?

The climate crisis is proving to be extremely complex (a multi-jurisdictional market failure on a global scale over very long time horizons) and dissimilar to traditional pollution problems, and thus may not be solvable by traditional output control techniques. An "output" emissions target approach, as exemplified by the current UNFCCC process, is fraught with inherent ethical and equity dilemmas and is (unsurprisingly) highly susceptible to deadlock. However, thinking of the climate crisis as part of a nexus with sustainable development would reframe the problem as a multidimensional challenge for transformative economic and social change. An "input" approach focused on a sustainable energy agenda (sustainable energy for all) within a global sustainable development framework could be pragmatic, morally justifiable and politically attractive; climate mitigation could be a contingent benefit of this agenda and framework. To break through the unfortunate impasses and deadlocks of recent years, global climate policy should strive to be pragmatic, valuing pluralism, flexibility and practical results – if some combination of "output" and "input" approaches could be workable, they should be seriously pursued.

With the emergence of the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) processes, we are at or fast approaching an inflection point in global development. The time may now be ripe for a fresh approach, to move towards convergence and integration of the two tracks of human development and environmental protection. In other words, poverty eradication, the overarching goal of human development, must be pursued in conjunction with environmental sustainability and the "game changer" of climate change. In this

light, the international community should pursue convergence of the UNFCCC processes with the post-2015 development agenda/SDG processes. As a start, for example, work stream 2 of ADP (the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action) could be programmatically integrated with the SDG processes on articulating climate change mitigation and adaptation goals, targets and indicators, so as to foster "cross-fertilization" of concepts and action steps. The ultimate goal should be to develop a coherent and integrated global climate policy that has the benefit of mitigating climate change and building resilience while respecting individual nations' right to development under a universally agreed sustainable development framework. Aspirational norms such as SDGs could inspire global action and partnerships across public and private sectors to foster the energy revolution that will be needed to decouple economic growth from fossil fuel consumption. We have a unique opportunity now – at this inflection point – to leverage the full panoply and power of the emerging global processes and mechanisms for implementing sustainable development, which surely must include pragmatic pathways for climate mitigation and adaptation. More information can be found at:

http://digitalcommons.pace.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=lawdissertations.