



IUCN VIEWS ON THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This document summarises the points the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) considers essential in the discussion on the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Separate IUCN position papers and policy briefs on specific issues are under development to provide for a more in-depth analysis.

1. IUCN envisions sustainable development as a **path that leads to a just and prosperous world which values and conserves nature by ensuring, through effective and equitable governance, that its resources are used sustainably**. This should be the ultimate outcome of any process to set Sustainable Development Goals.
2. The SDGs should be formulated in such a way as to **emphasise the synergistic links between the three dimensions of sustainable development**. Focusing on their **interconnectedness** will ensure that no one goal undermines the effectiveness of other goals. It is the interconnectedness among the economic, social and environmental (as well as cultural and governance) dimensions that will make the goals truly “sustainable”.
3. IUCN **recommends the inclusion of a goal addressing the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services**, as an important contribution to achieving the other goals. Because of the critical role that biodiversity and its ecosystem services play as the “life support systems” of our Planet, the SDGs framework should provide for the enabling conditions enshrined in the existing biodiversity-related agreements and for addressing the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss. Healthy and productive soils/lands, forests, oceans and fresh water ecosystems, achieved through conservation, sustainable use and/or restoration of natural resources should be the principal building blocks toward poverty eradication and universal human development and well-being.
4. The post-2015 development agenda and **the SDGs should build on all relevant existing commitments**, including those contained in the Rio agreements of 1992, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets which were adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010. The Targets cover a range of development-related issues and provide relevant quantitative targets for a number of the goals in the SDGs package. These have been negotiated and adopted by most governments and as such, they have strong international and national legitimacy.
5. **The means needed to achieve the SDGs should be discussed in a transparent manner**. Developed countries have pledged to commit 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) as Official Development Assistance (ODA), Most countries have not fulfilled this commitment. Delivering on this pledge would give a boost to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda by reflecting the confidence of

developed countries in the effectiveness of the SDGs framework to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

6. In a world with a population projected to reach 9 billion by 2050, ensuring **food, water and energy security** will remain the biggest concern of all governments, especially in a context compounded by the challenge of climate change. Nature, with its diversified ecosystems such as forests, aquifers, soils, lakes, oceans and wetlands, and the services they provide, is a critical ingredient in any approach that seeks to ensure continued availability of food, water and renewable clean energy. IUCN promotes **nature-based solutions** as an indispensable and cost-effective complement of measures to take society to a sustainable future.
7. **Water security** is based on contributions of both nature and human ingenuity. Natural infrastructure is provided by ecosystems (rivers, lakes, aquifers, wetlands and other ecosystems that provide and protect water catchment areas) and is usually highly cost-effective, and its restoration can provide attractive returns on investment in social and economic terms. This is what IUCN calls a **nature-based solution to water security**.
8. Ecosystems make critical contributions to food and nutrition security by **supporting the availability, access, and use of food**, both farmed and wild, and strengthening the stability of food systems by sustaining the ecosystems on which such systems depend. For example, soil processes and wild pollinators are critically important to agricultural productivity – and therefore food availability; forests provide access to food both directly (through the edible wild plants and animals found there) and indirectly (via forest-product income that can be used to buy food). **Stable food security** requires food systems that are resilient. **Food resilience** is the capacity of ecosystems to support food production and the ability of people to produce, harvest or buy food in the face of environmental, economic and social shocks and stresses. This emphasis on resilience is critical if food security objectives are to be achieved and sustained over the long term (to embrace risks and shocks from climate change or disasters). An ecosystem-aware approach to food security policy-making goes beyond the conventional focus on productivity, trade and macro-economic issues. It takes an integrated approach to the development of sustainable food systems that embrace the environmental aspects that underpin them. IUCN calls this a **nature-based solution to food security**.
9. **Energy security** in a sustainable development framework is the reliable supply of affordable, renewable and clean energy. Such a system is built on **reliability and resilience**. Changes in ecosystem services linked to degradation and climate change have the potential to impact on both. While there is growing recognition that resilience is a key component of energy security, traditional approaches to energy security have focused on shocks and changes in economic markets (e.g. spikes in oil prices impacting on balance of payments for governments dependent on imported petroleum products) and geopolitical issues (e.g. countries depending on other energy provider countries). Efforts to build resilience in energy systems have thus been focused on securing reliable supplies of energy. The role of healthy and well functioning ecosystems in this respect is of paramount importance. IUCN calls this a **nature-based solution to energy security**.
10. Disasters are identified as a key impediment to sustainable development and to the achievement of the MDGs. At the same time, environmental degradation is consistently highlighted as a key factor that exacerbates economic and non-economic