

UN General Assembly
Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the
Post-2015 Development Agenda
Goals and Targets

New Zealand statement

Delivered by Angela Hassan-Sharp,
Counsellor

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I'd like to briefly share how New Zealand currently measures and reports on progress towards sustainable development in New Zealand and work that is currently underway to prepare for measuring and reporting on the post-2015 development agenda.

Firstly, currently, New Zealand looks at fifteen themes that cover the three dimensions of sustainable development – environmental responsibility, economic efficiency and social cohesion.

These themes cover a diverse range of topics such as population, health, biodiversity, land use, energy, transport, economic resilience, social connection and governance.

We have selected a small number of indicators for each theme designed to answer four main questions:

- How well do we live?
- How well are resources distributed?
- How efficiently are we using our resources?
- What are we leaving behind for our children?

While we track progress on sustainable development using eighty-five indicators, there are actually just sixteen indicators which we use to answer these four questions.

To measure how well we live, we track the unemployment rate, disposable income, health expectancy and physical safety.

To measure how well resources are distributed, we track access to early childhood education, income inequality and economic hardship.

To measure efficient use of resources, we track greenhouse gas intensity, energy intensity and labour productivity.

And finally, to determine what we're leaving behind for our children we track the distribution of selected native species, greenhouse gas emissions, nitrogen in rivers, adult educational attainment, assets and infrastructure and speakers of Māori language.

So, while we collect data on 85 indicators of progress to sustainable development, we only use sixteen of these to report on how we are doing.

Secondly, like many of our fellow Member States we are already working domestically to understand and analyse what will be expected of New Zealand to measure and report on the Sustainable Development Goals. To that end, we've established an inter-agency taskforce to ensure a Whole of Government approach and policy coherence.

We recently asked the taskforce to review the 169 targets agreed by the Open Working Group, asking that they provide advice on:

- whether New Zealand currently measures progress against these targets?
- if we do, what is being measured in New Zealand?
- and which indicators are used to inform that measurement?

Our overall assessment is that we can track many dimensions of the proposed SDG targets, but we would struggle with other dimensions.

I'd like to give four examples – on oceans, ecosystem and biodiversity, health and education.

Oceans Targets

We found that while New Zealand can measure progress against four of the seven targets and one of the means of implementation, there are issues with each of the targets and there are challenges which could mean that not all countries would be able to track progress.

Ecosystems and Biodiversity

New Zealand can report on some dimensions of eight of the nine targets under Goal 15 but there are gaps that present difficulties.

Health and Goal 4: Education

While New Zealand is able to report on the targets under these goals, we are very conscious that many developing countries struggle to regularly report health and education data.

In conclusion, and as we have previously stated, to “leave no-one behind” the post-2015 development agenda needs to be able to be implemented, measured and reported on by all member states, particularly those in special circumstances, including SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.

New Zealand believes that a practical and common-sense approach is needed as we continue to strengthen the targets and determine effective indicators. We would welcome comment from colleagues on this issue and look forward to a good exchange of views over the rest of the week.