



**Expert Group Meeting for the Global Sustainable Development Report -
A prototype report, future directions and network of scientific contributors**

Dubrovnik, Croatia, 21-22 October 2013

Hosted by the Government of Croatia

Follow-up to Rio+20

A major outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (or Rio+20) was the decision to establish a universal, intergovernmental high-level political forum (HLPF). This forum is to build on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and subsequently replace the Commission. According to the Rio +20 outcome document¹, the high-level political forum shall follow up on the implementation of sustainable development. It should avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner.

The outcome document also stipulates that the forum could, as one of its functions, “*strengthen the science-policy interface through review of documentation bringing together dispersed information and assessments, including in the form of a global sustainable development report, building on existing assessments*” as well as to enhance evidence-based decision-making at all levels.

The Secretary-General provided further details in his report entitled “*Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled ‘The future we want’*”² within the agenda item of Programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013, which was endorsed by the General Assembly last year. The Secretary-General defined what the Division for Sustainable Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will do to support the above intergovernmentally agreed decisions, saying that it will undertake “*in-depth analysis and evaluation of trends and scientific analysis in the implementation of sustainable development, including lessons learned, best practices and new challenges, and cross-sectoral analysis of sustainable development issues*”.

The final report of the Secretary General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability³, while only an informal recommendation, contains a whole section detailing the importance of basing sustainable development policy-making on the best and most up-to-date evidence and in this regard also elaborates on “*Global Sustainable Development Outlook*”, which would bring together assessments across sectors.

A UN Task Team has been formed to reach out to scientific communities across the world and to prepare a first edition of the Global Sustainable Development Report. An Executive Summary of a prototype edition of the Report was launched at the inaugural session of the High-level Political Forum on 24 September 2013 for further consultations. For further details, please refer to: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/>

¹ A/RES/66/288

² A/67/591 of 27 November 2012

³ Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing,
http://www.un.org/gsp/sites/default/files/attachments/GSP_Report_web_final.pdf

Aim of the report

The Report aims to:

- Map the sustainable development assessments and related processes, provide science digests of issues not contained in assessments, and highlight emerging issues identified by scientists;
- Review sustainable development progress since 1950 versus goals suggested by science and in terms of trends in policy, institutions and implementation of commitments, and sketch the geography of sustainable development progress;
- Tell the “stories” of future pathways toward sustainable development based on the literature, contrasted against a dynamics-as-usual scenario ;
- Discuss investment and technology needs to achieve the future pathways outlined above, provide a status report on the global Rio+20 follow-up processes on the “means of implementation”, and discuss the pros and cons of new measures of progress “beyond GDP” and related means of monitoring;
- Identify lessons learnt and coherent policy menus from national, regional and global case studies of the climate-land-energy-water-development nexus; and
- Conclude with policy issues for consideration.

Objective of the expert group meeting

The expert group meeting aims to bring together scientists, policy analysts, planners and other experts involved in sustainable development at the national, regional and sub-regional level in order to see how they can best contribute to the future Global Sustainable Development Report and establish a network of scientific contributors that can cooperate and coordinate at the regional and sub-regional level.

Approach

The meeting will be a hands-on, working-level meeting. There will be a number of formal presentations, but most time will be allocated to discussions how to best to involve scientific community to contribute to future Global Sustainable Development Reports and how to make them useful for policy-makers in order for them to adopt evidence-based policy decisions.

Programme of the EGM

The EGM will last for two days. Day 1 comprises of a regional launch of a prototype of the Report for review and consultations by the meeting, in order to reflect the perspectives of the region. Day 2 will focus on the role of the Report in strengthening the science-policy interface. In particular, it will discuss a possible outline of the next Global Sustainable Development Report, most productive and useful way of involving national, sub-regional and regional scientific communities, policy analysts, planners and other experts as well as the most useful way to use scientific research and data in policy-making.

Participants

National, sub-regional and regional scientific communities, policy analysts, planners and other experts, representatives of countries in the region involved in sustainable development, as well as relevant regional and sub-regional organizations.

Management arrangements

Overall responsibility is with UN DESA which will prepare invitations, moderate sessions, and provide funding for participation, in line with UN rules and regulations.

The partner in Croatia will provide meeting facilities and support participants in local logistics.