

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR

Background Paper on Interlinkages between SDGs and Climate Change

Background and objectives:

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in 2015 has established a firm foundation for the coherent implementation of climate action and sustainable development objectives at all levels. Climate action features explicitly in Agenda 2030 as SDG 13: however, it is deeply interconnected with many of the other goals and targets.

The multiple inter-linkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement indicate that integrated and synergistic implementation of both would lead to many benefits. Such an approach would considerably enhance effectiveness and the quality of outcomes, besides contributing towards more efficient use of resources, greater coherence across sectors and actors, and the formation of novel partnerships.

In this context, DESA, jointly with the UNFCCC secretariat, and in collaboration with various partners, organized the ‘Global Conference on Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda’ in Copenhagen in April 2019. The conference aimed to identify potential synergies and inter-linkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement (including through analyses of VNRs and NDCs), analyzed gaps and challenges, including trade-offs, and made a set of concrete recommendations for strengthening synergies; directing the means of implementation towards more joined-up action; and stimulating multi-stakeholder partnerships.

A detailed concept note for the Conference is attached in [Annex 1](#).

The subject background paper will contribute to the development of a series of outcome documents of the Synergies Conference, and will feed into the discussions during COP25 (in December)

Work assignment:

The selected vendor will:

- Produce a desktop review paper on interlinkages between NDCs and SDG Action Plans, with a focus on implementation and global, regional, and national level actions, and suggestions to synergistically raising ambition levels with regard to both the NDCs and SDGs to simultaneously accelerate climate action and achieve sustainable development goals.
- Ensure that:
 - the paper has a strong emphasis on exploring the link between NDCs and SDGs and outline incentives for NDC enhancement in the context of sustainable development, challenges and successes for coordinated

implementation; the potential for scaling up or replication along with recommendations/good practice suggestions for practical ways in which to raise the level of ambition and action,

- the paper contains suggestions on how best to leverage advocacy, policies, programmes, implementation mechanisms, multi-stakeholder action and partnerships for both the SDGs and for climate action at the national level, so that co-benefits are maximized and trade-offs minimized.
- the paper contains suggestions for further actions to be taken at the global and regional levels, especially with regard to the ‘means of implementation’ identified in SDG 17 – such as finance; technology; capacity-building; policy/institutional coherence; multi-stakeholder partnerships; and data, monitoring and accountability – to provide cross-cutting support across both climate action and other SDGs.

Duration of contract

The duration of the assignment is from 15 September to 15 October 2019.

Expected Outputs and Delivery Dates

In fulfilling the responsibilities specified above, the consultant will deliver the following main outputs:

#	Deliverables	Target due date
1	Outline, 2-3 pages (in MS-WORD, TimesNewRoman, 12pt, single-spaced. To be submitted electronically.)	20 September, 2019
2	Final desktop review paper on interlinkages between NDCs and SDG Action Plans (In MS-WORD, TimesNewRoman, 12pt, single-spaced. 75,000 – 100,000 characters with spaces (approx. 20-30 pages in total) To be submitted electronically.)	15 October, 2019

Performance indicators

The following performance indicators will be used to evaluate the work undertaken by the vendor and to certify the payment of the fee:

- Timeliness of submissions
- Value of services rendered in relation to their costs
- Demonstrated expert knowledge of the subject area
- Receptive / responsive to feed-back from staff members
- Quality of analysis, recommendations or conclusions in reports/studies

- Readability of material

Payment terms

The fee will be paid in one instalment upon submission and acceptance of the background paper.

Qualifications/Experience:

- The vendor must demonstrate a minimum of 15 years of relevant experience in sustainable development, with demonstrated proven track record in analytical research and in the development of global multi-stakeholder partnerships;
- The vendor must demonstrate experience in writing project work plans, project-related documentation, or technical papers.

Language:

The background paper must be produced in English.

The vendor is requested to submit an offer, accompanied by the CV of the proposed person who will be assigned with this task, showing his/her qualifications and a company profile that documents the relevant experience. The contract will be rewarded upon review of the submitted documents.

Annex 1

Global Conference on Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Linking Implementation across SDGs and NDCs

Venue: UN City, Copenhagen/ Time: 1-3 April 2019

Draft Concept Note

Context

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in 2015 has established a firm foundation for the coherent implementation of climate action and sustainable development objectives at all levels. Climate action features explicitly in Agenda 2030 as SDG 13: however, it is deeply interconnected with many of the other goals and targets.

For example, the energy transitions envisaged in SDG 7 can be expected to contribute significantly to lowering GHG emissions relative to business-as-usual pathways, thereby contributing to the objectives of the Paris agreement. Similarly, more sustainable industrialization under SDG 9, sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices under SDG 2, and changing patterns of consumption and production in line with SDG 12 can all contribute towards low-emission pathways, the creation of new kinds of jobs and long term progress towards eradicating poverty and other deprivations.

At the same time, progress made towards limiting global temperature increase would significantly ease the path towards many other SDGs, such as those related to poverty, hunger, access to water, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, etc. Many of the goals and targets can also be achieved in ways that would enable adaptive responses to climate changes, for example those related to resilience in SDGs 9 and 11, respectively relating to infrastructure and urban settlements.

The relative strength of these interlinkages between climate impacts and the SDGs varies across countries and regions, as do the actions needed to ensure that co-benefits are maximized at all levels. A better understanding (including their quantification, wherever possible) of these co-benefits in national, regional and global contexts can spur more deliberate action and collaboration towards realizing them. Such actions and collaborations could result in, for example, improving the design and implementation of policies, directing finance and resources towards critical nexuses, supporting specific private sector initiatives and promoting well identified science, technology and innovation (STI) initiatives.

Such actions are urgently needed. The Special Report (2018) from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the impacts of global warming at 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels identifies the critical consequences of such a temperature rise, as well as the coming decade as being the only window within which actions to stay within this limit can

succeed. Hence the second round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) covering 2025-2030/35, to be prepared for submission in 2019 will be crucial in this regard.

This is also the window within which the SDGs themselves stand to be achieved, and the year 2019 holds special significance in that regard. The global review process for the SDGs will complete its first quadrennial cycle in 2019, with SDG 13 itself set for in-depth review at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July. Focusing on concrete measures for synergistic implementation at all levels would help inform the HLPF and stimulate corresponding action across multiple stakeholders.

Strengthening win-win outcomes for climate action and the SDGs

At the national level, the scope of such convergence has been examined through a number of studies that compare ‘Nationally Determined Contributions’ (NDCs) - countries’ own commitments of action towards the Paris Climate Agreement - to the SDGs. For example Brandi *et al* (DIE, 2017) and Dzebo *et al* (SEI, 2017) have noted the potential for climate related actions from the NDCs to contribute to all of the SDGs. They also observed that the most frequent links were to the SDGs related to food, water, energy, cities and life on land; but that links to others such as health, education and gender equality were relatively less common. Strong links to SDG 17, especially through those NDCs whose implementation is conditional to receiving financial support, were also apparent.

The full potential of such synergistic outcomes could, however, be difficult to realize unless deliberate action is taken. For example, Northrop *et al* (WRI 2016) studied 162 ‘Intended National Determined Contributions’ (INDCs) and found that the potential plans, policies, targets or other measures contained in them were aligned to 154 of the 169 SDG targets. However, they also found that most countries did not refer to the SDGs, or to their national planning priorities and objectives in communicating their INDCs, leading to an apprehension that many of the potential mutual benefits could remain un-realized during the implementation process.

Some of the voluntary national reviews (VNRs) presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in 2016 and 2017 noted the links between climate action and the SDGs. Arguably this represents a higher level of political awareness of the linkages between the SDGs and climate action; however, details were not presented on how to benefit from these links during implementation.

In this context, there is a strong case to be made for examining how best to leverage advocacy, policies, programmes, implementation mechanisms, multi-stakeholder action and partnerships for both the SDGs and for climate action, so that co-benefits are maximized and trade-offs minimized at all levels. The Conference aims to make a contribution in this regard.

Rationale for organizing a Global Conference

The multiple inter-linkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement indicate that integrated and synergistic implementation of both would lead to many benefits. Such an approach would considerably enhance effectiveness and the quality of outcomes, besides

contributing towards more efficient use of resources, greater coherence across sectors and actors, and the formation of novel partnerships.

The details of such an approach would vary, depending on the context. In some contexts, there may be limited awareness of how Agenda 2030 and the Paris Accord are linked - in such cases, there may be need for greater advocacy and research. In others, where such awareness is well established, there may instead be a greater need for practical guidance to support implementation in ways that would make the most of these linkages. Such guidance could include

The previous section has emphasized that at the national level, more work may be needed to connect the Nationally Determined Contributions, the primary implementing instruments towards the Paris Accord, with the national development plans, the primary implementing instruments towards the SDGs.

Actions taken at the global and regional levels may also need to be re-visited. In particular, several of the ‘means of implementation’ identified in SDG 17 – such as finance; technology; capacity-building; policy/institutional coherence; multi-stakeholder partnerships; and data, monitoring and accountability – can provide, if properly directed, cross-cutting support across both climate action and other SDGs.

A diversity of implementation experiences and research from different parts of the world is fueling a greater understanding of these issues, as well as bringing to the fore good practices, gaps, challenges and opportunities towards the joined-up implementation of both agendas.

It is in this context that DESA and UNFCCC secretariat, in collaboration with other various partners, proposes to organize a Global Conference to strengthen synergies between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. To this end, the Conference, planned for 1-3 April in 2019, will bring together experts from both developing and developed countries, as well as international resource persons from academia and think tanks, the private sector, NGOs and representatives of relevant UN organizations.

Objectives of the Global Conference

The participants in the Global Conference will identify potential synergies and inter-linkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement (including through analyses of VNRs and NDCs), analyze gaps and challenges, including trade-offs, and make a set of concrete recommendations for strengthening synergies; directing the means of implementation towards more joined-up action; and stimulating multi-stakeholder partnerships. The Conference will promote dialogue on the SDGs, considered in the HLPF, and linkages with climate action, considered in the UNFCCC.

The focus of the discussions will be on implementation at the global, regional and country levels. The Conference will also provide a unique opportunity for peer-to-peer exchange of information and experiences. It is anticipated that implementing partners will be motivated to translate these into concrete results on the ground, and follow-up events could also be held to continue peer-to-peer learning and exchanges.

Participants

A total of 200 participants are envisaged, including from countries that have conducted VNRs; have substantially advanced implementation towards their NDCs or deployed win-win solutions for climate action and the SDGs at scale through multi-stakeholder partnerships. DESA, in consultation with its partners, will identify knowledgeable and experienced experts and resource persons and will fund the participation of about 40 participants from developing countries. Representatives of developed countries and those of international organizations will be responsible for their own participation.

Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of the conference will consist of:

- (i) a publication containing selected expert papers on key topics discussed at the Conference (drafts will be presented as background);
- (ii) a policy-relevant summary reflecting the highlights of discussions; and
- (iii) a set of concrete recommendations for strengthening the linkages between climate action and the SDGs, including for VNR reporting.

It is expected that these outcomes will help inform on-going and future discussions on relevant issues at the HLPF, UNFCCC conference of parties and other relevant platforms.