



CLIMATE AND SDG SYNERGIES



Virtual Learning Series

Harnessing Climate & SDGs Synergies to Raise Ambition in the Era of Paris+5 and Pandemic Recovery

Virtual Learning Series

Five years after the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, 2020 was meant to be a turning point for climate action and the SDGs. While the COVID-19 Pandemic has upended societies, causing significant disruption worldwide, the climate and SDG emergency continues apace.

Extreme poverty is projected to increase for the first time in 20 years, as the most vulnerable bear the brunt of the Pandemic's impacts. Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are at record levels and continue to increase, putting the world on a dangerous path of rising temperatures, well above the level necessary to prevent the worst impacts of climate change.

Covid-19 shows us the importance of inclusive, sustainable, and resilient societies. No country can achieve this goal without swift and integrated climate and SDG action. As countries seek to rebound, recovery plans present an unprecedented opportunity to raise ambitions to leave no one behind and achieve net-zero carbon emissions by mid-century. Climate and SDG goals are best achieved in synch, with deliberately reinforcing policy synergies (or multipliers). Investment in social protection, energy and food systems; public services and infrastructure, for example, can be shaped to maximize environmental, economic and social co-benefits. A mounting body of evidence shows that low-carbon and climate resilient growth can deliver long-term social and economic co-benefits. Synergies can also boost the public benefits of investment, attracting additional resources.

Many low and medium-income countries responded to the pandemic with able and effective public health responses. They can continue to lead the way with recovery strategies that enable more resilient, sustainable, inclusive and prosperous economies

In the wake of the UN Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December, UNDESA, UNFCCC and UNITAR are launching this learning series to share the science, evidence and tools that enable climate and SDG synergies. The series will build on the 2019 Climate and SDG Synergies Conference and 2020 Virtual Consultations, going into more depth to facilitate the application of synergies in practice. The series' three webinars will respond to the questions: why, what and how. The first will equip stakeholders

to make the case for synergies; the second will zero-in on tools used to identify and harness climate & SDG interlinkages; and the third will focus on strategies to overcome implementation challenges.

Webinar 1: Making the Case for Integrated Climate and SDG Action

Date: Tuesday, 15 Dec 2020

Webinar 1 will provide participants with tools and evidence they can use to advocate for climate & SDG synergies in their local context. Speakers will illustrate how synergies can be tapped to meet needs now, while laying the ground for more resilient, just and prosperous economies. They will introduce ways to demonstrate the potential of tying climate action to job growth and poverty reduction; human health; financing; food security; and resilience.

Guiding Questions:

- **How can SDG & Climate synergies be applied to generate jobs and sustain livelihoods? How are these benefits directed to the most vulnerable and poorest?**
- **What financial gains or benefits can be realized by applying SDG & Climate synergies?**
- **What links human health to climate action and other SDGs? What examples best illustrate?**
- **With increased food insecurity, how do we make the case for climate & SDG synergies in agriculture and related sectors?**

Webinar 2: How to Maximize Climate & SDG Synergies? Identifying Opportunities and Navigating Trade-offs

Date: Tuesday, 12 Jan 2021

Webinar 2 will introduce the tools and methods that can help decision-makers identify climate & SDG synergies with the most potential in their locality or country. Trainers will offer lessons learned for local and national planning and introduce decision-making tools that can help planners navigate trade-offs and prioritize opportunities to realize climate & SDG co-benefits.

Guiding Questions:

- **What policy areas hold the most promise to maximize SDG and climate synergies?**
- **What tools can help stakeholders understand how social, environmental and economic policies and/or targets will interact in practice?**
- **What methods are used to identify the actions & collaborations most likely to advance multiple targets?**
- **How can stakeholders minimize or avoid trade-offs between objectives?**
- **How does integrated SDG and climate planning work in practice?**

Webinar 3: Overcoming Constraints to Implement Climate & SDG Synergies: capacity, financing and monitoring

Date: Tuesday, 26 Jan 2021

Webinar 3 will focus on the re-occurring challenges of realizing climate & SDG synergies in practice. Trainers will speak to the implications of integrated Climate & SDG action for national capacity, financing and monitoring. They will offer tools, resources and advice to help participants address each implementation challenge. Participants will be asked to share relevant examples and make forward-looking suggestions.

Guiding Questions:

- **What capacity or institutional constraints prevent countries or localities from integrating climate and SDG action? What strategies have been effective to overcome capacity gaps?**
- **What does integrated climate & SDG action mean for financing? In light of the Pandemic, how can countries and localities identify financing for integrated climate and SDG action?**
- **How can the synergies be monitored for transparency & accountability? What steps are countries taking to capture the impacts of policy multipliers, including across sectors?**

Key Resource Material

UNDESA & UNFCCC 2020 Virtual Consultations on Climate & SDG Synergies, Background Note:
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26236Concept_Note_2020_Global_Climate_SD_Gs_Synergies_Consultations.pdf

UN Climate and SDGs Synergies Knowledge Platform <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/climate-sdgs-synergies2019#home>

UN Global Sustainable Development Report 2019, “The Future is Now: Science for Achieving Sustainable Development”
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/24797GSDR_report_2019.pdf

Report of the First Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 1-3 April 2019, Copenhagen, Denmark
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/25256WEB_version.pdf

Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), SDG Synergies Website and planning tool
<https://www.sdg synergies.org/>

“Green recovery plans boost income, employment and GDP”, Report of the We Mean Business Coalition, Oct 2020 <https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/press-release/report-green-recovery-plans-boost-income-employment-and-gdp/>