

**Chair's Summary of the Expert Group Meeting for the UN Global Sustainable Development Report -  
Engaging National Assessments, Beijing, China, 12-13 December 2013**

1. Scientists and experts met in Beijing, China, from 12 to 13 December 2013, one year after the Rio+20 Conference.
2. Many supported the global aspiration for the next two generations to eliminate poverty and hunger; to feed, nurture, house, educate 9 billion people by 2050; to secure inclusive growth, equity and development, and to preserve the Earth's life support systems.
3. During the meeting, some identified a number of common challenges for the next decades including poverty eradication, sustainable consumption and production, employment and learning, inclusive growth, income distribution, social equity and security, education, health care, science and technology innovation, urbanization, energy, water, climate change, land use and soil protection, forests, oceans and seas, marine protection and fishing
4. Natural and social scientists have raised early awareness of emerging issues and have been suggesting sustainable development goals and targets for more than forty years. Many of these have already been addressed by decision-makers, but more needs to be done to inform decision-makers of emerging issues that scientists consider are currently not well represented on the agenda.
5. Scientists have suggested potential future goals and targets for the next two generations, based on existing assessments that analyzed past trends and future options (see Box). Many scientists suggested that they might be considered by the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG-SDG) to take this into consideration and to draw upon the scientific community of sustainable development scenario analysts to inform them on trade-offs and synergies between suggested goals and targets.
6. Many agreed that building this "common future we want" requires effective cooperation following the principle of the common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) at the global, regional and national levels, in particular on "means of implementation" for sustainable development such as technology, finance and capacity building.
7. Some expressed the need to draw on the wider range of global modeling and scenario analysis capabilities, in order to assess various sets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and pathways toward their achievement, including in terms of technology and financing needs. Scenarios can also help interpreting progress towards Sustainable Development Goals once agreed.
8. Some expressed the idea for the UN Division for Sustainable Development to provide a UN institutional home for SDG scenarios and global models, in order to inform the Global Sustainable Development Report in particular and the deliberations of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in general.

**Box: Potential sustainable development goals/targets that have been suggested by scientists:**

1. Eliminate extreme poverty worldwide by 2050
2. Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015, further halve it by 2030, and eradicate hunger by 2050
3. Universal access to improved water source and basic sanitation by 2050
4. Universal health coverage
5. Universal primary education by 2020. Universal secondary education by 2030.
6. Create 63 million decent new jobs per year until 2050, achieving full, productive and decent employment for all.
7. Eliminate overfishing and restore fish stocks.
8. Stabilize biodiversity at the 2020/2030 level (depending on region) by 2050.
9. No net forest loss and no more destruction of primary forests by 2020.
10. Stabilize global materials (e.g. non-renewable resource) consumption at 2015 levels.
11. Achieve 0.7% ODA/GNI (OECD countries), focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Mobilize resources for a global SDG fund commensurate with estimated needs by 2018.
12. GDP per capita > US\$10,000 PPP in all countries by 2050.
13. Reduce the wide disparity of per capita GDP between developed countries and developing countries.
14. Sustained increase in intergenerational earnings and educational mobility.
15. By 2030, ensure universal access to modern energy services; double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
16. Reduce the number of slum dwellers to close to 0 by 2050.
17. Hold global mean temperature increase below 2 degrees Celsius.
18. Increase science and technology innovation capacity through knowledge sharing and technology transferring.

Note: see also <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport>

9. Many expressed the views that national and regional sustainable development assessments, wherever available, may be important inputs for a Global Sustainable Development Report. There are big differences in terms of national priorities under the sustainable development agenda. Developing countries continue to face a capacity challenge to synthesize lessons-learned from sectoral or issue-based assessments. Developed countries need to change their unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. These national priorities, of both developed and developing countries must be adequately reflected in the Global Sustainable Development Report.

10. It was mentioned that there are thousands of international assessments that differ in terms of scope, scale, organization, process, participation, resources and perceived policy relevance. It was noted by some that the IPCC model of scientific assessments has served as an institutional model for an increasing number of assessments, including at the national level. It was also underlined that the United Nations flagship publication model has advantages of low cost, wider stakeholder participation, and a plurality of views.

11. Several experts expressed the need for a regular assessment of assessments to identify common ground and different views. The efforts of the UN Division for Sustainable Development to improve the science-policy interface for sustainable development were commended, including through its production of a prototype of the Global Sustainable Development Report and its readiness to continue producing regular editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report to bring together existing assessments to support evidence-based policy-making.

12. Many experts stressed the importance for future editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report to take into account various types of knowledge (beyond peer-reviewed knowledge) and take into account the full range of perspectives, especially those of scientists in developing countries including the poorest and most vulnerable countries. To this end, a wide range of participation through multiple channels could be encouraged. The Report could also highlight national and regional sustainable development priorities and make use of new technologies and approaches. Many suggested that Governments and other relevant stakeholders consider in their deliberations the options for future editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report illustrated in the prototype Report.

13. Many suggested the idea that national Governments carry-out regular national sustainable development reports that draw on the available scientific knowledge and to include all relevant stakeholders, to communicate their reports to the United Nations, and to cooperate with other Governments and other relevant stakeholders in building excellent national capacities. In this regard, the exemplary efforts of the Government of China and all others that submitted sustainable development reports were commended. Many suggested that the UN, donors and all relevant development partners support national sustainable development reports and related initiatives that provide ideas for improved policies.

14. Regional sustainable development reports can highlight regional priorities and support regional voices in the global deliberations. Some suggested that all Regional Commissions continue these efforts and cooperate closely with the national sustainable development report processes and with the UN Division for Sustainable Development.

15. The idea was expressed that all United Nations system entities integrate regional and sub-regional perspectives in their analytical and policy work, technical assistance and capacity-building programmes, for example by examining more systematically the implications for regional and national policy-making of intergovernmental commitments on sustainable development taken at the global level.

16. It was suggested that the UN Division for Sustainable Development continue engaging with scientists, experts, Governments and civil society to undertake in-depth analysis and evaluation of trends and scientific analysis in the implementation of sustainable development, including lessons learnt, best practices and new challenges, and cross-sectoral analysis of sustainable development issues. In particular, the idea was expressed that the Division continue leading the regular preparation of the UN Global Sustainable Development Report in an inclusive way as an entry point for the wide range of relevant scientific communities to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. It was emphasized that it is important to also involve younger scientists. It was suggested that the entire UN system and especially the UN Regional Commissions, UNESCO, UNCTAD, UNIDO and UNEP to join the effort.

17. Some expressed the need for national Governments to engage in the preparation of the Global Sustainable Development Report; facilitate science-policy dialogue; try to strengthen inter-ministerial policy coordination; to provide support to scientific networks and cross-border networking for sustainable development; to cooperate with other Governments on policies, technology and finance for sustainable development; and to consider the options illustrated in the prototype Global Sustainable Development Report.

18. Most expressed the need to consider the creation of a working group or advisory group to guide the preparation of future editions of the UN Global Sustainable Development Report. The group could include science and technology focal points nominated by each national Government.

19. Many shared the view that it is necessary to work closely together in the coming years to actively engage in and contribute to the UN Global Sustainable Development Report; to raise awareness and mobilize scientific communities in our countries to provide their inputs; to improve our collaboration and exchange of ideas on sustainable development challenges between us and between scientists and policy makers in general; to support the voice and unique perspective of our respective regions to be reflected in global debates on sustainable development; and to bring the outcomes of global science-policy debates into relevant national-level policy-making.

20. All participants expressed their gratitude for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality by the meeting host, the Administrative Centre for China's Agenda 21, and acknowledged the efforts of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs to convene this important meeting.