

Key Messages

Architecture of the HLPF

- The HLPF will be the home of the SDGs. As such, it must emphasize the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- The HLPF is a “hybrid” - where major groups and other stakeholders can engage through solid modalities. This is a great achievement for the UN.
- We must use the transition period to lay down groundwork for the HLPF, so that by 2016 it is clear what the forum will need to review and take stock of, and how, without trying to initially address everything.
- The HLPF needs a bureau, or an advisory board that can function as a bureau and guide the work of the HLPF.
- Such an Advisory Body to the forum would include representatives of Major groups and other stakeholders into the HLPF.
- The HLPF agenda should include elements that are relevant to stakeholders from all three areas of sustainable development, e.g. finance. We need to decide whether the agenda may include clusters of SDGs or individual SDGs, and how its themes will be relevant to promoting networking among various actors and raising the visibility of HLPF.
- The World Bank system, IRENA and others are important in sustainable finance and must engage in the HLPF.
- Various ministries could examine how issues areas and SDGs are related and how different ministries have an impact, noting relationships for each focus area.

The Review Process

- The HLPF will spearhead the implementation and review of SDGs.
- Review mechanisms are the basis for management accountability, and will inform the learning process within and among countries.
- SDGs need to reflect universality, but it may be a challenge for developed countries to accept this and to comply with the associated requirements.
- There could be a provision for shadow reporting by Major Groups of civil society as part of the voluntary review process.
- National sustainable development councils can promote integrated policy making and enhance accountability. They should be engaged in the forum.
- National sustainable development councils can create inclusiveness. They can work with ICLEI and mayor’s networks.
- Reviews could be organized thematically, rather than focus on the entire sustainable development agenda in a given country.
- It is important to identify the relevant state and non-state actors for each dimension on each topic so as, to showcase good practices and develop a nexus of presenters on specific topics. This could create a more permanent network of people interested to provide inputs into the forum on any given topic.
- Presentations on the reviews should be made and discussed in a more user and mass-media friendly way, so as to get messages out to all.
- It could be considered to conduct the reviews at regional level, e.g. in the regional commissions, and feed their outcome into the forum.

- The HLPF could provide “thought leadership” by synthesizing analytical efforts and showing they are adding value.

Polymaking, Coordination, and the Role of Science

- To support the HLPF, the UN system could get organized through a task manager system (with lead agencies) as was the case under the CSD.
- Task managers could help to foster collaboration and coordination across policies. They could bring in elements from other processes and the Multilateral Environment Agreements into the SDG process and the HLPF.
- Specialized agencies directly liaise with line ministries. They may not be as powerful as finance ministries, but can develop strong policies.
- The UN is a “norm-setting” institution; how best can the forum and international community help to translate agreed norms into policies at the national level?
- It would be good to create networks and engage leaders to transmit the outcomes of the HLPF to national and regional levels, and to other policymaking processes
- Implementation is difficult without funding. Finance Ministers should thus participate in HLPF discussions. Ministries of labor, agriculture, and education are also important.
- The World Bank and BWIs could take up financing of a particular issue or SDG and report to the HLPF on possible financing modalities. There could be HLPF related meetings during the Annual meetings of the BWIs.
- Perhaps a joint session of the HLPF and World Bank or Development Committee would be possible.
- Using ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum more actively for the HLPF could bring the ministers of development and possibly ministers of finance.
- ECOSOC development cooperation forum might alternatively be used for national sustainable development council meetings.
- Science is often disconnected from policymaking, so the HLPF should foster discussions between the scientific community and policymakers regarding new issues, ways to help steer policies successfully, and resources.
- The Global Sustainable Development Report could also be the vehicle to feed the outcomes of the forum’s implementation reviews into the forum.
- The Global Sustainable Development Report includes inputs from all scientific disciplines. Outreach is ongoing which will benefit the report. UNEP GEO reports have taken a similar approach.