

SUMMARY OF SIDE EVENT

Dialogue on Follow-Up and Review Mechanisms for Natural Resource Management and Governance to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Monday, 18 May 2015, 1:15 - 2:30 PM

Conference Room 4, Conference Building, UNHQ

The side event took place within the framework of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations

Background

Natural resources such as water, land and biodiversity, will support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as they are central to ensure food and energy security, and will be critical for the eradication of poverty. In view of the objective to leave no one behind; and in light of conflicting uses and the need for protection of the same natural resources across and among different goals and targets, the objective of the side event was to highlight the need for a participatory and integrated approach to identify synergies and ensure debates on the priorities of natural resource management and governance. Further to this, the aim was to deepen the debate on how such an approach can be operationalized building on existing experiences. The side event addressed one of the questions outlined in the UNDESA Discussion Paper¹ on Follow-up and Review of the Post-2015 Development Agenda published on 12 of May 2015: “How can reviews engage members of the public and civil society, the UN system, private sector and other actors?”



Proceedings

The side event was moderated by Mr. **Zak Bleicher** from the International Fund from the Agricultural Development (IFAD). Providing a background for the discussions, Ms. **Ivonne Lobos Alva** from the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) presented the main messages of the High-Level Event “Follow-Up and Review Mechanisms for Natural Resource Management and Governance to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals” organized by the same co-hosts, which took place in New York on 12-13 May with 65 participants from governments, permanent missions to the UN, UN agencies, civil society, and academia². Ms. Lobos Alva said the main messages of the High-Level Event supported the need for an integrated approach to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in order to ensure a successful

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7132Discussion%20paper%20on%20Follow%20up%20and%20Review%2012%20May%202015.pdf>
² <http://www.iisd.ca/post2015/nr-mechanisms/>

post-2015 development agenda. She further said *“we have to live up to the spirit of the data revolution but in a way that goes beyond big data. We are not able to cover everything with statistics; instead, disaggregated data, traditional knowledge and other forms of qualitative knowledge have an important role to play”*. She further highlighted the need for mechanisms to support these participatory and inclusive country-led national processes to give stakeholders the opportunity to actively seek for support on regional and global levels, if national level processes are not being conducted in an inclusive manner and the importance to strengthen the link between the discussions on participatory and inclusive follow up and review to the negotiations on Means of Implementation and Financing for Development.

The next three panellists welcomed the main messages of the High-Level Event and added insights on the need for inclusive, participatory and integrated reviews. Ms. **Maryam Niamir-Fuller** from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), described existing challenges for data management as the state of natural resources is a *“moving target for which new information is available every day”*. She stressed the crosscutting character of natural resources for the achievement of the SDGs and the need to build on existing mechanisms that provide decentralized and broadly accessible information and data. Moreover, natural resources have many characteristics that are difficult to measure, such as their cultural role. Regarding possibilities of implementation, Dr. **Marianne Beisheim**, of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs explained that a state-led review of the SDGs should not imply other non-state stakeholders are not included and that the outcome document of the Post-2015 agenda *“should ask national governments for the review to take place in a participatory manner”*. She highlighted the potential role of parliaments to ensure accountability at the national level and the importance of civil



society knowledge to complement statistics. Mr. **Jan-Gustav Strandenaes**, Stakeholder Forum, presented an analysis of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) resolution to address where and how participation of different stakeholders can support the achievement of the SDGs. He said review should go beyond monitoring. He acknowledged that the institutional framework of the HLPF is not entirely flexible to allow an interactive review where all stakeholders can participate but that the current set up provides the *“best possible point of departure”*.

During the question and answer period, participants highlighted the challenge of holding governments accountable to voluntary agreements made at international negotiations, the importance of communicating effectively and incentivizing both governments and citizens to engage in participatory reviews of the SDGs and the need to share experiences on review mechanisms that are working.

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