



Building Integrated Approaches into the Sustainable Development Goals

A Declaration from the Nexus 2014: Water, Food, Climate and Energy Conference in the name of the Co-directors held at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, March 5th to 8th 2014

Submitted to the UN Secretary-General on the 27th of March, 2014

Some **300 delegates** from **33 countries** representing governments, intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, companies, environmental and development organizations and other stakeholders met at an internationally supported¹ conference at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, from March 5th to 8th 2014 to explore how addressing interlinkages and an intersectoral approach can enable stakeholders to further the post-2015 agenda and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals currently being discussed at the United Nations.

The following declaration is based on discussions, research and contributions associated with the Nexus 2014: Water, Food, Climate and Energy Conference and outlines how integrative approaches might best be built into the UN's forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 agenda.

A comprehensive conference report that expands on the issues contained in here is available online at nexusconference.unc.edu under the header Conference Documents.

We submit this declaration to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and commend it to the chairs and members of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and to all those concerned with the post-2015 agenda and the creation of the new Sustainable Development Goals.

Sincerely,

Felix Dodds and Jamie Bartram

Nexus 2014 Conference Co-directors²

¹ Conference partners include the World Bank, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Development Program, United Nations Human Settlement Programme, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, International Renewable Energy Agency, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, United Nations Global Compact, Futures Group, WWF, Stockholm Environment Institute, Millennium Institute, Global Water Partnership, Biovision, World Society for the Protection of Animals, and Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research.

² Conference Partners include those who significantly contributed to the development of the Conference's agenda and vision. Additional organizations generously provided financial support and are thanked online at <http://nexusconference.web.unc.edu/2014-sponsors/>

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Principles

1. The world needs a **shared set of basic values** to provide a framework to guide the global community.³
2. The world is a **single complex system** in which all the parts and subsystems constantly interact. Global problems such as persistent poverty and climate change should be viewed from this perspective and solutions and policy interventions should be sought that are beneficial for the system as a whole.
3. Our top priorities are to further a global transition to sustainable patterns of living, production, and development and to create inclusive and sustainable global economies that can **eradicate extreme poverty** and ensure the fulfillment of every individual's basic human rights.
4. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are leading to severe pressure on **planetary boundaries** that must be reduced to avoid further damage to planetary systems and ensure critical tipping points are not reached.
5. Everyone contributes, as consumers and producers, to the global economy. **Global, regional, national, and local solutions** are needed to tackle systemic problems facing the world's systems and their interactions with the global human economy.
6. New global approaches must reflect the diversity of **local and country- contexts** and support initiatives that contribute to the eradication of poverty while transitioning to more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient economies.
7. Permanent solutions to the world's problems demand approaches that transcend individual sectors, are **beneficial for the system as a whole**, and address the needs of all people in an inclusive manner.
8. New institutional arrangements that move **beyond sectoral or silo governance structures** can encourage cooperation between governmental departments and form partnerships with business and other stakeholders that discourage silo thinking, tackle cross-sectoral problems, and implement integrative solutions.
9. Long-term solutions must be grounded in a **human rights framework** with an explicit recognition of the rights of women, including a fulfillment of the unmet demand for voluntary family planning to slow rapid and unsustainable population growth.

³ Prior examples of such a shared set of principles includes the 2000 Earth Charter

Recommendations

As the Open Working Group formulates its recommendations for future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we urge its members and chairs to consider that:

1. **The SDGs** are an opportunity to articulate the promise of a well-executed sustainable development agenda in a set of goals, targets and indicators that are specific, universal and flexible and capable of being achieved by 2030.
2. **The SDGs** must catalyze sustainable development in all countries, parts of society and sectors of the economy by reanimating institutional structures and initiatives at every governance level to advance human well-being and protect the integrity and resilience of the planet's natural systems.
3. **The SDGs** must express a balanced determination to achieve both poverty eradication and other development objectives, and to move decisively towards more equitable and sustainable patterns of consumption and production throughout the world.
4. **The SDGs** must push national and supranational entities to re-design institutional arrangements to encourage partnerships that span sectors and incorporate business, citizens and other stakeholders.
5. **The SDGs** must highlight the added value of combining the sustainability and poverty reduction agendas rather than casting sustainability as a necessary constraint. Potential examples of this approach include the concept of irreversible poverty eradication and of maximizing the sustainable yield from the oceans for human nutrition.
6. **Governments** must engage all stakeholders in the sustainable development agenda-setting process. The **business community** at all levels⁴ should be an active partner in order to further promote improved integrated resource management, more effective multi-sector collaborations, more equitable pricing structures, and more inclusive business models. An effective sustainable development agenda will encourage companies to overcome resource mismanagement and go beyond it to the opportunities created by proper resource management.
7. **Governments** should establish national multi-stakeholder bodies chaired by Heads of State and reporting to each country's respective legislative body as well as the High Level Political Forum at the United Nations in order to help secure implementation of the SDGs and ensure an integrative approach.
8. **Governments** have a role to play in correcting market failures. They need to ensure the integrity of financial markets and realign incentives and behaviors for a healthier financial system that accounts for sustainability issues. They must also support regulatory evolution to support new mechanisms and create market environments that will shift capital towards

⁴ All levels means all levels of government, local, sub national and national

sustainable development and supporting the eradication of poverty.

9. The **scientific community** must undertake and deliver interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research that identifies new policy approaches and grounds them in robust science, defining what is and is not a cross-cutting issue, and providing policy makers with evidence and tools that match their needs.
10. **Social entrepreneurs** need a funding platform for innovative projects that advance integrated action on cross-sector issues. Such a platform should be paired with experienced practitioners to serve as mentors.
11. Sustainable cities depend on sustainable country sides and rural transformation; **Local and regional governments** must respond not just to issue linkages but also to spatial linkages between societies, ecosystems, and economies. Urban and rural landscapes and human settlements are inextricably linked and policy-making must reflect this.
12. Ensuring global food security while also eradicating rural poverty requires investing in the empowerment of the 500 million **small-holder farms** worldwide to sustain and enhance the provision of goods and services from production systems through agro-ecological and good animal welfare practices, as well as through ensuring an enabling environments for their security of tenure and investment, with particular attention to achieving sustainable management of soils, water, energy, and biodiversity. **Governments** should also eliminate harmful agriculture subsidies.
13. The **development community** should work with the **agriculture community** to empower farmers of all scales to sustainably produce healthy, diverse and nutritious food for consumers in ways that reinforce rural and urban livelihoods, mitigate the adverse impacts of contemporary agricultural practices and facilitate adaptation and resilience in the face of changing climatic conditions.
14. Ensuring global food security requires a more sustainable and economically viable agriculture based on a proper and efficient balance between plant- and animal-based production. Such a balance would also enhance the nutritional value of global food consumption, restore soil fertility, protect water sources and plant and animal genetic diversity, promote biodiversity and enhance ecosystem services and resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

Integrated Sustainable Development Goals

An integrative approach is a valuable strategic tool for operationalizing the goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda. Constructing integrated goals and targets presents challenges but also clear opportunities for policy makers. To encourage conversation and the further development of potential goals and targets, the following annex provides a few examples of potential integrated goals and targets.

Annex

	Goals	Targets	Focus Area
Basic Goal/Target	Basic goal. Eradicate malnutrition and hunger.	For basic goals. Reduce numbers in hunger by x % per annum, or by y people per annum.	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #2 Food Security and Nutrition
Integrated Goal/Target	Eliminate hunger at the same time as using energy and water more efficiently in the agriculture and food sector and strengthening ecosystems.	Improve water and energy efficiency in agricultural sector by x and y% respectively per annum. Increase percentage of land under agro-ecological practices by x% by 2030 and reverse land degradation and achieve a land degradation neutral world.	
Basic Goal/Target	Achieve access to safe water for all. Achieve decent sanitation services for all.	Reduce numbers without adequate water by x% per annum. Reduce numbers without sanitation services by y% per annum.	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #6 Water and Sanitation
Integrated Goal/Target	Achieve access goals at the same time as improving management of water everywhere so as to maintain integrity of water resources and limit the energy demands of the water sector.	Reduce losses of water in catchment areas by x% per annum. Improve management of water in key water demand sectors by y% per annum.	
Basic Goal/Target	Achieve access to energy for all.	Expand access by x% per annum. Reduce numbers without access by y% per annum	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #7 Energy

Integrated Goal/Target	Access to energy for all at the same time as achieving global reductions in CO2 emissions.	Improve energy efficiency in all sectors by x% per annum. Achieve y% penetration of renewables by year z.	
	Develop new cities and settlements on sustainable principles from the outset. Progressively transform new cities to operate more sustainably working within a life-cycle approach	Improve energy performance of buildings by x % towards zero carbon status. Progressively improve carbon efficiency of all transport and progressively reduce air pollution from vehicles. Use planning system to optimize land use from sustainability perspective.	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #13 Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements
Basic Goal/Target	Reduce energy and other resource needs of global totality of all production chains to sustainable levels. Decrease individual carbon (and other resources footprints) to sustainable levels.	Measurable Steps towards Factor 4 or Factor 10. Reduce food waste/post-harvest loss by x % by 2030 Measurable steps towards reducing average individual carbon footprints (in countries where footprints currently exceed the long term sustainable level.	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #14 Sustainable Consumption and Production
Integrated Goal/Target	As above plus delivering energy, water, food and climate change goals.	As in targets for energy, water, food and climate change goals.	
Basic Goal/Target	Keep global temperature rise below	Reduce Green House Gas emissions by x % by year z.	OWG Co-Chairs' Focus Area #15

	2 degrees.		Climate Change
Integrated Goal/Target	Keep temperature rise below 2 degrees while maintaining economic growth by decoupling economic growth from growth in fossil fuel emissions	<p>Improve energy and water efficiency in key sectors (including buildings, transport and industry) by specified annual percentages.</p> <p>Increase penetration of renewables by x% per annum and decrease water use by y% by 2030.</p>	