

**2018 High-level political forum on sustainable development,
Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council
9-18 July 2018, UN Headquarters, New York**

The Forum meets annually, including a three-day ministerial segment, and is due to meet once every four years at the level of Heads of State and Governments under the auspices of the UN General Assembly.

Under the theme « **Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies** », this year's Forum focuses on **six of the 17 goals** :

Goal 6 : To ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7 : To provide access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 11 : To make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12 : To ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 15 : To protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss

Goal 17 : To strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, that will be considered each year

The Forum brought together more than a thousand governments, business and civil society leaders. They discussed progress already made by dozens of countries towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by 193 Member States in 2015, in an effort to find out what was and what was not working, based on the UN Secretary-General's annual progress report.

During the Forum, 47 countries shared their experiences, including the successes, challenges and lessons learnt so far.

GOAL 6

Progress has been made on achieving global goals to end poverty and hunger but meeting the targets by the deadline of 2030 will require a laser-sharp focus and a true sense of urgency. Many people are living better lives than a decade ago, even in regions facing the greatest development challenges. **The under-five mortality dropped by almost 50% in least developed countries. But for the first time in a decade, the overall number of people who are undernourished has increased, from 777 million people in 2015, to 815 million in 2016. The proportion of the world's workers and their families now living below the extreme poverty line has declined significantly, from 27% in 2000 to 9% in 2017.**

Biggest obstacle is greed. « There are enough resources in the world for everyone to live free of poverty and it should not require a big effort on the part of large developed countries, to profoundly help those struggling in poverty » (Professor Jeffrey Sachs). « Sweden is the country most on course to achieving the SDGs, and Europe is by far the region doing best so far ». Moreover, the list of the top 10 countries closest to achieving the SDGs mirrors a complementary ranking of the world's

happiest countries. The happiest countries are the ones that tax themselves the most, noting that Sweden thinks it is a good thing to pay half their national income to finance quality education and health care.

GOAL 7

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today, including poverty eradication, gender equality, adaptation to climate change, food security, health, education, sustainable cities, jobs and transports . **Despite improved access to electricity globally, nearly one billion people continue to live without electricity while about 3 billion people lack access to clean-cooking solutions and are exposed to dangerous levels of indoor air pollution caused by the use of fuels such as coal and wood indoors.**

GOAL 11

Although cities are often characterized by stark socioeconomic inequalities and poor environmental conditions, they also offer growth and development potential, making them central to the 2030 Agenda. SDG11 impacts a wide range of issues, from sustainable consumption and production to affordable and clean energy along with health, sustainable transportation, clean water and sanitation. Basically, life on land . **According to the UN, cities are where the struggle for global sustainability « will either be won or lost ». At the current rate of expansion, over 700 cities will have populations of more than one million by 2030 .** And while cities can be powerhouses of economic growth and development, without proper planning and regulation, they could, among other things, suffer soaring levels of poverty, crime and pollution, says UN-Habitat.

Some 6 billion people are inequately housed worldwide and close to 900 million are living in informal settlements and encampments in both the global North and South.

New York City took the distinction of becoming the first city in the world to report directly to the international community on its effort to reach global benchmarks in addressing poverty, inequality and climate change by 2030.

GOAL 12

A reckoning on the importance of maximising the world's resources is taking place across the world, and achieving the 17 SDGs by 2030 depends heavily on reeling in our global consumption and production patterns.

« Goal 12 lies at the heart and soul of the 2030 Agenda, as it presents us with a rational plan to secure the future of our species on Planet Earth, providing a train of cost-efficient and effective ways to achieve economic development, harmonize our relationship with the environment, and advance the well-being of humanity.

Currently, mass extraction of raw materials is taking place in low-income countries to support the fast-paced consumption practices of higher-income nations . **Statistics show that developed countries have at least double the per-capita footprint of developing countries. According to experts, the path to sustainable consumption requires that our societies make efforts on three different fronts : the use of fewer resources, the reduction of waste production and accelerating recycling.**

Progress is underway. **To date, 93% of the world's 250 largest companies are now reporting on sustainability, as are ¾ of the top 100 companies in 49 countries. In addition, in 2018, at least 108**

countries have now developed policies and initiatives designed to improve the way people, companies and Governments consume and produce.

GOAL 15

Today, biodiversity is in decline in all regions of the world, a trend that continues to accelerate largely due to human activities such as food production, pollution, and wildlife poaching and trafficking.

Member States committed to safeguarding biodiversity, combating desertification, sustainably managing forests, and halting land degradation, all of which define the quality of our food and water supplies, are job-generating activities, and are therefore essential components for human health and well being

GOAL 17

Finally the Forum examined progress on Goal 17, which focuses on national, regional and global trends to establish global partnerships for sustainable development, as well as challenges and opportunities ahead.

The High-level political Forum is the biggest gathering on SDG progress : more than 100 ministers, and more than 2000 non-state actors attended the Forum, and more than 100 mayors gathered at the first-ever local and regional governments' Forum to discuss the importance of localizing the 2030 Agenda.