



Synergies between Climate Action and SDGs

Implications for Multilateralism



SDG Charter

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1. Background

Even after almost a decade since the adoption of the ambitious Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the world continues to remain off track. According to the latest Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Progress Report, 13.6% of targets are on track (or the target has been met), 14.2% of targets have made moderate progress but require acceleration, 24.3% of targets have made marginal progress and require significant acceleration, 14.2% of targets have stagnated, 13.6% of targets have regressed, and 20.1% are not tracked due to insufficient data (United Nations, 2024a). Analyses of the targets listed under Goal 13 corroborate the slow progress (*ibid*). On the target of climate finance, resilience, and adaptive capacity, there has been marginal progress, but significant acceleration is needed. Regarding climate change awareness and capacity, there is insufficient data, and on national policies, there has been regression (*ibid*). Further, according to the First Global Stocktake, 43% of emissions need to be reduced by 2030, while the implementation of current nationally determined contributions (NDCs) will lead to only a 2% reduction (UNFCCC, 2023).

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) finds that the global temperature has already increased by 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels and is likely to reach or surpass the critical 1.5°C tipping point by 2035 (IPCC, 2022; 2023). The IPCC (2018) finds that climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5°C, and will increase further with 2°C. Despite the strong linkages between SDG action and climate resilience, only 23 out of 173 NDCs explicitly reference the SDGs (UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2023). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlights, “climate-resilient development is progressively harder to achieve with global warming levels beyond 1.5°C. Inadequate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 reduces climate-resilient development prospects” (IPCC, 2022).

With this backdrop, it is crucial to examine synergies between SDGs and climate targets. This policy brief will focus on examining the implications of SDG-climate synergies in the context of multilateralism, with specific reference to the multilateral processes concerned with SDGs and climate negotiations.

2. SDG-Climate Synergies

The concept of synergies is linked to concepts such as integrated approaches and co-benefits. Principle 13 of the Stockholm Declaration called for countries to adopt an integrated and coordinated approach to development, ensuring that development is compatible with the need to protect the environment (United Nations, 1972). Synergies refer to the strengthening of connections both between issues (e.g. climate, agriculture, health, gender) and multilateral policymaking processes, where integrated approaches enable the simultaneous achievement of multiple objectives. These synergies can lead to more sustainable and efficient outcomes through cross-sectoral solutions that capitalize on interlinkages and minimize trade-offs (TERI, 2019, 2024; Kainuma *et al.*, 2017). The concept of synergies and co-benefits emphasizes the need for integrated solutions to address multiple issues (Asian Co-benefits Partnership, 2024; Crutzen & Graedel, 1986; Pearce, 2000; Zusman & Amanuma, 2018). The adoption of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement in 2015 further highlighted the importance of linking climate action with broader social and economic goals (Nilsson *et al.*, 2016; UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2023; UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2024).

The imperative to align SDGs with climate objectives has never been more urgent. The *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023* underscores the critical nature of this alignment, revealing that “halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda, we are leaving more than half the world behind” (United Nations, 2023a). According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), climate action is linked to 80% of the 2030 Agenda targets, providing a strong case for integrated policymaking (UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2023). For instance, aligning SDG and climate efforts could potentially boost global economic output by a staggering USD 43 trillion by 2070 (*ibid*). Simultaneous development and climate initiatives can bridge investment gaps, yielding USD 4 in co-benefits for every USD 1 invested (*ibid*).

Both synergies and trade-offs must be considered when addressing climate action and the SDGs. A sole focus on climate targets could put an additional 84 million people at risk of hunger by 2050 (UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2023). Conversely, meeting nearly 70% of SDG targets by 2030 will necessitate robust adaptation measures, particularly in urban areas and vulnerable countries (*ibid*). Currently, only 23 out of 173 NDCs explicitly reference the SDGs, indicating a significant gap in integrated planning (*ibid*). Trade-offs can be identified and minimized by using evidence-based tools rooted in systems thinking.

This alignment can not only enhance economic resilience but also promote social equity and environmental sustainability. The holistic nature of the SDGs, which encompass climate action as one of their goals, advocates for a more inclusive and comprehensive approach. While climate discussions are increasingly prevalent, it is crucial to maintain the SDGs’ broader perspective to ensure that all aspects of sustainable development are addressed in unison.

3. SDGs and Climate in Multilateralism: A History

The development and implementation of SDGs and climate action initiatives have evolved in parallel, reinforcing each other and highlighting the critical need for an integrated approach to global sustainability.

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) marked a significant milestone with five major outcomes: Agenda 21, the UNFCCC, the Rio Declaration, the Declaration on the Principles of Forest Management, and the Convention on Biological Diversity. These frameworks aimed to address environmental challenges, reflecting a global consensus on achieving sustainability. While Agenda 21 called for new strategies to achieve overall sustainable development, the UNFCCC aimed at stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system (UNCED, 1992; United Nations, 1992). Together, these outcomes had the potential to synchronize efforts in environmental and developmental reforms.

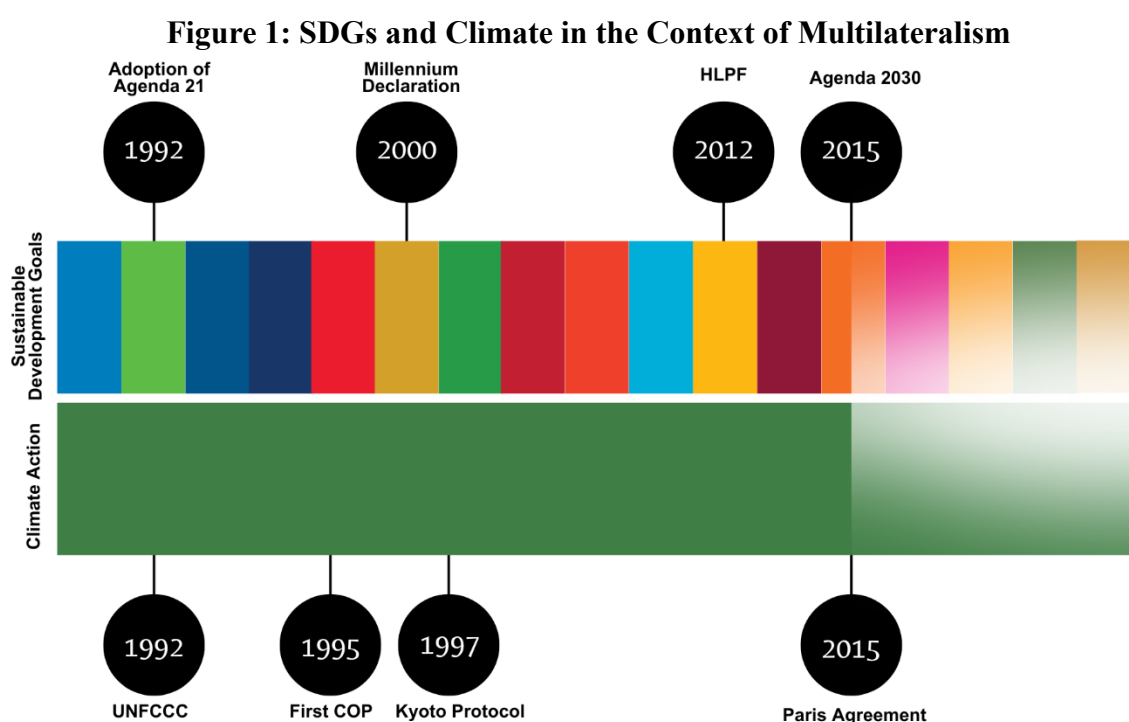
The first Conference of the Parties (COP) was held in Berlin in 1995, focusing on the adequacy of commitments to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations, establishing the Berlin Mandate. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, committing 37 industrialized nations to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5% below 1990 levels (UNFCCC, 1997). This protocol operationalized the UNFCCC, emphasizing the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities,” and entered into force in 2005 after a complex ratification process.

In parallel, the Millennium Declaration was adopted in 2000, which led to the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals aimed to address critical global issues such as extreme poverty, education, and health by 2015, setting a blueprint for

international development (United Nations, 2000). The MDGs contained eight goals, 18 targets, and more than 40 indicators (United Nations, 2001). However, there was no clear vision for understanding how climate change could affect all of these development sectors. Thus, the integration of climate considerations into economic and social concerns, beyond environmental impacts, was lacking.

Sustainable development was further institutionalized in 2012 with the establishment of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), replacing the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) established in 1992. The HLPF was designed to provide political leadership and guidance for sustainable development, enhancing the integration of its three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental (United Nations, 2012).

This timeline illustrates the parallel development of SDGs and climate action at the multilateral level (Figure 1).



In 2015, two landmark events set the mandates for SDGs and climate action. The General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, encompassing 17 SDGs aimed at addressing global challenges through a holistic approach. These goals are more comprehensive and call for action on poverty, health, education, inequality, economic growth, climate change, and environmental preservation (United Nations, 2015a). In the same year, the Paris Agreement was adopted during UNFCCC COP21, setting a legally binding framework for climate action with the goal of limiting global temperature increases to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C (United Nations, 2015b).

4. Fragmentation Between SDGs and Climate Processes

Despite their common origins, the processes of addressing SDGs and climate action have increasingly witnessed regime fragmentation. This can be explained using the concepts of regime complexity and multilevel governance.

Regime complexity: Regime complexity refers to the overlapping rules and actors involved in global climate and sustainable development governance, leading to coordination challenges. This framework helps explain the fragmentation between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. Both are part of different regimes with their own sets of rules, actors, and processes, leading to a lack of coordination and integration. COP agendas are primarily driven by COP presidencies in collaboration with the UNFCCC Secretariat, HLPF is mainly coordinated by UNDESA. Unlike agreements under UNFCCC COPs, outcomes related to SDGs are not legally binding. Submission of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) is optional, as SDGs are global goals, while it is mandatory to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This distinction underscores a critical challenge: legally binding instruments such as the Paris Agreement tend to be taken more seriously than voluntary commitments.

The global and national mechanisms responsible for monitoring and reporting progress related to the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda operate independently. This means that, for example, NDCs under the Paris Agreement and the VNRs under the HLPF process are not necessarily coordinated or aligned, even though they could influence each other positively. Climate reports and action plans can be specific in terms of the coverage of gases and sectors when it comes to mitigation, while climate adaptation and SDGs are cross-sectoral and more context-specific. To some extent, climate actions are reviewed in the HLPF during the review of SDG 13. The HLPF has reviewed SDG 13 three times: 2019, 2021, and 2024.

Table 1 summarises the key features of the SDG and climate regimes.

Table 1: Key aspects of SDG and climate multilateral processes

Features	Conference of Parties (COP)	High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)
Legality and Legal Recognition of Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COP derives its legitimacy from the UNFCCC, an international legal convention, and is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. • The Paris Agreement, negotiated at COP21, is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. However, it relies on global cooperation to lower emissions through NDCs determined by states. The mandatory element of the agreement is limited to the reporting requirement overseen by the Compliance Committee, established under Article 15. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLPF was created by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) through its resolution 67/290 in 2012, replacing the Commission on Sustainable Development established at the 1992 Earth Summit. HLPF operates under the aegis of ECOSOC and UNGA. • HLPF is the main organ for following up on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The HLPF outcome documents are non-binding in nature, and declarations are often negotiated in advance. There is an absence of a legally binding treaty or framework.

Features	Conference of Parties (COP)	High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)
Knowledge Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Article 5 of the UNFCCC states that Parties will support and develop international and intergovernmental programmes, networks, and research aimed at defining norms, assessing the context, and collecting data. Article 6 of the UNFCCC focuses on education, training, and research to foster public participation and awareness on climate change. Produces technical reports such as the NDC Synthesis Report and the global stocktake report. Supports and mandates other specialized agencies to produce and present special reports. Decisions can mandate special reports from bodies such as the IPCC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HLPF is the main body for following up on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. Ministerial declarations and summary documents include broad recommendations on SDGs. Its mandate is to provide a dynamic platform for regular dialogue, stocktaking, and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development. The Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) is a United Nations publication aiming to strengthen the science-policy interface at the HLPF. The other set of reports includes the Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report and the Secretary-General's Report on the Progress towards the SDGs.
Reporting and Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parties are required to submit NDCs and update them every five years. Reviews national communications and emission inventories submitted by Parties. A comprehensive measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) framework defines reporting requirements and timelines for the submission of national reports by Parties. The Paris Agreement (2015) established an Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). The ETF requires all Parties to submit Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), covering information on national inventory reports (NIRs), progress towards NDCs, policies and measures, climate change impacts and adaptation, levels of financial support, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building support and needs. BTRs will be subject to Technical Expert Reviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HLPF conducts annual meetings and reviews of SDGs, with reviews conducted at the level of heads of state every four years. Members submit their VNRs, which are put up for discussion. HLPF does not have any mandatory reporting clause; reporting is voluntary. HLPF has reviewed the progress on SDG 13 and related targets three times: in 2019, 2021, and 2024. It reviews a set of SDGs every year.

Multilevel governance: A multilevel governance framework helps in examining how different levels of governance (e.g., national governments, international organisations) interact or fail to interact. The ‘landing spots’ of international agendas, such as the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, remain disparate, indicating a need for better integration between these platforms (UNDESA & UNFCCC, 2024). Climate change processes and SDG processes have different institutional mechanisms since they have been treated as distinct agendas. As a result, mechanisms and processes do not naturally align, causing fragmentation in efforts to address both climate change and sustainable development simultaneously. Discussions on these topics often occur in isolation, despite their inherent overlaps and synergies. National and international processes often treat climate action and sustainable development as separate issues, leading to fragmented governance structures. This compartmentalisation prevents the development of cohesive policies that address the interconnected nature of climate and development challenges.

Different government agencies and international organisations often have different mandates and priorities, which can lead to siloed approaches to policymaking and implementation. For example, a government’s environment ministry might focus on climate goals, while its planning/development ministry might prioritise economic growth, without sufficient coordination between the two. In India, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) is the main nodal ministry for the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and climate negotiations, while NITI Aayog is the key agency for SDG-related coordination. Similarly, at the sub-national level, the environment or climate change departments are in charge of the State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs), while planning departments look at SDGs. For both SDGs and climate plans, there are areas of sectoral focus that are the responsibility of line ministries or departments. For both SDGs and climate, especially at sub-national levels, there are two to three core people working on assessments, which makes it even more challenging considering the range of sectors. Capacity and infrastructural gaps need to be addressed to make assessments more robust and grounded.

5. Present Approach to SDG-Climate Synergies

The Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030 share significant common ground, particularly in their overarching goals of sustainable development and climate action. Both frameworks emphasise the need for global cooperation and action to address the challenges posed by climate change, eradicate poverty, and promote sustainable development (United Nations, 2015a, 2015b). Agenda 2030 does acknowledge that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change. Four intersection points between the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030 are depicted in Figure 2.

One of the key initiatives at the multilateral level presently is ‘The Climate and SDG Synergy Platform’ which seeks to act as “a multi-stakeholder partnership catalyst with the aim at supporting the coherence, alignment, and monitoring of the interlinkages between climate action and the SDGs” (United Nations, 2024c). The three focus areas of the Platform are:

- Advocacy: mainstream climate and SDGs synergies in key UN intergovernmental processes and outcomes.
- Analyses: develop a comprehensive and systemic global assessment on climate and SDGs synergies.

- Capacity-building: enhance knowledge sharing at all levels through global conferences, regional seminars, and workshops.

Figure 2: Intersection points between the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030



The platform seeks to perform the functions of norm advancement, knowledge creation, and socialization.

Norm Advancement: The Secretariats of UNDESA and UNFCCC host the ‘Climate and SDG Synergy Platform’. The platform seeks to advance the norm of ‘mainstreaming climate and SDG synergies’ in key UN intergovernmental processes and outcomes. It advocates that the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda are two agendas that must be tackled synergistically to maximize benefits, minimize trade-offs, and ensure the goals of both are met. Key elements of climate and SDG synergies include breaking down fragmentation, synergistic approaches, inclusion and equity, localizing action, and collaboration across sectors. The ‘Climate and SDG Synergy Platform’ initiative produces reports by an expert group. The latest report, titled “Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want”, strongly emphasizes that addressing climate change and achieving sustainable development cannot be treated as separate or isolated efforts.

Table 2: Reports by the Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy

Global Reports	Thematic Reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023: Synergy Solution for a World in Crisis: Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together • 2024: Synergy Solutions for Climate and SDG Action: Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating Climate and SDG Knowledge and Data for Action • Policies that Support Both Climate and SDG Action • A New Financial System to Enable Both Climate and SDG Action • How Cities Can Act on Both Climate and SDGs

Knowledge Creation: The Division for the Sustainable Development Goals in UNDESA and the Division for Means of Implementation in the UNFCCC Secretariat act as joint secretariats for the work on “Climate Action and SDG Synergies: Strengthening the Evidence Base for Synergistic Action” and jointly co-convene an expert group (United Nations, 2023b). The ‘Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy’ currently includes 17 members. The expert group has produced two global reports on Climate and SDG Synergies and four thematic reports on Climate and SDG Synergies (Table 2).

Socialization: By hosting events like the ‘Global Conference on Climate and SDG Synergy’ and publishing influential reports, the Climate and SDG Synergy Secretariat socializes states and other actors into adopting these norms. The 2024 Global Report on Climate and SDG Synergy was launched at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York, in a special event titled “Bridging the Ambition Gap for the Future We Want through Climate and SDG Synergy,” co-convened by UNDESA and the UNFCCC Secretariat. The report was developed by the Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergy, with input from over 100 multi-stakeholder experts. The Fifth Global Conference on Strengthening Synergies between the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development took place from 5–6 September 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This was followed by the Summit of the Future from 22–23 September 2024 at the UN Headquarters in New York. Table 3 depicts the various editions of the Climate & SDG Synergy Conferences. In addition, UNDESA has organized the SDG Pavilion at the UNFCCC since COP24. UNDESA has also engaged with the Subsidiary Bodies (SB) meetings held under the UNFCCC in Bonn. In 2024, four thematic reports by the Climate and SDG Synergy Secretariat were launched at the SB in Bonn. Table 3 depicts the Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conferences.

Table 3: Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conferences

Conference Name	Date	Venue
First Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conference	1-3 April 2019	Copenhagen, Denmark
Synergy Learning Series	December 2020 - February 2021	Virtually
Third Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conference	20-21 July 2022	Tokyo, Japan
Fourth Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conference	16 July 2023	New York, United States
Fifth Global Climate & SDG Synergy Conference	5-6 September 2024	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

6. Interests of States on Review of SDG 13

A Ministerial Declaration was adopted at the 2024 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) (United Nations, 2024b). However, the process was marked by significant challenges, reflecting the deep and formative tensions within the multilateral system. The adoption of the Ministerial Declaration was contentious, with votes required on two specific paragraphs: one recognizing that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security, and another drawing attention to the impact of unilateral coercive measures (such as economic sanctions) on poverty and food security.

The Ministerial Declaration urged all relevant stakeholders to more effectively address the connections, synergies, and trade-offs among the SDGs, while improving policy coherence for sustainable development. It emphasized the importance of committing to enhancing synergies in the implementation of national climate and development policies, contributing to global

climate objectives and advancing the 2030 Agenda. Additionally, the Declaration highlighted the need to support synergies across SDGs and targets, particularly those focused on creating decent jobs, fostering financial, trade, and technological solutions, strengthening social protection systems, and customizing approaches to fit national contexts and needs.

G77 and China emphasized the indivisibility and interlinked nature of the SDGs. They reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement and emphasized the importance of the provision of means of implementation and climate finance from developed countries to support developing nations, especially in the form of concessional financing. The group emphasized that the integrity of the 2030 Agenda rested on achieving a balance between its economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

The EU emphasized the need to accelerate global greenhouse gas emission reductions, enhance adaptation, and implement the outcomes of the Global Stocktake from COP28. The EU also highlighted the interconnections between climate change, biodiversity loss, and poverty, stressing that the worsening climate crisis threatened the achievement of all SDGs, not just SDG 13.

The UK emphasized the urgency of tackling climate change and highlighted the need for nature-based solutions under SDG 13 to deliver "triple wins" for people, climate, and nature. It stressed the importance of addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and poverty as interlinked challenges that require coordinated action to maximize impact and ensure progress across multiple SDGs.

CANZ (Canada, Australia, New Zealand) stressed the importance of transformational change in addressing climate change through emission reduction, adaptation, and finance. They emphasized the importance of aligning Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C and called for supporting the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impacts of climate change. They advocated for a stronger focus on disaster risk reduction measures.

Switzerland called for a clear reference to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. It advocated for policy coherence across various sectors, such as food systems, poverty alleviation, and climate action, and emphasized the need for a whole-of-society approach to tackling these interconnected crises.

Mexico argued that the most efficient way to address climate change is by building synergies between different agendas, ensuring that climate policies provide shared benefits across multiple sectors. It emphasized the need for comprehensive efforts to address climate change as part of a broader sustainable development strategy and called for concrete means of implementation, particularly for developing countries.

The US emphasized that the Ministerial Declaration should not attempt to renegotiate decisions made at COP28 or prejudge outcomes ahead of COP29. It stressed that the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC should remain the primary forums for negotiating the global response to climate change. The US highlighted the importance of balanced references to COP28 outcomes, with a focus on mitigation actions.

Countries and groupings recognize the importance of synergies between various SDGs. The consensus is that climate action cannot be pursued in isolation but must be integrated with

efforts to address biodiversity loss, poverty, and other global challenges. The UK and EU particularly stress the interconnectedness of goals and the need for integrated approaches, while G77 emphasize the role of climate finance and means of implementation based on the principle of equity and CBDR-RC, in line with the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement. It is evident that developed countries highlight the interconnectedness of various SDGs, while the G77 grouping highlights the balance needed between its economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Power relations underlie the SDG-Climate synergies approach. The concept of “synergies” between climate action and SDGs represents a hegemonic idea that reflects the interests of the most powerful states and institutions within the global order. The emphasis on “synergies,” as opposed to “balance,” indicates a shift towards a narrative that aligns with the priorities of developed countries, particularly those in the EU, UK, and CANZ (Canada, Australia, New Zealand), which prioritize climate action and emission reductions.

7. Recommendations

Following the analysis and expert consultation, five key recommendations have emerged.

Buttress UN and Expert Mandates with Political Mandates

Political mandates for SDG-Climate Synergies at HLPF and COPs should be strengthened at the global level. Currently, the ‘Climate and SDG Synergy Platform’ is led by UNDESA and UNFCCC secretariats, with support from other agencies. In addition, experts contribute to knowledge creation. Political mandates involving member states can be strengthened at both global and national levels. The UN can encourage member states to lead by example, championing programmatic approaches that consider SDG-climate synergies in their national strategies and international cooperation efforts. The UN can support this by providing templates, best practices, and incentives for countries that successfully implement integrated programs.

Integrate Climate-SDG Synergies into Nationally Determined Contributions

NDCs should explicitly include sections detailing how climate actions contribute to achieving various SDGs. This integration will promote a holistic approach to reporting, ensuring that climate strategies are aligned with broader sustainable development objectives. A mapping of SDGs in NDC documents and NDCs in SDG documents can be undertaken.

Enhance Horizontal and Vertical Coordination in National and Local Processes

Strengthening coordination and coherence is key. Local governments must recognize and manage the synergies and trade-offs between climate actions and SDGs. Both horizontal and vertical coordination are needed for enhanced interaction between planning and environment ministries and departments, ideally coordinated by the Prime Minister at the national level, to ensure cohesive and comprehensive national strategies. A similar model can be adopted at the state level. Inter-ministerial and inter-departmental coordination, along with multi-level governance, will help align national policies with global commitments, driving more effective implementation. At the same time, synergies are often context specific. Therefore, synergies that meet sub-national and local priorities should be explored through enhanced coordination at all levels.

Bridge Financing Gaps for Multilateral Organizations and Developing Countries

There is a need to strengthen funding for UN financial mechanisms that are specifically designed to support projects with dual climate and SDG benefits. These instruments would prioritize projects that demonstrate clear synergies between climate action and sustainable

development. Synergy indicators for climate projects sanctioned by multilateral climate financing mechanisms, such as GEF and GCF, should be developed. Projects implemented by various institutions can use indicators that specify not only which SDGs are being covered in their projects but also to what extent the project contributes toward the achievement of certain SDGs locally.

Enhance Data Collection and Integrated Reporting

Building capacity for monitoring accurate and reliable data that reflects ground realities in developing countries is essential. Utilizing existing data and statistics will improve the understanding and strategic planning of SDGs and climate action, enabling more informed decision-making. Issuing standardized guidelines for data collection that ensure compatibility between climate and SDG reporting would facilitate the integration of data from different sectors and enhance the ability to track progress across both agendas. Synergies and integrated reporting can eventually also lead to a reduced reporting burden for different multilateral environmental agreements.

Since 70% of SDG targets by 2030 necessitate robust adaptation measures, SDG-climate synergies are important. There is no doubt that SDG-climate synergies exist, but it is equally important to consider the trade-offs. Trade-offs can be identified and minimized by using evidence-based tools that are rooted in systems thinking. Additionally, effective implementation requires means such as finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.

In conclusion, while these recommendations are ambitious, they are essential steps towards ensuring that climate action and sustainable development are not just parallel efforts but are effectively intertwined to achieve a truly cohesive and impactful global response.

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World Sustainable Development Summit

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship multistakeholder convening organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Established in 2001, the Summit has a legacy of over two decades in advancing 'sustainable development' as a globally shared goal. As the only independently convened international summit on sustainable development and the environment based in the Global South, WSDS strives to provide long-term solutions that benefit global communities by bringing together the world's most enlightened leaders and thinkers on a single platform. Over the years, the Summit series has witnessed the participation of 58 Heads of State and Government, 137 Ministers, 13 Nobel Laureates, 2,045 Business Leaders, 3,373 Speakers, and 40,362 Delegates.

Act4Earth

The Act4Earth initiative was launched at the valedictory session of the 21st edition of WSDS. Building on the discussions of WSDS, this initiative seeks to continuously engage with stakeholders through research and dialogue. The Act4Earth initiative has two components: **COP Compass** and the **SDG Charter**. The COP Compass seeks to inspire and mobilize leadership at all levels for inclusive transitions through ambitious and informed policies and measures, enabling paradigm shifts towards meeting the UNFCCC and Paris goals through mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. The SDG Charter seeks to identify gaps and suggest ways for strengthening and mainstreaming sustainable development in policy agendas for enhanced environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

Synergies between Climate Action and SDGs: Implications for Multilateralism

The knowledge document examines the critical synergies between climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting their implications for multilateralism. Despite the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, global progress remains insufficient, with only 13.6% of SDG targets on track. The interconnected nature of climate and SDG actions is evident, as aligning these efforts could significantly enhance global economic output and resilience. However, the fragmented approach in current multilateral processes, including the distinct regimes governing climate and SDGs, hampers effective integration. This brief emphasizes the need for integrated policymaking and coordinated action at national and international levels to harness the potential co-benefits of these synergies. The establishment of the Climate and SDG Synergy Platform is a step toward advancing norm development, knowledge creation, and political mandates for synergistic action. The brief concludes with recommendations to strengthen political mandates, integrate climate-SDG synergies into national strategies, enhance data collection, and support capacity building in developing countries. These steps are essential to achieving a cohesive global response to climate change and sustainable development challenges.

Keywords

climate action, sustainable development goals (SDGs), multilateralism, synergies, integrated policymaking



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