



Version: 11 June 2020

## **ECOSOC Integration Segment**

### **Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development'**

#### **Shared Responsibility to Recover Better from COVID-19**

**6 July 2020**

### **Background**

In its latest resolution on ECOSOC strengthening (72/305), the General Assembly expanded and refined the mandate of the ECOSOC Integration Segment. Its mandate is now three-fold:

- bring together the key messages from the subsidiary bodies of the Council and the UN system on the main theme of ECOSOC and the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), prepare the HLPF thematic review, develop action-oriented recommendations for follow-up and feed into the HLPF thematic reviews.
- coordinate the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council, promoting a clearer division of labour among them, and among the policies and activities of the specialized agencies relating to the SDGs.
- discuss and consolidate all the inputs of Member States, including case studies and lessons learned, the subsidiary bodies of the ECOSOC, the UN system and other relevant stakeholders to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in national and international policies (economic, social and environmental) in relation to the theme of ECOSOC and HLPF.

The General Assembly resolution 72/305 also decided that the Secretary-General, as Chair of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), would present to the Council CEB's annual overview report. This segment is where the Council is expected to discharge its functions to coordinate the work of its subsidiary bodies and the UN system which is a charter role of ECOSOC.

At the SDG Summit, Member States adopted a Political Declaration proclaiming a Decade of Action and Delivery of Sustainable Development. The Political Declaration provided high-level political guidance on the way forward by identifying ten cross cutting areas for action to set the world on an accelerated path towards sustainable development.

Currently, the world is facing the COVID-19 pandemic with implications far beyond the health sector. The UN Secretary-General, in his new report "Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19" has issued a call to action for a coordinated global response "across all sectors to the benefit of our human family".

The General Assembly, in its resolution on *Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)* (A/74/L.52), recognized that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic and that the impact of the crisis will reverse hard-won development gains and hamper progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The General Assembly also reaffirmed its full commitment to the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development and underlined the need for the United Nations system to work as one to support all Governments.

The Economic and Social Council, including through its integration segment, has an important role to play to support Member States and the UN system in their efforts to overcome this human crisis and recover better, to put countries back on track to implement the 2030 Agenda over the coming decade.

## 2020 Integration segment

The General Assembly decided that the theme of the HLPF and ECOSOC for 2020 will be: ‘*Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*’. The Integration Segment will address this overarching theme through the lens of overcoming this human crisis and building back better. This will be done through a focus on some of the cross-cutting action areas identified in the Political Declaration adopted at the SDG summit in September 2019<sup>1</sup> as well as some of the entry points identified in the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR)<sup>2</sup>.

### Policy dialogue and preparation of the HLPF thematic review on SDG implementation

The COVID-19 crisis is likely to have a profound and negative effect on sustainable development efforts. A prolonged global economic slowdown will adversely impact the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to FAO<sup>3</sup>, COVID-19 is already affecting the food and agriculture sector. The 2019 GSDR, which identified food systems and nutrition as one of the entry points, underscores the need to rethink the way food is grown and produced in order to accommodate a growing population while minimizing climate and environmental impact. Immediate collective action is needed to respond to the devastating socio-economic consequences of the pandemic and build more inclusive, green and sustainable economies that are more resilient in the face of such crises. Building on the work of its ecosystem (including ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and UN system entities), ECOSOC Integration Segment will explore integrated actions for preparedness, response and recovery in the context of COVID-19 pandemic and to put countries back on track to achieving the SDGs.

The Political Declaration adopted at the SDG Summit raised concern that progress was slow in many areas of the SDGs, underscoring the risk of missing the poverty eradication target and the rising hunger. According to the 2019 Special Edition of the SDG Progress report, progress on the 2030 Agenda’s central principle of leaving no one behind remains slow. Leaving no one behind and taking more tangible steps in this regard is also one of the cross-cutting action areas identified in the Political Declaration to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the SDGs. And today, as the UN Secretary-General underscores in his report<sup>4</sup> “the most vulnerable in the face of this crisis are those who are already at risk”. The principle of leaving no one behind, therefore, is particularly critical in the preparedness, response and recovery in the context of COVID-19.

### Coordination and guidance to the ECOSOC system and UN system

The Segment will also take an overall look at the work of ECOSOC ecosystem and provide guidance and coordination to ensure that all ECOSOC subsidiary bodies work in a focused and coordinated way to ensure coordinated action in building back better to put countries on track to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The segment’s work will prepare the HLPF thematic review.

---

<sup>1</sup> Leaving no one behind; Mobilizing adequate and well-directed financing; Enhancing national implementation; Strengthening institutions for more integrated solutions; Bolstering local action to accelerate implementation; Reducing disaster risk and building resilience; Solving challenges through international cooperation and enhancing the global partnership; Harnessing science, technology and innovation with a greater focus on digital transformation for sustainable development; Investing in data and statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals and Strengthening the high-level political forum

<sup>2</sup> The entry points are areas where the interconnections across the SDGs and targets are particularly suitable for accelerating the transformation needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda. These entry points include (1) human well-being and capabilities; (2) Sustainable and just economies; (3) Food systems and nutrition patterns; (4) Energy decarbonization and universal access;

(5) Urban and peri-urban development; and (6) Global environmental commons.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/en/>

<sup>4</sup> Report of the UN Secretary-General “[Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19](#)”

## **Speakers and format**

In light of the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person meetings and international travel, and as per guidance of the UN Medical Director, the Integration Segment will meet entirely virtually.

The Integration Segment will feature heads of specialized agencies and UN funds and programmes, as well as subsidiary bodies' chairs. Member States will be invited as lead discussants. Brief presentations/case studies of UN system success stories in integrated approaches to support countries in preparedness, response and recovery will be posted on the ECOSOC Integration Segment website. These together with inputs received by the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, as well as a compilation of key messages from these bodies will be posted on the ECOSOC Integration Segment website.

Based on inputs from the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and substantive preparations, the Segment will bring out key substantive messages from the bodies/organizations concerned on entry points or action areas as well as on the overall work of those bodies/organizations and the ways to improve their collective results and the sharing of tasks.