

CONCEPT NOTE – Side event in the ECOSOC Integration segment
***Sustainable Development in Practice: Applying an Integrated Approach
in Latin America and the Caribbean***

May, Monday 8th, 1:15-2:30 pm
Room 6, UN SG, New York City, U.S.A.

Background

The 2030 Agenda synthesizes the breadth and complexity of the development issues the world faces by identifying five key themes for action: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. The Agenda goes further by establishing 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are “*integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development.*” It is therefore not possible to eradicate poverty alone with social policies or selectively make progress in just a few of the goals.

Truly sustainable development outcomes cannot be achieved if development action remains within traditional social, economic and environmental silos. Instead, a more holistic or “integrated” approach is necessary. In this way, the connections between social progress, economic growth, and environmental sustainability are acknowledged. The multi-dimensional nature of the development challenges and the need to simultaneously achieve long-term gains in all realms must be recognized — and any actions must take this into account.

In 2014, UN Environment kicked off the project “Integrated Approach for Environmental Sustainability in Development Planning”, aimed at supporting countries in applying an integrated approach to meet the challenges of sustainable development and approach the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way, maximizing economic, environmental and social benefits. The Integrated Approach regional pilot initiated in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2015, with the support of the Government of Brazil, seeks to compile the body of knowledge and practices aimed at fostering sustainability that the region already has. Following the analysis of experiences¹ in the region, which develop and implement strategies and policies applying an integrated approach, by tackling the interlinkages among the three dimensions of sustainable

¹ The document entitled “*Sustainable Development in Practice: Applying an Integrated Approach in Latin America and the Caribbean*” is the result of analyzing just over a hundred experiences. The final systemization and analysis of 28 experiences set an example of how human determination can be utilised to find new solutions to challenges and promote prosperous and dignified lives for all, while preserving the environment on which people and economies rely on. These ‘out of the box’ experiences are proving to overcome challenges and build coherent, integrated and effective transitions towards sustainable development at different scales. Although designed before the international agreement on the SDG, they are already contributing to their achievement, proving to have a multidimensional impact. As a result of this process, over a hundred regional stakeholders from different governmental levels, the private sector, the academia and the civil society gathered in October 5-6, 2016 in Brasilia in a Regional Symposium in order to engage in knowledge exchange and sharing of experiences while mapping the main challenges, opportunities and specific tools for integrated policy support to SDGs with a focus on integrating environmental sustainability.

development. The project is, in 2017, fostering the replication and escalation of good practices by engaging national governments and strategic partners in a regional cooperation strategy, through, *inter alia*, South-South and Triangular cooperation.

Relationship with ECOSOC Integration Segment

The 2017 Integration Segment session of the Economic and Social Council, “*Making eradication of poverty an integral objective of all policies: what will it take?*” (UN Headquarters, New York, 8-a-10 May), sets up an excellent scenario for sharing the advances in the Latin America and the Caribbean region and the discussion of the main lessons learnt, opportunities and challenges of undertaking the integrated approach for sustainable development, with special focus on its relation to poverty reduction. Furthermore, this side event represents an opportunity to contribute to the outcomes of this segment that will feed the ECOSOC High-level Segment and High-level political forum under the auspices of ECOSOC.

The 2017 Integration Segment will look at the cross-cutting nature of poverty and the need for an integrated approach across disciplines and sectors. Specific examples will be highlighted from initiatives that are designed advancing on how to holistically address poverty eradication and attain broader sustainable development objectives. In fact, social policy alone cannot eradicate poverty, as neither can policies focusing only on the income aspect of poverty.

This side event will highlight how other sectors, apart from social development, have direct and indirect impacts on poverty results when adopting an integrated approach in policy design and implementation. It will focus specifically on the opportunities to incorporate the environmental dimension in poverty eradication through specific examples that contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG1) that aims at ending poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Particularly, governments, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders are thus challenged to find new ways of ensuring poverty eradication and well-being that do not result in the depletion of natural resources, environmental degradation and the destruction of livelihoods, while taking into account the different types of vulnerabilities the population may face in order to build more resilient communities and avoid falling back into poverty.

The Segment will also consider ways to monitor and measure poverty that reinforce inclusiveness and transparency while fostering greater efficiency in policymaking and monitoring implementation. The side event will also showcase methodologies that contribute to a multidimensional measurement of poverty and how new dimensions related to environment and risks can be considered while ensuring capacity development to improve the availability, management and analysis of data.

Recognizing that the integration of the environmental dimension in poverty eradication efforts requires institutional change, the side event will also explore which institutions are taking the lead and therefore the entry points for a more deliberate progress in: integrated policies, a more focused public action, engage all stakeholders involved, and ensure appropriate levels of funding.

Outcomes and Objectives of the side event

The side event has as main outcome to share the experiences of the Latin America and the Caribbean region in the application of integrated approaches to ensure sustained, inclusive and sustainable development results.

To achieve this main outcome, the side event will target the following objectives:

- Provide a practical overview of the application of integrated approaches for sustainable development in the LAC region, revealing challenges, opportunities and lessons learned for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- Provide inputs for the design of integrated and coherent actions that contribute to SDG 1 while ensuring that the environmental dimension is integrated through synergies with SDG 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15; and,
- Offer practical insights, entry points and tools successfully used in Latin America and the Caribbean to enable the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, including initiatives contributing to poverty eradication efforts.

Agenda

<p>Welcoming remarks by Brazil representative</p>
<p>Sustainable development in practice in LAC Presentation of the lessons learned, opportunities and challenges of the application of an integrated approach in LAC. Piedad Martín. Regional Development Coordinator Officer. UN Environment Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.</p> <p><i>The presentation will include a brief summary of the process of identifying, analysing and selecting LAC experiences, a summary of the main challenges, opportunities and tools successfully used in the initiatives in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, revealing the links of these initiatives to specific SDG targets, and, an outline of the main entry points to enable the merging of the three dimensions of sustainable development for poverty reduction.</i></p>
<p>Country experiences in focus: Henrique Veiga. Water Resources and Environmental Quality Secretariat. Ministry of Environment. Brazil– The efforts from the environmental sector to contribute to poverty eradication: the cases of <i>Bolsa Verde</i> and <i>Agua Doce</i> programmes.</p> <p>Marianella Feoli. Cooperative Fund for Sustainable Development. Executive Director. Costa Rica– Combining climate change mitigation and sustainable agricultural practices to improve quality of life of small scale coffee growers: the case of NAMA Cafe.</p> <p>Franco Piza. Bancolombia. Sustainability Director. Colombia – Harnessing banking for financial inclusion of rural families and the conservation of forests.</p> <p><i>This section will present three experiences which will outline the importance of an integrated approach for the inclusion of environmental considerations in poverty eradication and how the achievement of the 2030 Agenda hinges on its application. The session will include presentation from government, civil society and the private sector, with different focuses and combination of thematic areas which are not exclusively categorised under traditional sectors responsible for poverty reduction.</i></p>
<p>Interactive discussion Following the presentation of the panellists, an interactive discussion will follow to identify specific recommendations, solutions and gaps from the plenary participants and audience.</p>
<p>Wrap up and closure.</p>