



## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals

### Press Release

## High-level Political Forum concludes with call for accelerated action on sustainable development

### Ministerial Declaration reaffirms commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals

**New York, 23 July 2025** – The 2025 [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#) concluded this week with Member States calling for urgent, coordinated action to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Member States adopted a ministerial declaration that demonstrates the political will to achieve the SDGs for the benefit of all.

“The SDGs represent the common sense of humanity,” said Bob Rae, President of the UN Economic and Social Council. He further noted that “strengthening national ownership of the SDGs is essential. That means integrating them into national development plans, budgets, and policies—not as an add-ons, but as the core of how Governments serve their people.” He added that “We need to reaffirm the UN’s relevance through results—by showing that multilateralism delivers real, tangible benefits for people at every level of society.”

Held from 14 to 23 July under the auspices of the ECOSOC, the HLPF came at a critical time as countries strive to address intersecting global challenges—from protracted conflicts and economic instability to the escalating climate crisis.

Building on the outcomes of the third UN Ocean Conference in Nice and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Sevilla – that ended with a call to urgently address the \$4 trillion annual shortfall in financing needed to achieve the SDGs – the progress made at the HLPF will help inform discussions at the upcoming 80th session of the UN General Assembly.

“The Sustainable Development Goals are not a dream,” said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in his opening remarks on 21 July. “They are a plan. A plan to keep our promises — to the most vulnerable people, to each other, and to future generations.”

Over the course of two weeks, the Forum brought together over 6,000 in-person participants, including governments, youth, civil society, scientists, the private sector, and other key partners, to share experiences and spotlight innovative, inclusive solutions to advance SDG implementation. Discussions focused on integrated responses to today’s most pressing issues under the theme “*Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for*





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*Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for leaving no one behind.* The SDGs reviewed in-depth were Goals 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 14 (Life Below Water) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

### Accelerating SDG implementation critical to address global challenges

The recently launched the [Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025](#) revealed that significant progress has been made in global health, education, and sustainability: new HIV infections have fallen nearly 40 per cent since 2010, malaria prevention has saved over 12 million lives since 2000, and social protection now reaches more than half the world's population.

Yet only 35 per cent of targets are on track or making moderate progress, while nearly half are advancing too slowly and 18 per cent have regressed. More than 800 million people continue to live in extreme poverty, while billions lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services. Temperatures reached 1.55°C above pre-industrial levels in 2024, making it the hottest year on record. Conflicts led to nearly 50,000 deaths that same year, and forced displacement affected over 120 million people worldwide. At the same time, low- and middle-income countries faced record-high debt servicing costs of \$1.4 trillion in 2023.

The report called for action across six priority areas where intensified efforts could deliver transformative impact: food systems, energy access, digital transformation, education, jobs and social protection, and climate and biodiversity action.

### Voluntary National Reviews

Thirty-five countries presented their [Voluntary National Reviews](#) at the Forum — highlighting the actions they have taken to achieve the SDGs.

Snapshot of countries' reporting on progress:

- **Bangladesh** leverages the Future nation platform to connect thousands of young people from marginalized and mainstream backgrounds to skill-building, entrepreneurship, and job opportunities, bridging skill gaps through digital tools and global mentorship.
- **Ethiopia's** "5 Million Coders Initiative" equips youth with digital skills using free, certified, offline-accessible courses to bridge divides.
- **Finland** has made progress in marine protection, reaching the target of conserving 10 percent of its total marine area. It actively participates in negotiations for a new treaty to end plastic pollution. Finland's protected areas cover about 13% of its land area.
- **Germany's** Gender Equality (Management Positions) Act mandates a 30% quota for women on supervisory boards of certain companies, with a national target of increasing this to 40% by 2030. The federal public service aims for gender parity in leadership positions for women by 2025.
- **Japan's** "SDGs Award" system has successfully promoted nationwide efforts, significantly increasing public awareness of the SDGs from 50% in 2021 to





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approximately 90% in 2023. Various SDGs-related award programs sponsored by ministries and agencies continue to advance specific initiatives, such as the Food Loss and Waste Reduction Promotion Award and the Green Infrastructure Award.

- **Lesotho** has improved its legal framework with laws like the Counter Domestic Violence Act (2022) and has seen increased women's political participation at local levels due to legislated quotas.
- **Malta's** Electronic Public Procurement System (ePPS) has digitized procurement processes, incorporating modules for Green Public Procurement (GPP) and energy efficiency standards.
- **Nigeria** is making investments to foster innovation, support Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), enhance e-governance, and create jobs through expanded access to affordable, high-speed internet.
- **Papua New Guinea** is investing in digital literacy programs, especially for rural women, providing ICT training for entrepreneurs, coding courses, and digital financial literacy.
- **Qatar** actively engages youth through its Qatar Youth Innovation Award and hosts the Doha Forum, Youth Edition, which brings together young leaders globally for discussions on pressing challenges.
- **Seychelles** has enacted a Marine Spatial Plan in 2024, which legally designates 33% of its ocean territory for conservation and sustainable use. They have also achieved a notable reduction in plastic pollution through clean-up efforts and public awareness campaigns.
- **Suriname's** Labour Market Policy addresses workforce development through skill-building initiatives and labor market integration strategies, including a national strategy for Youth Employment

### Events held in connection with HLPF

In connection with the 2025 HLPF, there were 12 high-level special events, 13 VNR labs, 190 side events and 8 exhibitions, with a number of noteworthy outcomes including but not limited to the below:

- Launch of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments 9th Report on ["Towards the Localization of the SDGs"](#)
- Launch of new [SDG 6 Country Acceleration Case studies](#) (the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) (UN Water)
- Launch of three Thematic Reports by the [Expert Group on Climate and SDG Synergies](#) (co-convened by UN DESA and UNFCCC):
  - Synergy Solutions 2025: How Nature Conservation Can Advance SDG and Climate Action
  - Synergy Solutions 2025: Closing the Climate and Disaster Insurance Protection Gap
  - Synergy Solutions 2025: Linking Climate and Health Action in Cities
- Launch of [Tracking SDG7: The Energy Progress Report 2025](#) by SDG 7 Indicator Custodian Agencies (IEA, IRENA, UN DESA, World Bank and WHO)





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For more information, please visit: <https://hlpf.un.org/2025> ;  
<https://hlpf.un.org/2025/media> | Hashtags: #HLPF, #GlobalGoals, #SDGs

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