

Statement by the Science and Technology Major Group

Prof. Laszlo Pinter
ICSU/CEU/IISD
lpinter@iisd.ca

May 7, 2014

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair for giving me the floor, speaking on behalf of the Science and Technology Major Group. I would like to make two points in my intervention: one related to the importance of recognizing that all development ambitions discussed under the umbrella of the SDGs have to take place in the context and overarching framework of safe ecological limits and boundaries and a second on the need for a global science and innovation system enabled to support the transition to a transformed world that we are outlining here by way of discussing and agreeing upon a new set of global SDGs.

Staying within safe limits and understanding what it takes is important for all development aspirations and sectors, from oceans and seas, to biodiversity, water, climate, agriculture, sustainable consumption and production and others. We would like to emphasize that rather than being a self-serving agenda, staying within safe ecological limits is an *essential* precondition for maintaining human well-being in all these spheres, and requires the simultaneous development and maintenance of natural, human and produced capital.

While agreeing on shared SDGs alone is hard work, making the dream of a future, transformed world outlined by the goals happen will require translating aspirations, goals and targets into hard realities and measurable outcomes. The transition from the present to the world of the SDGs cannot happen without a globally coordinated science and innovation system, with all its components: international collaboration, national science systems, place-based research, intergovernmental assessments, creating or strengthening the evidence base of policies and action through data collection and observation, and science advice at national and international levels. Given its critical importance, the conditions for the development of science and innovation system capable of addressing the transition challenge should itself be reflected in the SDGs as an essential element of the means of implementation and capacity building.