

Environment: towards more effective multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve the environmental ambition of the 2030 Agenda?

15 March 2019 (morning)

Objective:

To highlight the environmental and climate ambition of the 2030 Agenda and examine how EU cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships can contribute to achieving this ambition.

Expected results:

- Highlighting the environmental dimension of the new global agenda and the urgency to step up action to address environmental degradation and climate change.
- Incentivise multi-stakeholder partnerships to take urgent action to combat climate change and environmental degradation and their impacts, in line with obligations under international agreements, including increased engagements by Policy Forum on Development (PFD) constituencies working in partnership.
- Sharing of experiences on challenges and opportunities faced by multiple stakeholders in promoting active participation in environmental governance and decision-making.

Background:

Environment and climate change are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, with dedicated goals (SDG 12, 13, 14, 15) but also as a dimension that cuts across the 17 SDGs. There is no sustainable development without healthy ecosystems, sustainably managed natural resources and a stable climate. Yet recent scientific reports¹ highlight that the global environment is more threatened than ever by unsustainable development. Humanity is nearing or crossing a number of planetary ecological boundaries that bring us beyond the planet's safe operating space. The world is on course to the 6th global extinction of species, this first one caused by humankind; the current changes in our planet's climate are redrawing the world and magnifying the risks for instability in all forms. The last two decades included 18 of the warmest years on record. The trend is clear. Immediate and decisive environmental and climate action is essential.

¹ [IPCC special report 2018](#) on the impacts of 1,5°C global warming; [IPBES regional reports 2018](#) on the state of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Climate change and environmental degradation are a serious concern and widespread citizens, including youth, have mobilized to request more decisive action by national governments and the EU.

A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the international community, civil society, including the private sector, the EU and other actors. Multi-stakeholders' deliberations on environmental sustainable development goals require integrated policy responses in a number of priority areas such as biodiversity, ecosystems, sustainable transport, sustainable cities, oceans, climate change and the nexus among energy, food and water. It requires a fundamental shift of development pathways and low-carbon resource efficient transitions across all sectors of our economies.

The EU and its member states are a leading force in shaping the global response to environmental and climate change² and have contributed to the adoption of an ambitious global agenda. This new framework comprises multilateral commitments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Multilateral Environmental Agreements including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Commitments to Action, as well as the EU's new European Consensus on Development. In December 2018, the nearly 200 countries gathered at the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) reached an agreement on the concrete implementation of the objectives agreed in the Paris agreement on climate change.³ The Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Beijing 2020) is expected to adopt an ambitious global agenda for action on biodiversity for the next decades.

² Amongst others, the 2020 energy and climate package; the energy and climate framework 2030; the Communication on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions pathway for 2050 and new EU policy and regulatory frameworks on circular economy and on plastics.

³ The agreed rule book establishes for the first time a common tracking system so that each country can measure the progress of their measures of mitigation, adaptation and financing climate change with common guidelines for all, though with a margin for the developing countries' need according to their different abilities. Before the Conference, the Intergovernmental Panel on climate change (IPCC) announced that natural disasters associated with climate change would increase dramatically if the global temperature will increase a degree and a half. If it exceeds the 2°C, the scenario would be catastrophic.

All stakeholders will have to refocus and intensify their efforts on areas where progress has been slow, and look at how multi-stakeholder dialogues should be used to hold all development actors accountable.

Methodology:

- Keynote speaker on 14 March
- A panel debate followed by a moderated discussion

Proposed guiding questions:

- What role is there for the EU cooperation and other development actors to tackle the global environmental and climate crisis? Are we doing enough?
- How can we create effective partnerships to realize the environmental ambition of the new global agenda and hold leaders accountable to commitments made?
- What can be done to transform sector and geographic driven approaches into more holistic thinking and action?