UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

WORKING WITH THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

Katinka Weinberger
Chief, Environment and Development Policy Section
United Nations Economic and Social Commission
of Asia and the Pacific

IAP Triannual Conference

Overview

- Who are the Regional Commissions?

- Stakeholder engagement in the 2030 Agenda, and ESCAP's role

- Follow-up and review: guiding principles, framework, highlights and take-aways from the 2019 APFSD

- Opportunities…and challenges

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UN Regional Commissions – Who we Are
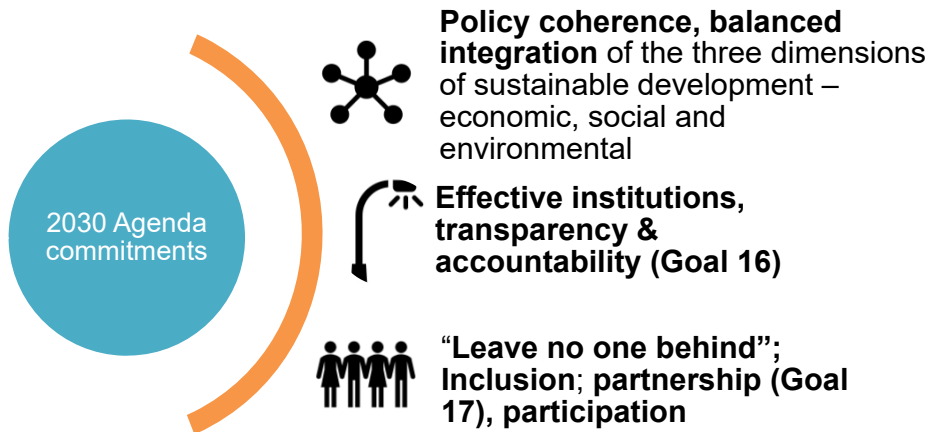
	Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (54 member States // Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)
	Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (56 member States // Geneva, Switzerland)
	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (46 member States // Santiago, Chile)
	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (53 member States // Bangkok, Thailand)
	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (18 member States // Beirut, Lebanon)

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Functions of UN Regional Commissions

- **Think tanks** of the UN System in the 5 regions, that produce integrated knowledge products regarding a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues

- **Conveners** of multi-stakeholder and intergovernmental platforms, such as the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development

- **Providers of policy advocacy and capacity building services** in areas related to the 2030 Agenda by demand of member States

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Engagement of non-government actors in the 2030 Agenda is not "business as usual" ….

2030 Agenda commitments

Policy coherence, balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental

Effective institutions, transparency & accountability (Goal 16)

"**Leave no one behind**"; Inclusion; **partnership (Goal 17), participation**

How can non-government actors contribute?

Planning
- Help develop social, political and scientific consensus on priorities & targets
- Strengthen integration and policy coherence
- Ensuring that the perspectives of the disadvantaged are taken into account

Delivery/action
- Spread the word - public outreach and awareness
- Shared vision and awareness at national/province/district & community levels
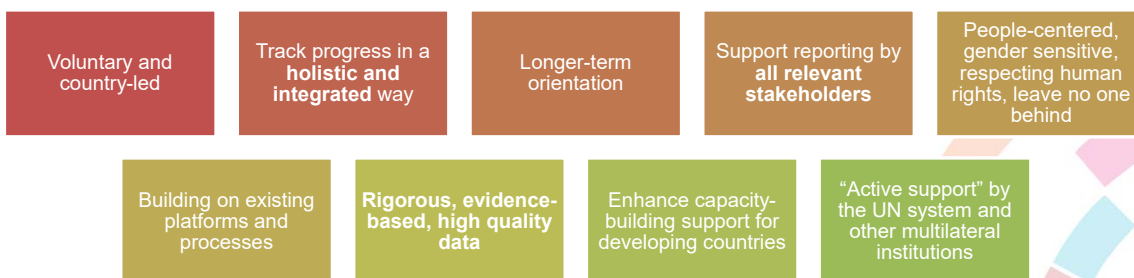- Partnerships for delivery

Follow up and review
- Help define data disaggregation needs
- Develop social consensus on progress, priorities and gaps
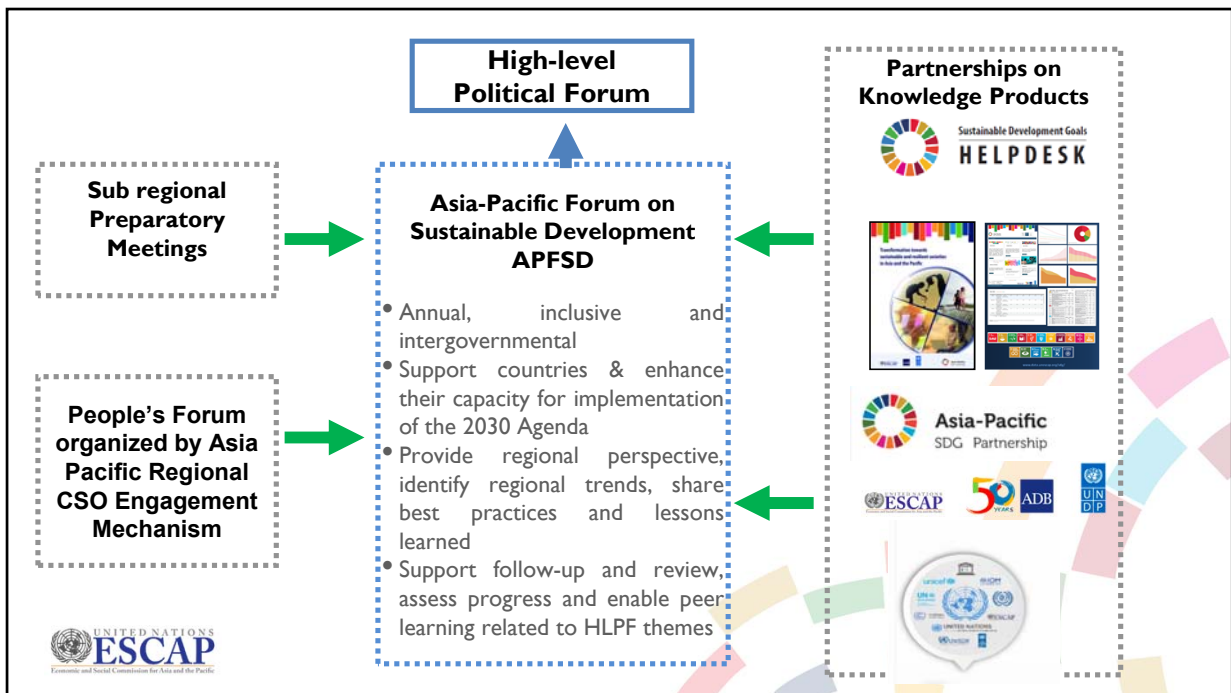- Data gaps

Stakeholder Engagement at ESCAP

- Substantial steps have been taken at regional level to involve stakeholders (CSO, Business, local authorities…)

- Engagement processes can be improved through capacity building and systematic approaches better adapted to 2030 Agenda

- Institutionalization of engagement can help bring greater benefits including in the UN

- Measuring & evaluating engagement and its benefits can help improve quality of engagement

---

Guiding principles for Follow-up and Review

Voluntary and country-led	Track progress in a **holistic and integrated** way	Longer-term orientation	Support reporting by **all relevant stakeholders**	People-centered, gender sensitive, respecting human rights, leave no one behind
	Building on existing platforms and processes	**Rigorous, evidence-based, high quality data**	Enhance capacity-building support for developing countries	"Active support" by the UN system and other multilateral institutions

National, regional and global follow-up and review processes

National Reviews
- **VNR**
- **National SDG progress report**

APFSD
- **Regional SDG progress report (ESCAP)**
- **Thematic report (ESCAP/ADB/UNDP)**
- **Goal profiles (UN system)**

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF ECOSOC

HLPF
- **47 VNRs (2018)**
- **51 VNRs (2019)**
- **SDG global progress report (annual)**
- **Global Sustainable Development report (quadrennial)**

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

High-level Political Forum

Partnerships on Knowledge Products

Sustainable Development Goals
HELPDESK

Sub regional Preparatory Meetings

Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development APFSD

- Annual, inclusive and intergovernmental
- Support countries & enhance their capacity for implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- Provide regional perspective, identify regional trends, share best practices and lessons learned
- Support follow-up and review, assess progress and enable peer learning related to HLPF themes

People's Forum organized by Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism

Asia-Pacific
SDG Partnership

ESCAP   50 YEARS ADB   UNDP

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Participation of Stakeholders in APFSD

The scientific community is involved in APFSD through:
- CSO engagement process (including an STI group)
- Invitation of scientists as panelists and keynote speakers
- Contributions to the development of Goal Profiles and SDG roundtables
- Engagement space, side events, exhibition booths

Year	Total Participants	Major Group and Stakeholder Participants	Participants from academia/research/ universities
2019	850	145	45
2018	803	120	70
2017	509	85	20
2016	437	65	6
2015	409	75	10
2014	256	36	7

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Highlights of the 2019 APFSD

Empowering people for a more inclusive and equal Asia-Pacific

35 side events
Engagement space
VNR Learning Café
Grupo Jobel

Opportunities resulting from 2019 APFSD

- Deepen our understanding of **how socioeconomic and environmental changes impact different groups** - closer collaboration and innovative partnerships between vulnerable groups, scientific communities and policymakers

- Gather, use and interpret **innovative sources of data**, such as big data and data generated by civil society and citizens

- **Address the technological divide** through partnerships between grass-roots innovators, start-up companies, the scientific community and venture capitalists – to better channel the potential of technology to empower

- Research on **policy effectiveness, innovative policy instruments** and **financing policies**

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Opportunities to engage

National level	Regional level
• Support VNR processes – and follow-up to the VNRs • Strengthen national statistical capacities • Support implementation of SDG projects	• Engage in APFSD (through national delegations, in side events) • Contribute to SDG Help Desk (reports, case studies) • Provide inputs to knowledge products • Participate in review processes, review groups • Showcase best practices and innovation at events

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Engagement challenges

- Lack of mechanisms to express research needs supporting policy to the scientific community

- Difficulty to reach out to scientists from all backgrounds

- Coordination/representativity due to the multitude of networks

- Lack of awareness of scientists of possibilities to engage

- Lack of funding

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Thank you !

Questions?

sdghelpdesk.unescap.org

UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific