



SAVE THE DATE

The Governments of Malaysia, Pakistan, and Turkey
in collaboration with
the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

cordially invite

All Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations and your esteemed delegations

to

**A High-Level Side Event of the 74th United Nations General Assembly:
Environmental Stewardship in Addressing Poverty to Achieve Sustainable
Development for All**

Date:

26 September 2019 (Thursday)

Time:

1.15 - 2.30 pm

Venue:

**United Nations Headquarters, New York,
Conference Room 2**

VIP Participation

***Keynote Addresses by the Hon. Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, and
the Hon. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan,
and speaking engagements with High Level Officials from co-hosting States, Delegations and UN
Agency***

RSVP: <https://forms.gle/BbJSJikSM8gLPjaf7>

Further information on the event could gathered [here](#)



Panel Discussion at the margins of the 74th United Nations High-Level Forum, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

Environmental Stewardship in Addressing Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All

Co-hosted by Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey

United Nations Headquarters, New York – Conference Room 2

Thursday, 26 September 2019
1315 – 1430 hrs.

A. Background

1. 70% of the world's poor draw upon natural resources for most of their livelihoods. Farmlands, grasslands, forests, freshwaters and ocean are the sources of more than half of the income of poor household worldwide. Yet those natural resources, the basis of the GDP of the poor countries are rapidly being degraded across the globe.
2. The 2030 agenda reflects on the major eradication of poverty and environmental challenges facing the world population's depleting natural capital. Climate vulnerability, gender inequality, rural-urban migration and growing resource demand, all of those disproportionately harm the livelihoods and well-being of the poor.
3. Poverty-environment actions of SDGs promote an integrated approach that brings poverty, environment and climate objectives into the heart of national and sub-national plans, policies, budgets and public and private finance to strengthen the sustainable management of natural resources and to alleviate poverty.
4. While countries around the world have substantially reduced the poverty rate, poverty in all its forms continue to increase due to various factors, which include the implications of environmental degradation. The income gap is widening between the rich and the poor. Most of economic activities are directly, indirectly

or remotely based on natural resources and any pressure on natural resources can cause environmental stress.

5. Environmental degradation can have severe consequences on the people, especially to the poor, as environmental damage increases the impact of floods and other environmental catastrophes. Soil erosion, land degradation and deforestation lead to a decline in food production along with a shortage of wood for fuel which also contribute to inflation. As the poor relies more directly on the environment than the rich for their survival, they are more vulnerable to any environmental threats.
6. Sustainable consumption and production must now be the mainstay of development mainstream. It is common for the poor to be dependent on agriculture and fisheries activities for their livelihood. If it is not managed sustainably, it will have significant impacts on the environment. Illegal dumping of toxic chemical contamination from industrial waste would not only cause air and water pollution but the sheer severity of its effects would also jeopardise the health and income of the community in the affected areas. This is because the toxic chemical contamination would enter the ground and absorbed by the plants and aquatic life around them. This include disposal of waste dumping from develop countries to developing and least developed countries.
7. Sustainable agriculture is imperative in protecting the environment, expanding the Earth's natural resource base, maintaining and improving soil fertility, reducing soil degradation and erosion, as well as conserving water resources. Agriculture that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable can make a vital contribution in our response to the most urgent challenges, which are reducing poverty and ensuring food security.
8. For example, countries in Southeast Asia are the largest producers of palm oil in the world, which accounts nearly half of the world's exports. However, the commodity seems to be falling on bearish production due to negative perception of palm oil effects on the ecosystem and subsequently, affecting the livelihood of mainly smallholders. However, efforts to ensure sustainability of this commodity have been addressed through various initiatives and platforms such as Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). The roundtable aims at transforming markets to meet sustainable norms.
9. Sustainable development has been at the heart of Malaysia's development approach with emphasis on eradicating poverty, improving well-being of people as well as caring for the environment. In 2017, Malaysia presented its Voluntary National Review on the progress of achieving SDGs at the UN's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The review, among others, underscored its achievement in reducing absolute poverty as well as its efforts in managing its natural resources and in conserving the environment.

10. Malaysia has also integrated the SDGs in its five years development plan, which has emphasis on a green growth strategy and is currently undertaking a review of the existing development plan to merge it with National SDGs Roadmap.
11. Sharing of experiences, lesson learned and best practices among countries with similar contexts and challenges are among the important key drivers of change. As poverty have some significant impact to the environment at global level, efficiency must be improved through better collaboration and cooperative partnerships, including among international development agencies and governments. International cooperation is necessary to build stronger partnerships to accelerate progress towards ending poverty through sustainable development, within the context that no one is left behind.

B. Objectives

12. This event will deliberate on main achievements, lesson learned, and common challenges faced in efforts to address poverty and environmental challenges around the globe. The discussion intends to foster a shared understanding of implementing the SDGs focusing specifically on SDG 1: No Poverty and SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and other goals that might be related to these goals.
13. Bringing together partner countries, academia and UN experts on this platform would create the much-needed policy space to strategize on leveraging cooperation among member states towards achieving sustainable development at all levels. This platform will provide a venue for dialogue between countries to generate inputs and recommendations for strategies and development of sound policy frameworks on sustainable development at national, regional and international level.

C. Organizers and Participants

14. The event will be convened by the Government of Malaysia, in cooperation with the Governments of Pakistan and Turkey, with support from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).
15. The event will consist of a moderator-driven, interactive panel discussion (Davos-style) with questions posed to every speakers (7-minute intervention) followed by discussions among the panellists and the audience to foster a lively interaction.
16. The event will be an open event, targeted at Member States and representatives of the UN system, private sector, international organizations, civil society, and donors that work in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.