



**LEAVES, A Newsletter of the  
INTERNATIONAL  
ENVIRONMENT FORUM**  
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**International Environment Forum** a Baha'i inspired organization addressing  
the environment and sustainable development

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**From the Editor, Request for information for upcoming newsletters**

This newsletter is an opportunity for IEF members to share their experiences, activities, and initiatives that are taking place at the community level on environment, climate change and sustainability. All members are welcome to contribute information about related activities, upcoming conferences, news from like-minded organizations, recommended websites, book reviews, etc. Please send information to [newsletter@ief.org](mailto:newsletter@ief.org)

Please share the *Leaves* newsletter and IEF membership information with family, friends, and associates and encourage interested persons to consider becoming a member of the IEF.

**IEF Conference in Toronto with ABS 7-10 August 2014**

Airal The 18th Annual Conference of the International Environment Forum will be a partnership with the 2014 Association for Baha'i Studies - North America Conference on 7-10 August at the Fairmont Royal York hotel in downtown Toronto, Canada.

The ABS theme is "**Scholarship and the Life of Society**", so the theme of the IEF contribution will turn around environment and sustainability contributing to the life of society. We shall focus on how reflection on environmental limits, climate change and sustainability from a spiritual and ethical perspective contributes to more sustainable lifestyles and communities, and how we can put our concerns into action at the international, national and local levels. Registration is through the ABS on their web site at <http://www.bahai-studies.ca>.

The IEF breakout sessions will include a panel on "**Contributing to sustainability discourse and action**".

One of the purposes of Baha'i-inspired organizations like the International Environment Forum is to provide a place where professionals in a particular discipline can explore together the application of Baha'i principles to the solution of problems they encounter in their professional work. The creative interaction of spiritual principles and practical problems can shed new light on difficulties that have proven intractable in traditional frameworks and thus influence the life of society. This panel will present examples of this process at the international, national and local levels in the fields of environment and sustainability. Dr. Arthur Dahl will review the ways Baha'i principles are introduced into United Nations dialogues and conferences. Peter Adriance will present the approach to sustainable development issues and climate change in the American Baha'i community. Christine Muller will use the example of the Wilmette Institute course on Climate Change to show how a deeper understanding of the scientific and spiritual dimensions of the issue stimulates changes in individual behavior and activities at the community level. This example could inspire professionals in other

fields to organize, encourage and accompany each other as they work to find solutions to the challenges they face in the light of Baha'i teachings.

There will also be a presentation by IEF President Arthur Dahl on "**Addressing sustainability challenges: a framework for material and spiritual transformation**". The world is facing a combination of environmental, social and economic crises that are overwhelming the existing world order. While the solutions in embryonic form are found in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, there is a strong resistance to turning to these solutions both from religious orthodoxies and from modern materialists. While governments seem paralyzed, progress is still possible at the community level. The challenge of Bahá'í scholarship is to demonstrate the validity of spiritual principle as a necessary complement to sectoral approaches to the sustainability challenge, inspiring a more integrated systems perspective on the necessary transition to sustainability. Recent work on values, cooperation, well-being and happiness is opening the door to a wider dialogue on these issues. Since youth will be in the vanguard of the coming transformation, this presentation will highlight the need to inspire them with hope and accompany them with intellectually-sound proposals and frameworks for action across the full spectrum of challenges to civilization.

### **The presenters**

Dr. Arthur Lyon Dahl, President of the International Environment Forum, is a retired Deputy Assistant Executive Director of UNEP, with 45 years' experience in sustainability, international environmental governance, development, indicators, and systems science. He lectures widely and consults with the World Bank, World Economic Forum, and UNEP, among others.

Peter Adriance is Representative for Sustainable Development in the U.S. Baha'i Office of Public Affairs, a board member of the International Environment Forum, and has represented the Baha'i International Community and Baha'is of the U.S. at numerous national and international fora.

Christine Muller wrote "Scientific and Spiritual Dimensions of Climate Change", an interfaith study course for the International Environment Forum, is lead faculty for the Wilmette Institute Course on Climate Change, and is on the Board of Rhode Island Interfaith Power and Light - a religious response to global warming.

It is five years since we last had our conference in North America, and the second time that IEF has partnered with ABS after our successful collaboration in Washington, D.C. in 2009. See the report at <http://iefworld.org/conf13.htm>. Please plan to attend both to participate in the life of IEF and to network with the larger community of scholars. The IEF Annual General Assembly and election of the Governing Board will be held during the conference.

## **Webinar: The UN Environment Assembly Made Easy to Understand**

**17 JUNE WEBINAR**

The UN Environment Assembly Made Easy to Understand



### **INVITATION**

**17 June, 2014**

**9am EST (New York)/2pm GMT (London)/4pm EAT (Nairobi)/10pm UTC (Seoul)**  
**Online event will be 90 minutes**

**REGISTER BY CLICKING [HERE](#).**

**<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/sf/index.php/our-work/events/610>**

We would like to invite you to a focused webinar on the role and remit of the recently established United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA). The online event will inform stakeholders about the significance of the new body and its relationship with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the wider UN system. Participants will also be informed about engagement opportunities with the new body and its relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 development agenda. A panel will address the following topics to prepare stakeholders for the first UNEA (June 23-27):

- The roots of UNEA (Brief history of UNEP and overview of Rio+20 outcome)
- Modalities, rules of procedure and opportunities of engagement for non-governmental stakeholders with UNEA
- Themes for the first UNEA and likely advocacy topics for the UN major groups and other stakeholders
- What is the Major Groups Facilitating Committee and how will it be utilised by UNEA

#### **Background information:**

From 23 to 27 June 2014, the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme will convene at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi with more than 1,200 participants, including Environment Ministers, Government delegates and representatives of major groups and other stakeholders. The overarching theme of the first session is "Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including sustainable consumption and production" and as a second important topic, the UNEA will also address "Illegal Trade in Wildlife".

UNEA is a result of the call made by world leaders at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Brazil in June 2012, to strengthen and upgrade UNEP as the pre-eminent body within the UN to deal with the environment. [MORE INFORMATION](#).



**Major Groups  
Facilitating Committee  
(MGFC)**



## **Second Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption**

Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China, 8-11 June 2014

The 2014 Global Research Forum Sustainable Production and Consumption Conference: Global Transitions to Sustainable Production and Consumption Systems, was held at Fudan University, Shanghai, People's Republic of China, on 8-11 June 2014. About a hundred participants from around the world gathered to explore the challenges and research opportunities in trying to move the world towards sustainability. IEF President Arthur Dahl participated in the conference, as several IEF members did in the previous GRF-SPaC (<http://iefworld.org/conf16>) in Rio de Janeiro in 2012. Since there were numerous parallel sessions of papers, this report emphasizes the values dimension. More information on GRF-SPaC is at <http://grf-spc.weebly.com/>.

After the opening welcomes from Prof. Lin Shangli, Vice-President of Fudan University, Prof. Philip Vergragt, Coordinator of GRF-SPaC, and Prof. Trevor Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of East Anglia (UK) and Director of the Fudan Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, the first keynote talk was given by the distinguished diplomat John Ashton, CBE, founder of Third Generation Environmentalism and former Special Representative for Climate Change for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

In a remarkable talk, partly in Chinese and partly in English, on "The Politics and Diplomacy of Climate Change" which was really his "Chinese dream", Mr. Ashton said we must break with our belief in separation from and dominion over nature, which cannot be exploited freely and will take revenge. After referring to the four elements of a good, not

sour earth, containing fire and controlling our passions, water as a bridge not a barrier, and air, he cited the Confucian values of benevolent virtue and harmony. In the political struggle to control climate change, he referred to three battles. The first is for climate security linked to food, water and energy security. With the risk of an early catastrophic collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet and a 2 meter rise in sea level in this century (putting Shanghai and many other cities under water), we risk losing the capacity to choose our own destiny, but do we have the will? The second battle is to make the market our steward, not our master. The market has no goal and produces extremes of wealth, so it cannot take us there. We must intervene in the market with top-down as well as bottom-up solutions, as there is no time for bottom-up approaches alone. The third battle is to decide who we are, how we define ourselves, our souls. We are drunk with market-driven consumerism. This requires a political and moral choice to abandon the consumer society. Youth have so little confidence in their parent's generation that the bridge between generations is broken, and we must repair it. The world of knowledge must reach out to the world of choice that is politics. We must win these three battles, but it depends on our will, and breaking down the barriers between disciplines.

The second keynote by Ashish Kothari, founder of the Indian environmental group Kalpavriksh, advisor to the Government of India and IUCN on biodiversity and indigenous peoples' issues, and widely-published author, was on "Sustainable Consumption and Radical Ecological Democracy". He noted that the corporation-dominated democracies have breached ecological limits while continuing inequalities and human depravation, with an alienation of nature that has become a spiritual crisis. He proposed a "sustainable consumption line" that people should not go over like the "poverty line" that people should not drop below. Over-consumption equals someone else's depravation. Consumption is deeply cultural, with market mechanisms that enrich the rich, who can eat organic, while the poor can only afford junk food. He defined radical ecological democracy as achieving human well-being through participation in decision-making with an equitable distribution of wealth. We need a new economics with ecological limits as core, production and consumption locally for basic needs, and well-being indicators. There should be a new culture of knowledge and

knowledge of culture founded in values and principles, relinking with nature and learning through doing, with a mix of tradition and modernity and a diversity of approaches in a free exchange of ideas between global and local. He anticipated further collapse over the next decades, with people looking desperately for solutions, until we reach a transition point.

Professor William Rees, an ecologist, a founder of the field of ecological economics, Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia, and co-creator of the ecological footprint, gave the third keynote talk on "Overcoming Denial: Toward an 'Ecological Civilization'." He started by showing that the social construction of our economic "reality" based on endless growth is a circular system with no relationship to anything outside itself like human relationships or the environment. Its globalization is oriented to maximize consumption and production, and un-sustainability is an inevitable emergent property of such a system. This is a fatal model, and we are in denial. Indeed, the "environment" was a creation by economists to connect marginally with "nature" with little real connection so that the economy could grow forever. This is a misunderstanding of reality and does not match the biophysical reality. Our present economy is parasitic on the rest of nature, so that growth makes us poorer rather than richer, destroying \$20 trillion in ecological goods and services annually. In the USA, 1% of the population captures 90% of the new wealth, but people are socially engineered to deny reality in an "age of unreason". The increasing income gap is breaking down any residual social trust. Full systems failure is possible when the first critical resource runs out, and in a globalized economy it will take the whole world down together. He called for a paradigm shift in beliefs, values and assumptions with a different representation of reality. If the purpose is to satisfy the biophysical needs of the people within the limits of the planet's biocapacity, emphasizing material sufficiency, regional self-reliance, economic security, relative equity, community resilience and ecological stability, then sustainability will emerge.

The final keynote by Professor Dajian Zhu, Professor of Economics at Tongji University, and involved in policy research projects with the World Economic Forum, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, was on "Sustainable Production and Consumption in China's Green Transition". He cited statistics on

China's expected development, with 1 billion people in urban areas by 2030, with a GDP per capita twenty times that in 2000. It was essential to develop a green agenda decoupling economic growth from environmental impact in order to stay within planetary limits. The challenge is to convince ordinary people that sustainability is better for their life.

Values were a major theme of the conference, with several papers on the values-based indicators developed with Professor Marie Harder at the University of Brighton (UK), who is now also a 1000 Talents Professor at Fudan University. Arthur Dahl presented a paper on "The Ethics of Hope: Values as Positive Drivers for a Sustainable Future" (<http://iefworld.org/ddahl14b>). He also took part in a panel discussion on "Human Values and the Future of Sustainable Consumption and Production", and chaired a session on sustainable lifestyles (see below).

A session on "Sustainable Lifestyles" provided three distinctive and complementary perspectives. Wenling Liu discussed "Sustainable Consumption in China: a conceptual framework and research agenda". Sustainability of consumption and production is not yet visible in China, with its focus on a rise in consumption. It is a complex issue to understand and research, combining as it does individual intentions, the provision of infrastructure, and social practices, and covering domains such as food, energy and transport. There is a lack of links between technical and behavioral considerations, and consumption itself is undergoing a dynamic transition. Integrated frameworks are needed that are specific to China. The second presentation by Shilpa Iyanna on "Everyday sustainable behavior practices of individuals in the UAE" described the challenges of moving towards sustainability in the world's least sustainable country according to its global footprint, the United Arab Emirates. She explained the political issues with sustainable consumption, such as not accepting any drop in consumption or the lack of available choices, so the focus has to be on personal responsibility. This contrasted with the perspective in Japan, presented by Midori Aoyagi in her paper "How people perceive their future lifestyles: the results of our focus group interviews on sustainable lifestyles". Using innovative scenario development of lifestyle trends, she explored how people live their lives and consume in Japan in the context of a decreasing

population, a widening gap in income and education with a shrinking middle class and an expanding lower class. She observed shifting values with respect to careers and self-realization, an erosion of the family system with increasing vulnerability to external risks, and shrinking consumption.

Some of the issues raised in the session included how the different cases of expanding consumption, overconsumption and declining consumption illustrated how dynamic the issue is over time. How is it possible to determine a sustainable level of consumption? It is important to distinguish the consumption of the rich who can choose a sustainable lifestyle but do not, and the poor who have little choice and are vulnerable to the lifestyles imposed on them. This highlighted the need to change social systems, not just consumption.

The conference closed with a panel discussing the "Long-term Transition to Sustainable Production and Consumption Systems". Bill Rees noted that wars and catastrophes can cause rapid change, but social learning for a new narrative takes decades. How can we speed up social learning? Knowledge can prepare the way for legislation and regulation to lay the foundations for a new civilization. John Ashton said that this was a question of power, who has it and how it is used. The system resists change in the growth model, as in the case of a university economics department that refused to teach about the crash of 2008. Individual action is simply displacement and will not solve the problem, which requires getting out of fantasy economics into real economics. Maurie Cohen, one of the conference organizers, noted that Japan was ahead of the pack, with its youth moving away from conventional values towards post-consumerism. Philip Vergragt highlighted the need for cultural change, not just values, with learning processes to offer better visions of the future, and deep democracy to legitimate the new directions. He referred to the wisdom of indigenous knowledge systems, and the need to listen to children. Lars Mortensen of the European Environment Agency concluded that business could be a partner in the transition, recognizing the need for new business models, and governments could help to enable this process.

The next GRF-SPaC will be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in 2016.



## “Faith Voices for a Healthy Climate” from Moms Clean Air Force

<http://www.momscleanairforce.org/faith-voices-climate-ebook/>

Moms Clean Air Force salutes the many people of faith, from world leaders to citizen congregants, who are doing so much to lead the way in tackling the most urgent problem humanity faces: global climate change. Read quotes by Pope Francis, the Dalai Lama, Sally Bingham, and many others, as well as by Peter Adriaance, US Bahá'í Office of Public Affairs and IEF board member (quoted on Page 20).

Download the free e-book PDF at

[www.momscleanairforce.org/wp-content/uploads/moms\\_clean\\_air\\_force\\_faith\\_voices\\_climate\\_ebook.pdf](http://www.momscleanairforce.org/wp-content/uploads/moms_clean_air_force_faith_voices_climate_ebook.pdf)



## VALUES-BASED LEARNING TOOLKITS OF VALUES-BASED ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS FOR EDUCATION FOR RESPONSIBLE LIVING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The International Environment Forum is a partner in an international project which aims to inspire students to understand ‘achievement’ and ‘success’ in new ways - not just in terms of exam grades, but in terms of acquiring the skills and values needed to survive and thrive in the 21st century.

The **Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living** (PERL) is a group of educators and researchers who have spent more than a decade learning about the values at the heart of sustainable schools and societies. These values include, among others, trust, compassion, creativity, empowerment, and care and respect for the community of life. IEF has been leading the PERL workgroup to prepare toolkits on values-based activities and indicators for school use.

This research has been used to create a draft set of *Values-based Learning* activities and assessment toolkits for secondary school (high school) teachers and students. There are three toolkits that are complementary in their uses:

Measuring What Matters - Values-based Indicators: While values underlie much of human behaviour, they have long been considered intangible and unmeasurable. New methods and indicators pioneered by the European Union-funded ESDinds research project (<http://www.esdinds.eu>) show how values are expressed and can be measured. This toolkit explains the background and approach for those who want to create their own indicators adapted to their needs.

Discovering What Matters - A journey of thinking and feeling: To what extent have students already acquired the values, as well as the skills, knowledge, attitudes and personal qualities, which will prepare them for tomorrow? Can they understand more clearly what their own values are, and learn to live by them? In which areas do they need more help? This toolkit developed with and for students includes both a menu of indicators and examples of activities ready to use. It can be used directly by student groups.

Building a Shared Vision - A toolkit for schools: Are we 'walking our talk' as educators? Is our school a living example of a vibrant, sustainable community? Do we provide a supportive learning environment for staff and students, and empower them as agents of positive change? This toolkit provides tools to assess whether the educational environment we create for our students facilitates acquiring responsible values.

Drafts of the three toolkits are now available for review and testing. Download pdf files from the links above. Any comments or descriptions of experience in the classroom would be greatly appreciated, and should be sent to [ief@iefworld.org](mailto:ief@iefworld.org).

## **Sustainable Consumption and Production: Targets and Indicators & the SDGs**

<http://www.iisd.org/publications/sustainable-consumption-production-targets-indicators>



Livia Bizikova, Heinz Schandl (CSIRO), László Pintér, Kate Offerdahl, Gabriel A. Huppé, Dora Almassy, Tilmann Liebert, Charles Thrift, Ingeborg Niestroy, Scott Vaughan

 [Download \(1.26 MB\)](#)

[http://www.iisd.org/sites/default/files/publications/scp\\_targets\\_indicators\\_unep.pdf](http://www.iisd.org/sites/default/files/publications/scp_targets_indicators_unep.pdf)

The United Nations and its Member States are currently crafting a post-2015 development agenda to build on the Millennium Development Goals. Outcomes of previous UN Summits, including Rio+20 in 2012, have shown that the objective of shifting to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns is central to achieving sustainable development. Negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, and on the associated sustainable development goals (SDGs), indicate that there is strong interest in many Member States in embedding the objective of SCP in both. The present discussion paper provides insights into potential targets and indicators for SCP, based

on the scientific literature, as well as on past and on-going international processes on sustainable development policy.

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## **Climate change: historians will look back and ask 'why didn't they act?'**

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/jun/13/climate-change-historians-will-look-back-and-ask-why-didnt-they-act>

Mark Harris, [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com), Friday 13 June 2014

Harvard historian Naomi Oreskes talks about her new book, which imagines that current inertia in the face of climate change will puzzle academics for centuries to come



A doll lies on a hole in the dry soil of Los Laureles dam, southern Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Photograph: Orlando Sierra/AFP/Getty Images

Most historians think about the past. Some study the present. Very few, it has to be said, write about the future. But Naomi Oreskes, a Harvard professor in the history of science, believes that our inertia in the face of climate change will puzzle academics for centuries to come.

“The historian of the future will look back on today and ask, what happened? Why didn’t they act on what they knew?” she says in her sunny office in Cambridge, Massachusetts, surrounded by rocks that speak of her own past as a geologist. Oreskes’ latest book, The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future, imagines a Chinese scholar in 2393 analysing the slow-motion disintegration of 21<sup>st</sup>-century democracies as they fail to tackle a growing environmental catastrophe.

“The book starts from a position of complete factualness, then imagines what might unfold. We’re not expecting all this to happen. We’re saying this is what a worst-case scenario could look like,” Oreskes tells me. It’s not a pretty picture. By the end of the book, co-written with fellow historian Eric Conway, the Netherlands and Bangladesh are submerged, Australia and Africa are depopulated, and billions have perished in fires, floods, wars and pandemics. “A second dark age had fallen on Western civilisation,” Oreskes writes, “in which denial and self-deception, rooted in an ideological fixation on ‘free’ markets, disabled the world’s powerful nations in the face of tragedy.”

The new book follows Oreskes’ and Conway’s (non-fiction) best-seller *Merchants of Doubt*, in which they painstakingly detailed how a small group of scientists and lobbyists successfully sowed confusion about the dangers of cigarette smoking and climate change. “*Merchants of Doubt* tried to explain why so many people think that scientists are still arguing when the reality is quite different,” says Oreskes. “This time, we took thousands of pages of IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] reports and distilled them into a parable about what climate change really means and what it would mean to ignore it, which is more or less what the world has been doing.”

In *Merchants of Doubt*, mainstream scientists were often the victims, outmanoeuvred by a cabal of pseudo-scientific renegades working alongside industry. In *Collapse*, Oreskes’ future historian slams the very same experts for pursuing certainty at all costs. “It’s absolutely insane that we don’t have different evidentiary standards for potentially existential threats,” says Oreskes. “There’s no law of nature that tells us that a 95% confidence level is ‘proof’. By demanding an excessively high standard when faced with an existential risk, you could be sentencing the world to experiencing that crisis.”

“Scientists also constantly discuss climate change in the future tense, and have been doing so for 30 years. But some of the things they talked about in the 1970s are happening now. There has to be a point at which you say, yes, heat waves have become more frequent, it’s a statistically significant signal. Maybe not at the 95% confidence level, maybe only 90%, but maybe that’s good enough.”

While scientists take a beating, Oreskes and Conway reserve their greatest ire for politicians and the business community. “I find it amazing that grown men in suits and ties talk about the magic of the market,” says Oreskes. “If my three-year old did that, I’d call it magical thinking. The reality is that markets are created by people and that markets need governments to sustain them. Without the right structures and institutions, markets degrade into monopolies. Adam Smith knew that. This is not a new insight.”

Their 24<sup>th</sup>-century historian identifies the “carbon combustion complex”: a self-sustaining global network of powerful industries that includes fossil fuel producers, energy companies and manufacturers reliant on cheap energy, but also road builders, banks and PR firms.



"It's not as if the fossil fuel industry is a free market. The subsidies for it are massive and have been documented by the World Bank. But it's important to realise this isn't an obvious conspiracy," says Oreskes. "And it's not the fact that they are coordinated that is nefarious, it's the ends to which they put that coordination: confusion, disinformation and potentially fraud, to stop action on a serious, real problem that potentially effects all of our lives."

Action is still possible, insists Oreskes. She points to the success of emissions trading schemes in controlling acid rain and believes that a carbon tax could be a powerful force. But time is of the essence. "The longer we delay acting, the worse the problem gets, and the more likely it is that governments will have to intervene in heavy-handed ways."

In *Collapse*, Oreskes envisages mid-21<sup>st</sup> century democratic regimes banning renewable fuels, imprisoning out-spoken scientists and rationing food and water. Eventually, the United States enacts "one child" laws, introduces martial rule and suffers a humiliating merger with Canada. Britain, absent a flooded East Anglia and London, clings to survival as the tide-powered nation of Cambria. Three hundred years from now, China is the world's only remaining superpower, thanks to rigid population controls, a massive shift to renewable energy and an authoritarian central government.

"The book is meant to be deliberately provocative, of course," says Oreskes with laugh. "But if you really care about democracy and personal freedoms, you ought to be in the front line to create a market-based solution to fix climate change. The alternative is not one that you're going to like."

- The Collapse of Western Civilisation: A View from the Future (Columbia University Press) is published on 1 July, £6.95.

## Small island developing states summit aims for alliances

<http://www.scidev.net/global/vulnerability/news/small-island-developing-state-alliances.html>



Jocelyn Carlin / Panos,  
11/06/14, Laura Owings

The UN's Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), in Apia, Samoa, on 1-4 September, will aim to identify the unique needs and vulnerabilities of island nations and opportunities for international support.

"The challenges facing SIDS are interlinked and cannot be tackled in silo or by one country alone," says conference secretary-general

Wu Hongbo. "This calls for collaboration and partnerships, with active engagement by all stakeholders, governmental and non-governmental."

"The centre will assist energy industries in developing countries in taking advantage of growing sustainable energy market opportunities." Martin Lugmayr, UNIDO

The conference will focus on critical areas where new global partnerships are needed, including climate change, oceans, waste, sustainable tourism and disaster risk reduction.

Various voluntary commitments have already been announced. These include the creation of a Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, which is intended to tackle the challenges of access to affordable energy, energy security and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Once fully operational, which is due to happen by 2018, the centre will fall under the remit of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

“The centre will assist energy industries in developing countries in taking advantage of growing sustainable energy market opportunities and provide a platform to promote South-South and North-South knowledge and technology transfer,” says UNIDO renewable energy expert, Martin Lugmayr.

Other new collaborative projects include the University Consortium of Small Island States, which, with the Spanish government and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, announced plans to develop a degree in sustainable development delivered internationally through an online portal.

In addition, six countries and various organisations have announced support for the Coral Triangle Initiative that will protect the region, which is home to the highest coral diversity in the world.

Maintaining ocean health will be a centrepiece of the conference, according to Milan Meertarbhan, Mauritius’ ambassador to the UN, who says this should lead to the development of a global strategy for a healthy ocean economy.

“Given [the ocean’s] crucial importance to the international community and to SIDS in particular, the Samoa summit should consider making a clear recommendation in favour of a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal on the oceans,” Meertarbhan says.

The conference will echo and reinforce targets likely to be outlined in the forthcoming Sustainable Development Goals (a draft of which was released this week), as many of the topics addressed have global significance, says Wu. It will also contribute to an elaboration of the post-2015 UN development agenda, he adds.

“In particular, [this will be] through discussions on climate change, where SIDS’ experiences are providing both an example of the devastating impacts and the outcomes of efforts to fight the phenomenon,” he says.

This will be the first SIDS conference in the Pacific. The inaugural conference was held in Barbados in 1994 and resulted in the Declaration of Barbados. This officially recognised the sustainable development needs of SIDS and called for regional and international support to deliver these. The second conference, held in Mauritius in 2005, concluded with the Mauritius Strategy, a further implementation of the Barbados plan with emphasis on the vulnerability of island nations.

Wu said the outcome document for this year’s conference will outline priorities for all SIDS and provide a road map for future action to address sustainability priorities.

> [Link to the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States](#)

## **Sea-Level Rise in Small Island Nations - Up to Four Times the Global Average - to Cost US\$ Trillions in Annual Economic Loss and Impede Future Development: Shift to Green Policies and Investment Critical**

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2791&ArticleID=10879&l=en>

See more at:

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2791&ArticleID=10879&l=en#sthash.AC6M27QR.dpuf>

**5 June 2014 - Global Net Loss of Coral Reef Cover - Worth US\$11.9 Trillion - to Severely Compound Vulnerability of SIDS Halving Fossil Fuel Dependence by 2035 a Must and SIDS Electricity Prices Soar 500 per cent Higher than US**

Climate change-induced sea-level rise in the world's 52 small island nations - estimated to be up to four times the global average - continues to be the most pressing threat to their environment and socio-economic development with annual losses at the trillions of dollars due to increased vulnerability. An immediate shift in policies and investment towards renewable energy and green economic growth is required to avoid exacerbating these impacts, says a new report by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

In all SIDS regions, coral reefs, the frontline for adaptation, are already severely impacted by rising sea surface temperatures. The global net loss of the coral reef cover - around 34 million hectares over two decades - will cost the international economy an estimated US\$11.9 trillion, with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) especially impacted by the loss.

## **Climate Change, Risk Management and the Big Emitters**

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/06/03/climate-change-risk-management-and-the-big-emitters>

### **June 3, 2014 STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- *Dealing with climate change is fundamentally about risk management, two lead authors of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports told an audience at the World Bank. It's a threat multiplier that adds new dimensions and complexity to the development challenges we're already facing.*
- *Governments are stepping up to the challenge as business leaders, investors, and civil society urge action on climate change.*
- *The day the IPCC authors spoke, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released its plan to regulate emissions from power plants with a goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent by 2030.*

## **Saving energy now, using less later: energy efficiency in the Western Balkans**

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/06/02/saving-energy-now-using-less-later-energy-efficiency-in-the-western-balkans>

### **June 2, 2014 STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- *Demand for energy is expected to increase by as much as 70% in the Western Balkans over the next two decades.*
- *Improved energy efficiency measures in public buildings around the region represent savings of up to 40% of total energy consumption, which can help ensure more secure and reliable energy supply to fuel economic growth.*
- *The World Bank Group, with support from the Energy Sector Management Assistance Program, is working with the region's governments to significantly scale-up energy efficiency programs.*

## **What Does It Mean to Put a Price on Carbon?**

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2014/06/11/what-does-it-mean-to-put-a-price-on-carbon>

### **June 11, 2014 STORY HIGHLIGHTS**

- *Carbon pricing is gaining attention as a way to address climate change. About 40 countries and more than 20 cities, states and provinces use carbon pricing mechanisms such as emissions trading systems and carbon taxes or are preparing to implement them.*
- *A price on carbon helps shift the burden for damage from greenhouse gas emissions back to those who are responsible for it and who can reduce emissions.*
- *The private sector has been increasingly outspoken in its support for consistent carbon pricing. Many companies already operate in countries with carbon pricing and use shadow carbon pricing in their planning and investments.*