Advancing the 2030 Agenda: Lessons learnt from the first cycle of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
How far can we go?

SESSION 8
What is the role of national multi-stakeholder platforms in advancing the 2030 Agenda, and how can this be best encouraged and supported?

Charles Nouhan, Chairman Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future

UN Headquarters, NY · September 11, 2018
MAP OF NCSDS

A global map of NCSDs by type across all six continents.
• In response to the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, and then again at Johannesburg, many countries set up councils or similar bodies.

• All served a similar purpose: to further sustainable development nationally.

• Their form and function have differed considerably from one country to the next.

• Rio+20 Outcome Document: ‘...strengthen national, sub-national and/or local institutions or relevant multi-stakeholder bodies and processes, dealing with sustainable development’ (Para 101)
Challenges to National Councils

- Getting government, business, and civil society to work together
- How those groups interact with each other
- Effective management of resistance and challenges to their validity
- Durability of support from all sides
- The 2030 Agenda
Trump to pull U.S. from historic Paris climate agreement

Move breaks ranks with more than 190 countries

President Trump will make good on a campaign promise to “cancel” the Paris climate agreement, officials say, breaking away from a global effort to reduce greenhouse gases. “The Paris Accords are bad deals for Americans,” read a White House memo to supporters explaining the president's decision.

By Philip Rucker and Chris Mooney • 19 minutes

As U.S. backs away from climate pledges, India and China step up

But the world’s two other biggest polluters whose vast populations stand to lose most from global warming — will not be able to fill the financial incentives the United States leaves on the table.

By Annie Gower and Simon Denyer • 43 minutes

Oklahoma officials praise US exit from climate accord

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON — Calling the Paris climate agreement “unfair to the United States” and “nothing but empty promises,” Oklahoma lawmakers applauded President Donald Trump's announcement Thursday afternoon that he is withdrawing the U.S. from the landmark agreement.

“I warned international representatives from around the globe that without Senate ratification our commitment to Paris would only last as long as Obama was president,” U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Tulsa, said in a statement. “Our withdrawal today demonstrates that this certainly was the case.”

The move honors a Trump campaign promise but risks rupturing global alliances and disappointing both environmentalists and some corporate titans.

But Trump said he would seek to negotiate a new climate deal that is, in his view, “fair” to America’s interests.

“In order to fulfill my solemn duty to protect America and its citizens, the United States will withdraw from the Paris climate accord but begin negotiations to re-enter either the Paris accord or an entirely new transaction on terms that are fair to the United States.”
Advancing the 2030 Agenda with meaningful multi-stakeholder platforms requires financing

- Do the ebbs and flows of political and financial support for sustainability expose a flaw in the concept of councils?
- Can councils facilitate pathways to sustainability where conventional methods and institutions are still failing to deliver?
Mandates and Agendas

- Councils have often been created when countries have decided to adopt national sustainable development strategies.
- A core function of most councils is to operate as an advisory body to government.
- But work programs differ, as they often arise from the priorities of the time.
Composition and membership

1. Government representative memberships
2. Mixed memberships (government and non-governmental members representing other sectors and interests)
3. Memberships drawn entirely from outside government
Functions and Activities

1. Strategy creation and advice
2. Policy and implementation
3. Monitoring and scrutiny
4. International outreach
5. Stakeholder engagement and capacity building
National Council stakeholder engagement has typically been split into two types

1. Activities that seek inputs from stakeholders to inform Council thinking, research and recommendations.

2. Activities convened by councils that aim to increase stakeholder understanding of sustainable development issues, strategies and policies.
The German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) established by the German government in 2001

- A **Mixed Memberships** Group
- Currently funded until the end of 2019
- Primary tasks of the council are:
  - The development of contributions for the implementation of the German Sustainability Strategy
  - The naming of concrete fields of action and projects
  - As well as make sustainability an important public concern.
15 years Sustainability Council

The Sustainable Development Council celebrated its 15th anniversary on 4 April 2016.
Councils that have endured - Germany

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Councils that have endured - Chile

Council of Ministers for Sustainability and Climate Change

- A **Government Representative Memberships** group
- Funded by the Ministry of the Environment
- Duties: Reporting to the President, to recommend:
  - Policies for sustainable management of natural resources
  - Sustainability criteria to incorporated into policy-making
  - The creation of protected areas of the state
  - The criteria and mechanisms by which citizen participation is to be incorporated into Environmental Impact Statements
Councils that have endured - Chile

Measures of success of the Council include:

• 15 Regional Environmental Advisory Councils
• Public awareness-raising workshops
• National and regional dialogues hosted by the Government
• “Dialogues for a Sustainable Chile” organized by civil society
• A National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda
Councils that have endured - India

- A **Government Representative Memberships** group
Councils that have endured - India

Objectives

• Facilitate and carry out appropriate and target oriented action for climate change mitigation and adaptation; interlinking agriculture, sustainable development and rural development & Climate Smart Cities

• Foster and leverage public leadership to achieve the goals of such an integrated approach

• Strengthen knowledge economy.
Councils that have endured - India

Action plan for 2018-2019

- Participate and Give training the farmers of Gujarat in Krushi Mahotsave 2018 in all Districts.
- Develop the “Building Climate Smart Farmers “Guide book in Gujarati and publish 20000 copies and distribute to Farmers in “Krishi Mahotsav”
- Develop the “Building Climate Smart Farmers “Guide book in Hindi and publish 1000 copies and distribute to Farmers of India.
- Prepare the Module of Doubling of Income and give training to farmers, Sarpanch and other Government officers and KVK team.
- Participate in COP -24 –UNFCCC meet at Poland.
- Exchange Visit of Gujarat team to USA, FAMU for transfer technology for developing Climate Resilient Agriculture.
- Identify the synergy Between India and Kaduna State of Africa and Tanzania and begin exchange visit
- Kudan of state of Nigeria, Collaborates: Nigeria, Iraq, Moracco, Ghana, Peru and Figi.
- International Conference on Doubling of Farmers Income 2019
Councils that have come and gone - the UK

- A Memberships drawn entirely from outside government group
- Established in 2000 as the UK Government's independent adviser on sustainable development
- Funded by the four UK Governments
  - Core funding by Defra for Whitehall and UK work
  - Additional funding from the 3 devolved governments
- Ceased operations on 31 March 2011
Councils that have come and gone - Australia

- A **Memberships drawn entirely from outside government group**

- The National Sustainability Council was established by the Australian Government, under then Prime Minister Julia Gillard, in October 2012.

- As a result of her more conservative predecessor Tony Abbott’s “smaller bureaucracy” initiative, as a non-statutory body the NSC was absorbed by the Department of Environment on Nov 08, 2013.
The National Council for Sustainable Development, a body formed within the Ministry of Environment in 2015, held its first official planning meeting yesterday to discuss priorities for 2016-2018.
Environment and natural resources

Cambodia's environment provides natural resources including forests, waterways, plants and wildlife. Natural resources also include minerals, energy and extractives. The environment is varied, covering at least seven distinct landscapes across the country.

Read more ...
Sustainable Development Goals

At the end of 2015, Vietnam had only met 3 of the 8 Millennium Development Goals. Now as they report on the first Voluntary National Review at the 2018 High Level Political Forum the work over the last two years to align Vietnam’s Sustainable Development Goals are highlighted in this examination of the localisation and monitoring progress of Vietnam.

Read more...

Lotus, Vietnam national flower | Photo by Hoang Khai Nhan via Flickr | CC.BY.NC 2.0
Observations

- Councils that have been long-lived could be so because they have become part of the DNA of government, or the cultural, or perhaps part of a national consciousness.

- Factors for durability often include stable governments, wealth, and/or close economic ties to the land or sea by a majority of stakeholders.

- Some councils appear to have transformed into VNR mechanisms.
What where governance for sustainable development has not taken deep root?

- Sometimes this has happened because a Council is seen to have completed its main task.
- Sometimes councils have been abolished for political reasons, often a change of government.
- Sometimes there is fading interest in or attention to sustainable development by the government or by society at large.
- Sometimes councils, along with other non-statutory bodies, become victims of economic or other circumstances.
Recommendations

1. Re-establish a network of councils across the world
2. Assess which forms of councils are most affective, taking into account cultural, geographic, and economic factors that foster durable councils
3. Use the network as a mechanism for countries with durable councils to act as mentor or match-makers
4. Facilitate a mechanism to reliably and permanently connect local level sustainability councils to NCSDs
5. Mentoring to include helping councils at all levels to identify in-country resources for durable funding
6. If a stand-alone NCSD is not viable, facilitate joint programs or activities at the regional level rather than have no NCSD at all
Thank you

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