



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

19th meeting, 29, 30 and 31 May 2024

Information Paper No. 1

Concept note and programme of the side event “Advancing the six transitions: What role for young people?”¹

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda:

Regional framework of cooperation for sustainable development: Outcomes of the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and of the side event organized by the United Nations Environment Programme in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development in the framework of the Forum

Prepared by the UNECE Secretariat

¹ This information document was not formally edited

1. The Steering Committee will be briefed on: the main outcomes of the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (Geneva, 13–14 March 2024); and the outcomes of the side event “Advancing the six transitions: What role for young people?”, co-organized by Cyprus, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ECE, Geneva Environment Network and Youth and Environment Europe, on 11 March 2024, in the framework of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (information paper No. 1).
2. The concept note and the programme of the side event are provided below.
3. The weblink to the event including the video is available at <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/advancing-the-six-transitions-what-role-for-young-people/>

RFSD 2024 – Side event “*Advancing the Six Transitions: What role for Young People?*”

This side event to the 2024 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development discussed how to cooperate better to deliver on the sustainable development goals by placing young people at the center of the agenda, and explore how to meet the needs of young people through the six transitions while also preparing for the challenges of the future.

Outcomes of the side event

The 2023 SDG Progress Report has clearly shown our efforts to address global challenges and achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030 very weak, insufficient; stalled or gone into reverse. Key findings in relation to young people include higher unemployment, low connectivity, limited digital skills, to climate change education not kept up with youth demand, youth not prepared for a greener future, and limited participation in decision-making.

In response, the Secretary-General of the United Nations has called for a “Rescue Plan for People and Planet” for ambitious actions and shifts to jump-start progress through strengthened multilateral cooperation and support for the United Nations development system.

The six transitions proposed are linked to food systems, energy, digital connectivity, education, jobs, and planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. These are priorities with catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDG and require the full engagement of young people.

The 2024 RFSD is taking place against the backdrop of the outcome of the halfway review of the SDGs [in 2005 heralded as “a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take bold decisions”], but also looking forward to the “Summit of the Future” [also “a once-in-a-generation opportunity and a moment to mend eroded trust and effectively tackle current challenges] to forge a new international consensus to deliver better for present and safeguard the future.

Therefore, this side event brought together UN agencies, policy makers and practitioners to discuss and showcase, how to cooperate better to deliver on the above aspiration and goals by placing young people at the center of the agenda, and explore how to meet the needs of young people through the six transitions while also preparing for the challenges of the future? How to build trust and accountability with young people on commitments made in the past, including STEP UP: a joint commitment by Heads of UN entities to promote the right of young people and future generations to a healthy environment and their meaningful participation in decision-making at all levels, in relation to climate action and climate justice? How to integrate the voices of young people in global governance? And how to use the energy, passion, creativity, and dedication of young people to bring about impactful solutions to accelerate the SDGs by empowering young people.

PROGRAMME

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Wondwosen ASNAKE KIBRET | Policy and Partnerships Coordinator, Europe Office, UNEP | Moderator

Panel Discussion

Aravella ZACHARIOU | Chair of the UNECE Steering Committee for ESD

Simon HERTELEER | Coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform

Katja CIC | Programme Director, Youth Health Organization

Aurora AUDINO | Climate and Youth Advocate | EU Climate Policy

Consultant | Environmental Engineer

Eimear MANNING | National Youth Council, Ireland

Andrianos CHARALAMBOUS | Political and Sustainability Communications Specialist | Secretary General, Cyprus Young Greens

Q&A

Closing