



Article from Ministry of the Environment

Organisations provided input for high-level environmental conference

Published 15 January 2021

Civil society, the business sector and municipalities have an important role in the efforts for sustainable development. State Secretary Eva Svedling invited organisations and networks that are involved in this issue from different perspectives to a discussion on the focus of the Stockholm+50 high-level conference. One suggestion from the consultation was that Stockholm+50 should be action-oriented and highlight the conditions for, and obstacles to, implementing global goals.

The world is in the midst of global biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation and climate change. These crises affect all of us living now. In a speech on the state of the planet, the UN Secretary-General has expressed the view that humanity is waging a war against nature and that we are already seeing the consequences of this. Our relationship with nature needs to change.

Thanks to various conventions, the countries of the world are working together to reduce emissions and negative environmental impacts, but in order to achieve the international environmental and climate goals, ambitions must increase sharply. The Government wants to increase dialogue and cooperation by organising a global high-level conference in Stockholm, 50 years after the first environmental conference took place in Stockholm in 1972.

Ms Svedling and Ambassador Johanna Lissinger Peitz invited organisations that are active in areas such as the environment, business, development assistance and indigenous peoples to include their input in the planning and focus of the conference.

Stockholm+50 will contribute to redefining our relationship with nature and support a green recovery from the pandemic, with a focus on the transition to sustainable consumption and production, nature-based solutions and the role of young people in the transition. The ambition is for the meeting to result in concrete measures during the 2020s, which the UN has called the Decade of Action, but also beyond 2030.

The participants were positive about the conference's planned focus on sustainable consumption and production and nature-based solutions, as measures in this area are central to preventing biodiversity loss and climate change. During the consultation, various suggestions for the focus of Stockholm+50 were presented, and some examples are described here. Stockholm+50 should be action-oriented and highlight conditions and obstacles to implementing global goals. A focus on the circular economy and economic measurement methods was highlighted as important, as was the question of how investments can affect the relationship with nature. The business sector has an important role and businesses can contribute in various ways to sustainable development. Stockholm+50 could therefore contribute to long-term regulatory frameworks and technical development.

Many of the organisations emphasised the importance of reaching out widely and including various sectors and organisations in the preparation and implementation, not least indigenous peoples who can contribute traditional knowledge and a holistic perspective in relation to nature. The perspectives of young people and young adults must be taken into account and it is important to ensure that their participation is meaningful. Through both physical and digital platforms for the conference, more people can be included. Many organisations emphasised the importance of a just, equitable and inclusive transition.

The Ministry of the Environment will take on board the views and proposals that emerged during the meeting to see how they can contribute to the continued work on the Stockholm+50 high-level conference. Sweden will continue to seek views from various actors, including internationally.

The following organisations participated in the meeting:

- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Greenpeace
- Friends of the Earth Sweden
- Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
- ChemSec – the International Chemical Secretariat
- 2022 Initiative Foundation
- National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations
- Fältbiologerna (‘Field Biologists’)
- National Union of the Swedish Sami People
- United Nations Association of Sweden
- Oxfam Sweden
- CONCORD Sweden
- Haga Initiative
- Confederation of Swedish Enterprise
- Swedish Consumers’ Association
- Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions
- End Ecocide
- Swedish Red Cross
- Wateraid
- Olof Palme International Center
- Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation



Article from Ministry of the Environment

Youth organisations gave the Government input on climate policy, consumption and a high-level environmental meeting

Published 15 December 2020

Sweden's young people are deeply committed to the issue of climate change. In recognition of their commitment, Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin met with representatives of ten youth climate organisations on 25 November to discuss climate ambitions and objectives for the high-level meeting Stockholm+50 from a young person's perspective.

We are living in the midst of climate change. It is we human beings who bear the responsibility. The issue of climate change is no longer a distant problem for future generations. Pursuing an active climate policy is a question of solidarity with future generations, with all people throughout the world, and with the ecological system.

Sweden's young people are strongly committed to the issue of climate change. The youth climate movement has repeatedly urged the Government and the Ministry of the Environment to make use of their valuable perspectives and experiences when formulating Sweden's climate policy. As a step towards addressing climate challenges, Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin, State Secretary Eva Svedling and Ministry of the Environment staff met with representatives of ten Swedish youth climate organisations in a digital forum to discuss Sweden's climate efforts and

objectives for the high-level meeting Stockholm+50 from a young person's perspective.

The questions for the meeting were what ambitious climate policy means at national, regional and global level, and what sustainable production and consumption within our planetary boundaries means. The input from the youth organisations to the Government and the Ministry of the Environment was clear: world leaders' actions to combat global warming are inadequate and too slow. It is time to reprioritise from short-term economic growth to long-term well-being for everyone, and to take greater account of indigenous peoples' collective knowledge – climate transition cannot come at their expense. It is the responsibility of the world's politicians, not the individual or consumer, to reverse the negative trend and secure the climate transition.

The Ministry of the Environment will share the views, ideas and concerns expressed during the meeting with colleagues at the Government Offices in the next stage of the process. The input will also be incorporated into Sweden's planning for the high-level conference Stockholm+50.

In preparation for the youth council on climate change, the Ministry of the Environment coordinated closely with NOD (national body for dialogue and consultation between the Government and civil society) and maintained a dialogue with the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations.

The organisations that participated in the meeting were Fältbiologerna (Nature and Youth Sweden), Global Shapers, Climate Students Sweden, the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations, PUSH Sweden, Sáminuorra, Guides and Scouts of Sweden, Svenska Kyrkans Unga (Church of Sweden Youth), we_change and WWF Sweden Youth. The youth representatives taking part in Sweden's delegation to the UN climate negotiations played an active role before and during the meeting.



Article from Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden is scaling up its efforts to leave no one behind

Published 10 July 2020

‘Leave no one behind’ (LNOB) is an overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda. It is both a prerequisite and goal for sustainable development, and should permeate all our efforts to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The operationalisation of this principle has never before been reviewed at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). This year, Sweden outlines how it is scaling up its efforts to deliver on the LNOB principle, in a report that focuses in particular on future generations and seven main messages to realise the LNOB principle by 2030:

1. Realising human rights and gender equality
2. Strengthening empowerment and participation
3. Advancing the transition towards resource-efficient, resilient and climate-neutral economies
4. Promoting multidimensional poverty reduction
5. Promoting social dialogue and decent work
6. Progressively realising universal social protection
7. Improving data and monitoring

Marginalised groups particularly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic

The importance of delivering on this principle has been illustrated by the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone is affected, but the crisis is disproportionately affecting people in vulnerable situations.

Women, men and people from different minority groups are affected in different ways. Particularly at risk are people who are older, sick or disabled, people living in poverty and marginalisation, and people who have limited access to health care services and water, sanitation and hygiene. Some women and children, as well as LGBTI people, are isolated at home and subjected to domestic violence. Small businesses and groups with precarious or informal employment contracts are experiencing severe economic uncertainty.

The 2030 Agenda offers a framework for building more inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies equipped to respond to pandemics, climate change and other global challenges. The 17 SDGs must be realised for all, everywhere – including for future generations.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Social distancing and markedly reduced travel in Sweden

Published 18 June 2020 Updated 18 June 2020

Swedes are largely following the government agencies' advice and recommendations. This has been shown through surveys and data concerning movement patterns. Now travel within Sweden is permitted again – but if the guidelines are not followed, the Government is prepared to take measures.

More than eight in ten Swedes are keeping a greater distance from others than they normally would. Just as many are avoiding shaking hands and are washing their hands more often than usual. Over 60 per cent are taking part in social activities outside the home to a lesser extent and are avoiding public places where there are lots of people. This is clear from a survey on behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic conducted by analysis company Kantar Sifo on behalf of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency. In other words, Swedes are largely following the advice and recommendations issued by the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

Travel decreased by over 40 per cent

The travel advice of the Public Health Agency of Sweden has also been heeded. When the Agency advised against non-essential domestic travel at the end of March, travel in the Stockholm region decreased by over 40 per cent. Data on movement patterns from telecom company Telia's mobile network shows that, in Sweden as a whole, travel decreased by more than 20 per cent. Since 13 May, when the advice was changed to permit travel corresponding to one to two hours by car from home, travel in the country has gradually increased again.

According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden, it is not travel per se that spreads the virus, it is personal hygiene and social contact. Now that fewer Swedes are receiving care in hospital and tracing and testing have got under way, as of 13 June it is permitted for people with no symptoms to travel freely within Sweden.

“Common sense, a large portion of responsibility and caution are required. The vast majority have demonstrated this so far, and it still applies,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

New restrictions may be issued

A number of restrictions remain in place. These include the ban on visits to homes for older people, the ban on gatherings of more than 50 people and the rules concerning crowding in restaurants, bars and cafés. Businesses that do not follow the regulations may be closed after an inspection; so far, this has happened on some ten occasions in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The tourism and hospitality industry is also covered by the guidelines on crowding. The situation remains serious and if the curve indicating the number of seriously ill people turns upwards again, new restrictions may be issued.

“Although some restrictions are lifted, this does not mean that life can return to normal. Important restrictions will remain. It is important to hang on, otherwise the spread of infection might take off. We all need to continue to take great personal responsibility,” Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin says.

“If it turns out that this doesn’t work, we’re prepared to take measures and tighten the recommendations,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Government to establish a Ministerial Working Group on Climate Policy

Published 12 June 2020

The Government's goal is for Sweden to be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. To achieve this, all policy areas must pull in the same direction and the issue of climate change must be integrated into all relevant policy areas. For this reason, the Government has decided to form a ministerial working group on climate policy.

– Climate change is the defining issue of our time and it cannot be solved if we're stuck in a silo mentality. All relevant policy areas must contribute to the transition of society as a whole, says Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin.

The purpose of the ministerial working group is to strengthen the Government's work to achieve the climate objectives and to implement the climate policy action plan. The working group will hold regular meetings chaired by the Prime Minister. In addition to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Environment and Climate, the group will include six other ministers whose areas are crucial to the climate transition: the Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation, the Minister for Infrastructure, the Minister for Energy and Digital Development, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Minister for Financial Markets and Housing.

The Ministerial Working Group on Climate Policy will have a central role in efforts to drive the transition and pursue the green recovery.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Infrastructure

Several Ministers participated in commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January

Published 30 January 2020

On Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27 several representatives from the Swedish Government participated in memorial services to honour the victims of the Holocaust and to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended a memorial ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation. The memorial service began in Auschwitz and ended with a candle lighting ceremony in Birkenau.

Minister for Education Anna Ekström spoke at a memorial service arranged by the Council of Roma representatives in Malmö and then at a memorial service arranged by the Jewish Community of Malmö in the Synagogue of Malmö.

Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg spoke at a ceremony arranged by The Living History Forum at Raoul Wallenberg's Square and then at the memorial ceremony in the Great Synagogue of Stockholm. Minister for Environment and Deputy Prime and Climate Isabella Lövin, Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson and Minister for Financial Markets and Housing Per Bolund also participated at the ceremony in the Great Synagogue.

Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind visited the Jewish Community of Gothenburg and spoke at the memorial ceremony in the evening.

Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation Åsa Lindhagen spoke at the memorial ceremony at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Further Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson participated in a memorial service at the The Royal Dramatic Theatre.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of the Environment

Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin received Belarusian Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

Published 23 May 2019

Minister for Environment and Climate Isabella Lövin received the Belarusian Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Andrei Khudyk on 22 May 2019. Mr Khudyk and the Belarusian delegation visited Stockholm and Borlänge to study Swedish waste management experience and discuss sustainable development.

Isabella Lövin and Andrei Khudyk discussed the Sustainable Development Goals, reducing CO₂ emissions and improving the Baltic Sea environment.

Both ministers concluded that Sweden and Belarus have good cooperation in the environmental area. This is implemented through Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) support to development projects in Belarus, cooperation on radiation protection, the Eastern Partnership, the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environmental Partnership (E5P) and other instruments. The ministers welcomed the resumption of Sida's presence in Belarus and hoped that this would strengthen the conditions for cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals in the Baltic Sea region.

Ms Lövin hoped that Belarus could benefit from Sweden's experiences and underlined that high environmental standards and broad and inclusive

cooperation with environmental organisations, local populations and the business community have been particularly important for Sweden's environmental successes.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of the Environment

Speeding up climate action and improving people's everyday lives by greening the economy

Published 07 May 2019

Listen to Minister for Environment and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin talk about her areas of responsibility, her priorities and the challenges awaiting during this electoral period.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality - Hosts' summary and reflections

Published 20 June 2018

The Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality was held on 15–17 April 2018 and gathered more than 700 participants from over 100 countries and a multitude of sectors and functions. The discussions covered a broad range of areas and focused on concrete methods and tools to enhance gender equality and the full enjoyment of rights, representation and resources for all women and girls.

The hallmark of the Forum was co-creation. This included:

- A broad nomination process in which CSOs and other partners joined the Swedish Foreign Service, the Swedish Institute, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in suggesting participants.
- A co-owned agenda inspired by the participants themselves and what they reported as being the greatest challenges to gender equality.
- A collaborative process in which partners, collaborators and participants developed and organised seminars together and in close dialogue with the Swedish Institute.

Results

- A unique Forum constituting a global and vibrant manifestation and mobilisation for gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights

by all women and girls.

- A powerhouse of inspiration co-created by, and further invigorating, a multitude of gender champions from all over the world.
- A total of 29 interactive seminars and roundtable discussions that were co-organised with participants and – thus – contributed to substance, methods and partnerships.
- A platform for non-stop sharing of experiences and best practices, both within and across sectors, policy areas and regions.
- A wealth of new and further developed initiatives, commitments and partnerships focused on areas such as creating awareness, legislative change and capacity building, involving countries from all over the world.
- A number of launches of new tools, such as a 'Women, Business and the Law' report from the World Bank Group.
- A Call to Action to counter the shrinking space and to increase support for women human rights defenders, drafted and presented by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation with partners and other women's rights activists.
- A broad communicative reach. During the week of the Forum alone the hashtag #GenderEqualWorld reached almost 3 million people, trending in countries such as Australia, India, the US and the UK, and also achieving huge reach in countries such as Brazil, Canada, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, France, Iraq, Poland and Turkey.
- A wide range of articles and news broadcasts in traditional media around the globe.
- A distinct contribution and push for the efforts to implement the SDGs as well as CEDAW and other relevant conventions, resolutions and agreements.
- A starting point for discussions in new constellations, including in the form of a first cross-sectoral Feminist Think Space held back-to-back with the Forum and co-hosted by UN Women and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and cofacilitated by UN Women and Sida.

Next steps

- Building on the momentum and capitalising on the results of the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality, Tunisia will host the conference Tunis Forum on Gender Equality in 2019.
- Participants are pursuing a number of other initiatives linked to and/or inspired by the Forum.
- Participants can continue to register initiatives, commitments and partnerships resulting from or connected to the Forum on the Forum

website: <http://genderequalworld.com/initiatives/>.

- The Swedish Institute will post documentation from all the seminars and roundtables on the website. Together with other outcomes of the Forum, the documentation will serve as a library of best practices and a platform for continued networking.
- The Swedish Institute will develop a tool kit so that Swedish embassies and other stakeholders can take the Forum and its outcomes further in their respective context.
- Sweden commits to implementing the 2018 action plan for feminist foreign policy and launching a handbook on how to conduct a feminist foreign policy. Sida will operationalise the new global development cooperation strategy for gender equality.
- Sweden will present the documentation and results of the Forum to UN Women, as well as cooperate with UN Women and other partners on following up the Forum, including by disseminating and drawing on the best practices and experiences shared.
- Sweden will continue the dialogue with partners interested in arranging events inspired by and following up the Forum.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Safer world for women and girls in focus at European Development Days

Published 20 June 2018

The European Development Days is a development forum that the European Commission has organised since 2006. This year's theme was gender equality under the thread 'Women and Girls at the Forefront of Sustainable Development'.

Carin Jämtin spoke about women in decision-making positions

Director-General of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) Carin Jämtin took part in two panel discussions. One dealt with how we can increase the number of women in decision-making positions, and the other how men can be agents of change. Other participants on the first panel included First Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans and Gambia's Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment Isatou Touray.

The topics discussed by the panel included ways in which we can involve and support young women with the aim of getting more women in managerial positions and on governing boards.

During the panel discussion, Ms Jämtin spoke about the need for different types of leadership. One way we can help more women enter the labour market is to create education and job opportunities for girls and young women. Others include a fairer distribution of work in the home between women and men, and giving men the opportunity to take parental leave.

- We need more women in the labour market, and one way is to support women's leadership. A good start towards increasing women's leadership is to teach our sons to be gender-equal men.

Responsibility for staff in humanitarian operations

Ambassador Mikael Lindvall, Representative of Sweden in the Political and Security Committee, took part in a discussion on transparency and responsibility for staff in humanitarian operations. The panellists discussed how we can work proactively to prevent abuses at workplaces.

A recurring theme during the panel discussions was that the recent abuses have resulted in both debate and an insight that new systems are needed, with better feedback and training, so that in the long term, a culture is created in which zero tolerance of all kinds of abuses is the norm.

Ambassador Lindvall emphasised the importance of having staff on site for the people working in the field and creating a good dialogue. Maintaining a dialogue and a local presence makes it easier to uncover corruption and signs of abuse more quickly.

- No institutions are free from abuse. We are all a part of the problem and we must all be part of the solution.

Also on the panel were Oxfam International's Executive Director Winnie Byanyima and Director-General of the European Commission's DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Monique Pariat.

Activists and ministers took part

The European Development Days attracts several thousand participants including heads of state and government, the UN Deputy Secretary-General, ministers, officials, activists, journalists and many more. The forum is a platform for dialogue and the exchange of experiences to move work on development issues forward.



Article from Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden to host Stockholm Tax Conference – an international conference on tax capacity-building, 30–31 May

Published 22 May 2018

Efficient and effective tax administration is fundamental to the long-term financing of a functioning society, poverty reduction and the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Sweden has therefore invited representatives of governments in 160 countries, agencies, international and regional organisations, civil society and the business sector to exchange experiences of tax capacity-building. The Stockholm Tax Conference will be held on 30–31 May.

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Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin will host the conference, which is being held by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Swedish Tax Agency at Stockholm Waterfront Congress Centre. The conference will help

to support tax capacity-building in low and middle income countries and is part of the Government's 12-point programme to combat tax evasion, tax avoidance and money laundering.

Some 500 participants are expected to take part in the conference. During the conference, good examples will be highlighted on subjects such as government and business partnerships, transparency in tax systems, how digitalisation and civil society can promote capacity-building, and implementation of the Addis Tax Initiative, which will involve Sweden doubling funds for tax capacity-building by 2020. Speakers at the conference will include former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, Benin's Minister of Economy and Finance, Romuald Wadagni, Navid Hanif from the UN, James A. Brumby from the World Bank, and Felix Fernandez Shaw from the European Commission.

Using international financing for development efforts (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) as the starting point, the conference will be an important complement to international institutions' work and initiatives in the area of tax. These include the Platform for Collaboration on Tax conference in February 2018, the Financing for Development Forum in April 2018, and the UN summit on SDG financing in September 2018.

More information about the conference and the programme are available on the conference website at www.stockholmtaxconference2018.se.

Follow the dialogue on social media. We will be tweeting under the hashtags #sthlmtaxconf and #tax4dev.

Date: 30–31 May

Venue: Stockholm Waterfront Congress Centre

#sthlmtaxconf

#tax4dev



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joining forces to strengthen global gender equality efforts

Published 23 April 2018

More than 700 gender equality advocates from more than 100 countries gathered at the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality to exchange experiences and mobilise efforts for global gender equality. The participants included key figures from civil society organisations, business, academia and politics. They all have the same goal: a gender-equal world.

The Forum took place at a decisive point in time. While gender equality is progressing in many places, many of the participants highlighted the fact that gender inequality and discrimination of women and girls are among the greatest human rights challenges of our time. Efforts to promote women's and girls' rights, representation and access to resources therefore require concerted action. It requires cooperation between gender equality advocates and decision-makers, and between men and women.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström began her speech with a special welcome to the men, stressing that gender equality is not a women's issue – it concerns peace, security, development and democracy. To illustrate the path to gender equality, she quoted Mahatma Gandhi:

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win. I sense that we are winning," she said.

More statistics needed

To tackle the issue of gender equality, the right conditions are required. Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation and

Climate and Deputy Prime Minister, highlighted identifying gender inequality as an area requiring considerable improvement.

"What you don't know about, you don't care about. We need more statistics on gender equality in the world to move forward. That will give even better opportunities to work for increased gender equality," she said.

"Gender equality is smart economics"

Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde made the point that gender equality is not only wise and right, it is also smart economics.

"Women who participate in the labour market have more power over their own lives. This strengthens the whole of society. Shutting women out of economic activity is probably the world's greatest waste of opportunity and talent," said Ms Linde.

The Forum delegates are now urged to submit concrete examples of commitments, initiatives and cooperation to continue supporting and inspiring each other in their efforts to increase gender equality.



Article from Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy to raise ambition regarding global efforts for environmental sustainability

Published 13 March 2018

Reduced emissions, increased resilience to climate change, and more sustainable management of water, ecosystems and natural resources. These are some of the goals aimed for in development efforts. In March 2018, the Government decided on the new strategy for Sweden's global development cooperation in the areas of environmental sustainability, sustainable climate and ocean, and sustainable use of natural resources. The strategy applies for the five years 2018–2020.

"Climate change is the defining issue of our time. Our blue planet has a fever. Those affected most are those with fewest resources, and this is why development cooperation in this area is extremely important," says Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate.

The goal of Swedish international development cooperation is to create opportunities for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression, and to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The new strategy also aims to – within Swedish development cooperation focused on a sustainable environment, climate and ocean, and on the sustainable use of natural resources – contribute to development of the global normative framework, global policy and methods, as well as strengthened capacity among organisations and institutions.

The strategy will steer the global efforts of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in three areas: climatically sustainable development, environmentally sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources, and sustainable ocean and water resources. The 10 goals for operations set by the Government include reduced climate emissions and increased resilience to climate change, increased access to renewable energy, strengthened protection and sustainable management of ecosystems and natural resources, and sustainable management of water and ocean, with reduced pollution and littering.

Climatically sustainable development

This area concerns, among other things, preventing climate change and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants. It also concerns sustainable energy systems, and contributing to reduced vulnerability of people who live in poverty, and to increased resilience to handle climate change and natural disasters. A new area in this strategy, compared with previous years, is that a focus on the ocean is included.

"I am delighted that Sweden, through this strategy, also continues to highlight the importance of ocean issues," says Ms Lövin. "For many small island nations, climate change is an immediate existential threat."

There is a major need for adaptation to ongoing and future climate change, and it is particularly important to build resilience in the least developed countries, in small island nations and for the most vulnerable population groups.

Environmentally sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources

This area concerns, among other things, sustainable management and sustainable use of land-based ecosystems, biodiversity and species, natural resources, including agriculture and forestry, and ecosystem services. It also covers an aspiration to achieve environmentally sustainable cities, sustainable production and consumption patterns, preventive control of chemicals, and ensure that more people who live in poverty gain access to sustainable renewable energy at an affordable cost.

Increased access to sustainable and modern energy services is key to poverty reduction. And it is necessary to transition to sustainable consumption and

production of goods and services to reduce the negative impact on the climate, the environment and human health.

Sustainable ocean and water resources

This area concerns cleaner water and ocean, reduced emissions of pollutants and reduced littering. It also covers biodiversity and sustainable management and use of marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems.

"Water is a fundamental prerequisite for all life on Earth, and therefore also a condition for human health and well-being. Marine-based industries therefore need to take economic, social and environmental sustainability as their starting point," says Ms Lövin.

Long-term sustainable water use, with functioning ecosystems and ecosystem services that can clean and buffer access to water, requires integrated and transparent water management both within and between countries. Cross-border cooperation on water can also contribute to preventing conflicts.

Sweden's development cooperation shall always be based on and characterised by a rights perspective and poor people's perspectives on development, and this also applies to this strategy. By contributing to the strategy's goals, activities can support low- and middle-income countries accession and implementing commitments under international environmental conventions and agreements. Increased knowledge, access to information, dialogue and participation that promotes equality and gender equality are cross-cutting themes that contribute to the development of global policy and methods, as well as capacity-building. Increased participation in decision-making processes, access to justice and transparency also promote environmentally sustainable development and contribute moreover to preventing conflicts.

Fact box – strategy for a sustainable environment, climate and ocean, and sustainable use of natural resources

- The strategy has a total budget of SEK 6.5 billion.
- The strategy applies for five years: 2018–2022.
- The strategy is to be particularly based on a number of the Global Goals in the 2030 Agenda and, within the framework of activities, contribute to achieving these. The Global Goals in question are:

- Clean water and sanitation (Goal 6)
- Affordable and clean energy (Goal 7)
- Sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11)
- Responsible consumption and production (Goal 12)
- Climate action (Goal 13)
- Life below water (Goal 14)
- Life on land (Goal 15)

- Synergies between the different areas of the strategy must be harnessed.
- The strategy will be followed up according to the principles and processes stated in the Government guidelines for strategies in Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid.
- Reporting is to be conducted with reference to how activities contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Article from Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy to increase the level of ambition regarding global efforts on the environment, climate and oceans

Published 09 March 2018

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Climate-resilient sustainable development

This area concerns, among other things, preventing climate change and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants. It also concerns sustainable energy systems, and contributing to reduced vulnerability of people who live in poverty, and to increased resilience to handle climate change and natural disasters. A new area in this strategy, compared with previous years, is that a focus on oceans is included.

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Environmentally sustainable development and sustainable use of natural resources

This area concerns, among other things, sustainable management and sustainable use of land-based ecosystems, biodiversity and species, natural resources, including agriculture and forestry, and ecosystem services. It also covers an aspiration to achieve environmentally sustainable cities, sustainable production and consumption patterns, preventive chemicals controls, and ensure that more people who live in poverty gain access to sustainable renewable energy at a reasonable cost.

Increased access to sustainable and modern energy services is a key to poverty reduction. And it is necessary to transition to sustainable

consumption and production of goods and services to reduce the negative impact on the climate, the environment and human health.

Sustainable oceans and water resources

This area concerns cleaner water and oceans, reduced emissions of pollutants and reduced littering. It also covers biodiversity and sustainable management and use of marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems.

"Water is a fundamental prerequisite for all life on Earth, and therefore also a condition for human health and well-being. Marine-based industries therefore need to take economic, social and environmental sustainability as their starting point," says Ms Lövin.

Long-term sustainable water use, with functioning ecosystems and ecosystem services that can clean and buffer access to water, requires integrated and transparent water management both within and between states. Cross-border cooperation on water can also contribute to preventing conflicts.

Sweden's development cooperation must always be based on and characterised by a rights perspective and poor people's perspectives on development, and this also applies to this strategy. By contributing to the strategy's goals, activities can support low- and middle-income countries joining and implementing commitments under the framework of international environmental conventions and agreements. Increased knowledge, access to information, dialogue and participation that promotes equality and gender equality are constant themes that contribute to global policy and methods development and capacity-building. Increased participation in decision-making processes and access to legal examination and transparency also promote environmentally sustainable development and contribute moreover to preventing conflicts.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

“Sweden must continue to lead the way on climate action”

Published 12 December 2017

The One Planet Summit begins in Paris on 12 December, and Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, Isabella Lövin will be there. Below she talks about the summit and a new Swedish climate initiative.

The One Planet Summit begins in Paris on 12 December. What kind of summit is it?

The summit is an initiative of French President Emmanuel Macron, and its aim is to speed up the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The summit will focus on the financing of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impact of climate change, particularly in developing countries. President Macron's initiative came shortly after the United States withdrew from the Paris Agreement and drastically cut its share of funding to international climate action. In light of this, it is vital that other countries increase their contributions. For this Government, it goes without saying that Sweden must continue to lead the way on climate action.

What are your expectations of the summit?

The situation is extremely serious. Climate change is happening here and now, and research shows we have very little time to act. Nevertheless, the growing will among many countries to also take action makes me hopeful. The starting point of the summit is the need to speed up our efforts to fight climate change and to work together. There is incredible strength in this. I hope and believe that we will hear about a number of hope-inspiring initiatives from participating countries.

How many countries will take part in the summit?

Some 130 countries are expected to take part, and around 50 heads of state or government.

Which issues will you highlight in particular?

This summit is largely about cooperation and creating new partnerships and initiatives, which is why I will share examples of successful climate action under way in Sweden. This includes our pioneering climate act that enters into force in January, our ambitious climate objectives and how various actors are now deeply engaged in greening Sweden to enable us to be the world's first fossil-free welfare nation. One exciting area in this regard is our Green Industry Leap budget initiative, which provides central government support to transition to fossil-free industry in Sweden. Sweden could be the first country to produce steel without using coal, a development that seemed inconceivable just a few years ago. I believe we have much to gain by seeing the opportunities involved in transitioning to a sustainable society.

Many countries are expected to launch new initiatives during the summit. What will Sweden contribute?

Since the major focus is on financing, we will highlight the Stockholm Sustainable Finance Centre that was launched a week ago. This is a knowledge centre led by the Stockholm School of Economics and the Stockholm Environment Institute, and co-financed by the Government. The Centre will help build expertise and capacity for sustainable investments by financial market actors, not least in developing countries. Sweden has extensive knowledge in this area, which we naturally want to share.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Swedish Government's climate initiatives – three years into the electoral period

Published 13 October 2017

Sweden is to become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations, and the Government is now implementing the largest initiatives on climate and the environment in modern times.

Three years into the Government's electoral period, its initiatives have resulted in the introduction of a climate policy framework, a changeover in the transport sector from fossil fuels to sustainable fuels and electrification, and major investments being made in renewable energy and energy efficiency. Through the Climate Leap, the Government has invested SEK 2 billion, thus far, in regional and local initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Investments are being made in charging stations, biogas plants, railway maintenance and energy efficiency. Support to solar and wind power is being increased, and the goal is 100 per cent renewable electricity production. The Government has made the greatest investments ever in climate and the environment. The investments in climate and the environment in the 2018 Budget Bill mean a doubling of the previous Government's climate and environment budget bill for 2014.

Sweden is also pursuing climate action in the European Union and provides a uniquely large contribution to the UN Green Climate Fund.

Sweden is taking the lead internationally for climate and our climate policy is now ranked overall best in the EU.

Some of the Government's investments in climate so

far

- • **A climate policy framework**

Sweden has adopted a climate act and clear climate goals, which means that we are now at the forefront of global climate efforts. The objective is for Sweden to have no net emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by 2045, and thereafter achieve negative emissions. Emissions from transport will be reduced by 70 per cent by 2030. The Climate Act will enter into force on 1 January 2018.

Read more about the Climate Policy Framework.

- **A climate policy council**

Sweden has decided to establish a climate policy council tasked with assisting the Government by providing an independent assessment of how the overall policy presented by the Government is compatible with the climate goals. The council is included in a government bill on a climate policy framework, together with new climate goals and a climate act.

The climate issue is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity, and to meet this challenge, our climate policy must be in order. The climate policy council will be an interdisciplinary and independent expert body with broad expertise that can examine and assess whether the overall policy presented by the Government is compatible with the climate goals.

- **Renewable energy**

A cross-party agreement on energy policy, for the first time in Sweden's history, with a goal of 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2040.

Initiatives to achieve 100 per cent renewable energy are made through support to solar cells and energy storage, and investments in energy-efficiency measures in housing.

The agreement will also lead to an extension of electricity certificate systems and a new goal by 2030, in agreement with the Norwegian Government.

Read more on the agreement on Swedish energy policy.

- **The Climate Leap**

The Climate Leap will strengthen local and regional climate efforts through support to climate investments, for instance in a town, municipality,

company, school, or county. Via the Climate Leap, more than 1 000 local climate investments have been made in infrastructure for charging electric cars, investments in renewable fuels such as biogas, and other local initiatives to reduce emissions. This includes co-financing via the Climate Leap of 9 200 charging points for electric vehicles.

- **Strategy for sustainable consumption**

A repair contribution has been introduced for items such as clothing, shoes and bicycles.

Read more on 'Sweden nominated for international award for reuse initiative'

- **New national environmental objectives coordinator for business**
- **Increased climate financing**

Sweden has increased support to help society adapt to climate change. With its contribution of SEK 4 billion to the UN Green Climate Fund, Sweden is the largest donor per capita in the world.

- **The position of consumers on the electricity market will be strengthened**

The position of the consumer on the electricity market will be strengthened, for example by making it easier to select hourly metering of electricity.

- **A fossil-free Sweden**

The Fossil-free Sweden initiative brings together companies, municipalities and organisations that will help make Sweden one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations. Read more about Fossil-free Sweden.

- **Sustainable growth and reduced climate impact from transport and travel**

Collaboration between public actors, the business world and universities and other higher education institutions will ensure the future growth, employment and climate of industry. Below are some of the initiatives to support this:

- A decision on a bonus malus – a bonus for people who buy cars with low emissions levels, and tax increases for vehicles with high emissions levels.
- A decision on fuel conversion for the transport sector that aims at 50 per

cent biofuel by 2030 and a system of penalties for vehicles (bonus-malus).

- A decision on an aviation tax, so aviation can contribute to the climate effort by taking responsibility for its own environmental costs.
- A decision on support for feasibility studies, planning studies and investments in industry to reduce the large emissions in connection with industrial incineration and processes. The Government has launched the Green Industry Leap as a long-term initiative to prepare Swedish industry for the future. SEK 300 million per year between 2018–2040 will be invested to support Swedish industry in the transition towards zero net emissions of greenhouse gases.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ocean Conference unites world

Published 13 June 2017

The Ocean Conference, co-chaired by Sweden and Fiji, concluded after an intensive week at the United Nations in New York. On 9 June, the countries of the world agreed on the Call for Action, confirming the political momentum that has been established to save the oceans.

"For the first time, the full range of ocean issues was raised at the UN General Assembly. It has moved from being an area for marine and fisheries experts to one that concerns everyone's survival, not least small island nations and the least-developed countries. The silo mentality that has been the curse of the oceans is finally beginning to erode. All the political engagement that has been mobilised is one of the most important outcomes of the conference. Now we must be sure to move it forward," says Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin, who co-chaired the Ocean Conference with Prime Minister of Fiji Frank Bainimarama.

The Ocean Conference focused on solutions and was a forum for all relevant stakeholders. It resulted in more than 1 300 voluntary commitments from countries, companies, organisations and other stakeholders concerning everything from reducing plastics in the oceans to stopping illegal fishing and strengthening the protection of marine environments.

"This week was the starting point for the hard work ahead of us to reverse the negative trend in the oceans. The participants leave here with to-do lists that they will start to check off on Monday. There is also broad support for a coordinating force within the UN system to secure living oceans, which I discussed with UN Secretary-General António Guterres," says Ms Lövin.

Sweden registered a total of 26 voluntary commitments during the week, mainly within three priority areas: marine litter, ocean and climate, and a sustainable blue economy. The Swedish delegation included Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog, Minister for Rural Affairs Sven-Erik Bucht and State Secretary Mattias Landgren, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation. Crown Princess Victoria also participated during the week.

Kenya and Portugal announced that they are prepared to take up the baton from Sweden and Fiji and organise a follow-up conference in 2020. From the outset, Sweden has worked to enable the holding of follow-up conferences until 2030 in order to maintain political pressure and facilitate the implementation of the Global Goal on living oceans, Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda. A decision on the next conference must first be approved by UN Member States.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid

Published 12 May 2017

In December 2016, the Government adopted a new policy framework outlining the direction of Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The policy framework has now been translated into English.

The parameters for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid are laid down in the policy framework. The English translation will make it easier for missions abroad and other actors to work with and implement the framework.

The purpose of the policy framework is to have a knowledge-based, broadly supported framework adapted to the new global development agenda that for the first time clearly links international work on poverty reduction to the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. At the same time, Sweden wants to go beyond the 2030 Agenda in a number of areas, such as gender equality, democracy and human rights.

"We must respond to the major changes taking place in our world, and our work has to be adapted to the new global development agenda. The 2030 Agenda actually offers fantastic opportunities to combat poverty and create sustainable development. Sweden should be at the forefront in this regard and advance international efforts," says Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin.

When an increasing proportion of extremely poor people live in conflict-affected and fragile countries, it is important that the focus is placed on long-

term efforts for peaceful and inclusive societies. The need for a bridge between long-term development cooperation and humanitarian aid is made clear in the framework. The synergies must be strengthened and the transition made more efficient, while keeping the unique humanitarian mandate firmly in place.

The Government highlights three new perspectives that will permeate development cooperation: the conflict, gender equality and environment and climate perspectives. Poor people's perspective of development and the rights perspective should also continue to be integrated in decision-making and in the planning, implementation and follow-up of activities, together with the three new perspectives.

The partner countries' ownership and a mutual responsibility is crucial to the implementation of development cooperation. To be efficient and able to deliver results, the policy must take its cue from the local context and needs.

The policy framework guides all Swedish development cooperation – bilaterally, regionally, thematically, in multilateral organisations and in European Union development cooperation.

"Together with the partner countries, civil society and companies, and through the EU and multilateral organisations, we will advance poverty reduction and sustainable development. We will contribute to innovative thinking and change, and we will really make a difference for people living in poverty," says Ms Lövin.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden co-organiser of conference on women's rights throughout the world

Published 01 March 2017

On 2 March, an international conference entitled 'She Decides' will be held in Brussels. The conference is being co-organised by Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark. "She Decides is taking a stand for women's rights, in particular their obvious right to decide over their own bodies," says Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin.

She Decides aims to increase support for sexual health and family planning worldwide. The initiative is a response to the US President's reinstatement of the Mexico City Policy, banning financial support to foreign organisations that provide access to safe abortion or information about abortion, even if they do so with funds other than those provided by the US. Women's human rights, especially their sexual and reproductive health and rights, have very important implications for every woman's and girl's own health, socio-economic situation and personal development.

"We will mobilise political and financial support and show that there is a counterweight to the worrying developments we are seeing in the US and in other parts of the world," says Ms Lövin.

All funds will go to organisations that provide information about family planning and sexual health, including safe abortion, and/or provide related services. Funds will go to organisations that are affected by the Mexico City

Policy.

The main goals are to:

- keep health clinics open
- continue providing a full range of sexual and reproductive health services to clients
- continue advocating for law reforms to reduce the number of unsafe abortions

Government representatives from some 50 countries around the world will be invited to the conference, along with intergovernmental organisations, civil society and private actors. Participants will talk about practical efforts for women's health and rights, including access to safe abortions. Women and girls will bear witness to the crucial impact this has had on their lives.

Governments are called upon to support the She Decides initiative, both financially and politically. Since the launch of the initiative, many countries have already reacted in a positive way. Canada, Cape Verde, Finland and Luxemburg have already joined the initiative. Over 230 NGO's from 65 different countries have signed a petition, applauding the She Decides initiative and encouraging other allies to support She Decides.

Sweden welcomes additional support for the She Decides initiative via <http://www.shedecides.eu>

Read more about how support for sexual health and family planning can change lives at Swedish Foreign Policy News.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin opens The Ocean Conference preparatory meeting in New York

Published 15 February 2017 Updated 15 February 2017

On 15 February 2017, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin opened The Ocean Conference preparatory meeting at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The Ocean Conference will be held on 5–9 June and, in its capacity as co-President together with Fiji, Sweden aims to incentivise stakeholders to form ambitious voluntary commitments to step up work on sustainable oceans, which are crucial to both combating poverty and promoting economic development.

Two years ago, Sweden and Fiji sowed the seeds for a unique conference to save the global marine environment. The critical situation that included acidification, littering, emissions and overfishing required a new approach. This resulted in the Ocean Conference – the first of its kind to focus solely on one goal of the UN development agenda. Ms Lövin opened The Ocean Conference preparatory meeting together with Fiji's Minister for Fisheries Semi Koroilavesau and UN General Assembly President Peter Thomson.

"Saving our oceans requires global leadership now. The situation is urgent. The trend we are seeing with overfishing, emissions and littering means that unless we do something by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the oceans," says Ms Lövin.

Sweden and Fiji want to mobilise and accelerate engagement on sustainable

ocean management and development to strengthen sustainable development in the most vulnerable countries and regions. The sustainable oceans, seas and marine resources goal is central to the entire UN development agenda and is closely linked to other goals, such as combating poverty, food security, combating climate change, sustainable production and consumption, and supply of clean water and sanitation for all.

"Oceans are of vital importance to our survival and that of the entire planet. They are a crucial source of protein for the world's poorest people. Failing to save the oceans will lead to widespread global insecurity," says Ms Lövin.

The Ocean Conference in June will be an important platform for all stakeholders – civil and knowledge society, the business community and Member States – to show their strong engagement and pledge concrete voluntary commitments to step up work on implementing Sustainable Development Goal 14 on sustainable oceans, seas and marine resources. Since the deadline for several of the targets is either 2020 or 2025, finding effective and innovative solutions is even more urgent. This kind of broad global mobilisation will give the international community a coherent overview of how far countries as a whole have come towards achieving the goal, and at the same time identify where major efforts are needed.

"We want all countries to present their action plans and identify where measures are needed so that our oceans are sustainable by 2030, as the development agenda prescribes and as they have all agreed to," says Ms Lövin.

For Sweden, three areas in particular are prioritised:

- Marine littering is a growing problem in Sweden and around the world, and the situation is particularly worrying when it comes to plastics that originate from land based sources but end up in the ocean and are there degraded to microplastics.
- Sustainable fishing is another area Sweden is focusing on. Overfishing and illicit fishing are emptying the oceans of life. Some 90 per cent of marine fish stocks are overfished or fished to their limit (WWF).
- The third priority area is to clarify the link between climate and ocean management issues. This winter, the temperature in the Arctic has been 20 degrees higher than normal. The marine environment is extremely sensitive to higher temperatures, and there is a now risk that the entire Arctic ecosystem – from plankton to polar bears – will collapse.

Sweden particularly wants to highlight the challenges facing the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries, regions and populations. This applies especially to the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).

An overarching aim of these priorities – and for the preservation of marine biodiversity – is to also stop climate change and restore and protect coastal ecosystems. Developing regional seas cooperation is also a fundamental requirement for achieving sustainable oceans.

The preparatory meeting in New York gives thousands of leaders from civil and knowledge society, the business community, foundations and Member States a chance to meet to discuss these issues. The agenda also includes discussions on the content of an intergovernmental political declaration on sustainable oceans, and also which themes should be the basis for the partnership dialogues that will be held during the Conference in June. The dialogues are to lead to broad, concrete recommendations on commitments and partnerships to achieve the goal on sustainable oceans.

"Implementing the 2030 Agenda requires everyone's involvement. This includes the business sector, organisations and private persons. Everyone can take part and make changes at different levels," says Ms Lövin.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Preparations in New York ahead of the Ocean Conference

Published 13 February 2017 Updated 13 February 2017

On 15–16 February, development issues and the oceans will be in focus in New York. Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin will take part in the preparations for the largest UN conference that Sweden is helping organise since the Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. An important part of the efforts to save the world's oceans will be based on voluntary commitments from Member States, civil society and the business sector.

"Saving our oceans requires global leadership. The trend we now see with overfishing, emissions and littering means that by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in the oceans," says Ms Lövin.

The marine environment is fundamental to poverty reduction, food security and economic development for hundreds of millions of people. At the same time, the trends are very negative.

The preparatory meeting in New York will be a first step on the road leading up to the Ocean Conference, which will be held in New York on 5–9 June 2017, co-hosted by Sweden and Fiji. The aim of the UN conference is to support efforts to save the world's oceans and achieve the Sustainable Development Goal on oceans, seas and marine resources – Goal 14 of the UN 2030 Agenda. All countries must take resolute action to achieve this goal. It is important to mobilise the engagement of all stakeholders in society in these efforts.

The idea is that partnership dialogues between governments, businesses, civil society and the knowledge society will create innovative solutions and voluntary commitments aimed at tackling major common challenges. The pollution of oceans, unsustainable fishing and the effects of climate change are some of the areas that will be addressed. The opportunities that the sustainable use of the ocean's resources can contribute to fighting poverty and achieving food security will also be given considerable scope.

The conference is intended to lead to an intergovernmental political declaration, a 'Call for Action', to advance efforts towards sustainable oceans. Member States and other stakeholders are also expected to present their plans within the framework of the implementation of Goal 14. These voluntary and ambitious commitments will be collected in a list that will be another important part of the conference's outcomes.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

New strategy for humanitarian aid

Published 01 February 2017 Updated 02 February 2017

In situations of armed conflict, natural disasters and other disaster situations, humanitarian aid is one of the most effective and tangible means of saving lives and alleviating the suffering of the women, men, girls and boys affected. In January 2017, the Government adopted a new strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid via the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for the period 2017–2020.

Over the last ten years, global humanitarian needs have increased considerably, above all as a result of conflicts that are difficult to resolve and have often led to protracted refugee situations. Recurring crises also occur in the wake of extreme weather events, such as drought and flooding, which risk further increasing the needs in the long term. The UN estimates that over 128 million people will be in need of humanitarian support in 2017, which is the highest figure ever. Particularly vulnerable are the more than 65 million refugees. The trend is for refugee situations to become more protracted. According to the UNHCR's definition, 6.7 million people are estimated to be living in protracted refugee situations (and 5.2 million Palestine refugees are included in the UNRWA's mandate). On average, a protracted refugee situation lasts for 26 years.

The overall objective of Swedish humanitarian aid is to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity for the benefit of people in need who have been, or are at risk of becoming, affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters or other disaster situations. Humanitarian aid is about helping people in acute distress on the basis of humanitarian needs and humanitarian principles. The humanitarian principles are humanity, neutrality, independence and impartiality. Long-term development cooperation is about

helping people lift themselves out of poverty and oppression through support for long-term measures. Sweden's humanitarian aid is based on global humanitarian needs and the humanitarian principles, as well as international humanitarian law, international refugee law, human rights, legal instruments with a bearing on disasters, and accepted international practice in this area. In addition, humanitarian aid is steered by the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD).

To reduce future humanitarian needs, it is important that we deal with the root causes of crises, highlight preventive measures and strengthen people's and societies' resilience (resilience, ability to recover and adapt) to crises and disasters. The number of development actors working on strengthening the resilience of individuals and societies and working in humanitarian contexts must increase so as to promote long-term solutions to recurrent and protracted crises. Sweden is working for greater collaboration between humanitarian aid and long-term development assistance.

Sweden's total humanitarian aid

Sweden has long been an important actor in humanitarian aid and was the seventh largest bilateral donor in the world in 2016, providing approximately 2.7 per cent of global humanitarian support. Sweden's total humanitarian aid rose from SEK 3.3 billion in 2005 to over SEK 5 billion in 2016. Sweden's humanitarian financing is allocated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the form of core support (unearmarked support to various humanitarian organisations' activities, based on the organisations' needs assessments) and by Sida in the form of country and region-based support. For 2017, the humanitarian appropriation totals SEK 5.8 billion, of which SEK 3.1 billion will be allocated via Sida and SEK 2.7 billion via the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

At the beginning of this year, Sida is allocating more than SEK 2.1 billion of its humanitarian appropriation. Almost SEK 1 billion of the appropriation will be kept by Sida as a reserve in the event of sudden or aggravated crises.

At the beginning of this year, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is allocating over SEK 2.6 billion to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

Sweden is the single largest donor of unearmarked core support to the humanitarian UN bodies. For example, in 2016, Sweden was the largest donor of unearmarked support to UNHCR, WFP, CERF and UNISDR. This support enables rapid and flexible measures for the women, men, girls and boys most in need of help. Unearmarked core support also contributes to predictability and coordination. The country and region-based support paid by Sida enables flexible use and increases capacity to meet humanitarian needs in a fast and cost-effective manner.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for the overall coordination of Sweden's humanitarian aid and for Swedish policy vis-à-vis humanitarian organisations, and gives unearmarked core support to these organisations. Sida finances international humanitarian contributions within the framework of UN appeals and contributes to the implementation of Sweden's humanitarian policy. The policy framework for Swedish development cooperation and humanitarian aid states the Government's direction for humanitarian aid.

New strategy for Sweden's humanitarian aid via Sida

In January 2017, a new strategy was adopted for Sweden's humanitarian aid via Sida for the period 2017–2020.

To save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity for people affected by crises, Sweden provides support to contributions made up of material aid and protective measures. To achieve the overall objective within the framework of the strategy, Sida is expected to contribute to:

- needs-based, fast and effective humanitarian response;
- increased protection for people affected by crises and increased respect for international humanitarian law and the humanitarian principles;
- increased influence for people affected by crises;
- greater capacity and efficiency in the humanitarian system; and
- the systematic mainstreaming of gender equality, conflict sensitivity and resilience in humanitarian aid.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Major Swedish engagement in the UN Ocean Conference

Published 18 January 2017 Updated 18 January 2017

On 11 January, Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin hosted Swedish stakeholders with an interest in oceans at an information meeting about the UN Ocean Conference, due to be held in New York on 5–9 June. There were over one hundred representatives of companies, the knowledge society, civil society and government agencies present – all with the joint agenda of working to save our oceans.

Sustainable oceans essential for global development

The 2030 Agenda is a global agenda for sustainable development, in which Goal 14 on sustainable oceans plays a key role. Ms Lövin emphasised that the marine environment is fundamental to poverty reduction, food security and economic development for hundreds of millions of people. At the same time, there is a strong negative trend.

"If we do not break the current trend, in 2050 there will be as much plastic in the oceans as there are fish. Measures have to be taken quickly and resolutely. This is why Sweden and Fiji have taken the initiative to host the UN's first major ocean conference," said Ms Lövin.

Goal 14 covers a broad range of marine issues, such as sustainable fishing, marine littering, ocean acidification and a sustainable blue economy. This was also clearly reflected in the broad participation in the meeting, moderated by Johan Kuylenstierna, Executive Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute.

The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and other Swedish government agencies presented their roles in Sweden's work on Goal 14 and the conference, as did the World Maritime University in Malmö, which is the only UN body located in Sweden. The strong academic presence highlighted how far Swedish-led research has come in the marine environment area, as well as the importance of linking this research to a broader development perspective.

Partnerships and cooperation are a success factor

The Ocean Conference will build long-term, innovative and concrete partnerships between states, civil society, the private sector, the knowledge society and other stakeholders. This is why broad participation from all areas of society is important, at local, regional, national and global level.

"The oceans are our world bank. There is major economic potential to be protected in our marine environment," said Mattias Rust from the WWF.

Swedish companies represented at the meeting also highlighted how innovative solutions are contributing to sustainable marine management.

Register for the Ocean Conference by 22 January 2017



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Launch of SIPRI report on climate and security

Published 02 January 2017 Updated 02 January 2017

On 15 December, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin inaugurated a seminar during which a new report on the links between climate and security was presented. On behalf of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has produced a study on these issues entitled "Climate-related security risks: Towards an Integrated Approach".

Climate change has an impact on many areas, on societies and people's everyday lives. Apart from the consequences for the environment and people's livelihoods, risks that threaten people's security can be one of the negative effects of climate change.

Poor countries with weak institutions are particularly vulnerable. The risks include worsened supplies of water or food, which can trigger or aggravate conflicts of various kinds. Worsened coastal environments or rising sea levels can mean that possibilities of earning an income are limited and the risk of conflicts increases. Migration as a result of climate change can lead to conflicts. Moreover, all of these risks are interlinked and can aggravate each other.

It is important to include climate-related risks in work against conflicts and for peaceful societies, otherwise there is a risk of overlooking important factors that contribute to conflicts breaking out. Sweden is working to ensure that the climate perspective is included in a more systematic way when preparing measures to prevent conflicts or promote peace. This applies to

measures implemented by Sweden through expert agencies as well as at international level.

The ability of the UN system to analyse risks systematically and from a climate perspective – and thus also improve the basis on which decisions are made – must be strengthened, and Sweden will pursue this aim during its membership of the UN Security Council.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#FirstGeneration Global Goals Forum – focus on young people and joint efforts for a better world

Published 10 October 2016 Updated 10 October 2016

More than 300 engaged young people, teachers, inspirers and representatives of civil society and the business sector gathered on 5 October for the #FirstGeneration GlobalGoals Forum in Stockholm. Optimism for the future permeated the entire day, which focused on young people and the UN Global Goals.

Swedish YouTube star and presenter Clara Henry was the moderator for the day, and a large number of inspiring young people from all over the world took part in the programme. The Forum was opened by Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Ahlendawi, sent a video message.

"Young people are not just the beneficiaries of the Global Goals, but rather they hold the key to their success. This is why I am especially encouraged by the #FirstGeneration campaign's focus on teachers and educators. Teachers have a unique opportunity to instil the importance of sustainability from a young age and to cultivate and enable the younger generation to serve as change-makers."

The day's activities offered many inspiring and educational moments. The audience were given food for thought in an interactive quiz, and Staffan Landin raised awareness of sustainable development. Audience members also had a chance to hold Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog and representatives from businesses including IKEA and E.ON to account in a

Global Goals grill, arranged by We_change. The #FirstGeneration Award was also presented for the first time. State Secretary Ulrika Modéer and Mats Djurberg, Secretary-General of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, presented the award to educators and inspirational figures from 17 countries, in recognition of their efforts to inspire and engage young people on issues to do with fair and sustainable development, peace and climate change. Following the award, Swedish-Sami hip-hop artist Maxida Märak performed a Sami joik. The Forum concluded with a video message from Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin. Her message was clear – global challenges require global solutions.

"We need role models around the world if the Global Goals are to become reality. Global challenges need global solutions. I'm sure you will continue your work to find these solutions together."

The Forum was held on World Teachers' Day, 5 October, as a fitting date to highlight the important role of educators and others in inspiring and engaging young people on issues to do with a just and sustainable future. The event, which was held at Norra Latin, an old school, went viral both nationally and internationally, with the hashtag #FirstGeneration trending on Twitter with more than 13 000 tweets.

The Swedish initiative #FirstGeneration aims to encourage young people to engage in the UN Global Goals for sustainable development. It is for this reason that the initiative particularly highlights educators and inspirers as those with an important role in engaging the young. The #FirstGeneration Global Goals Forum gave recognition to individuals around the world who, in their day-to-day work and in various ways, inspire young people on issues to do with fair and sustainable development. The educators and inspirers who were invited to the Forum were selected in collaboration between Swedish embassies and local partners including UN Women, the UNDP, UNESCO and various universities. Along with their young attachés in Stockholm, these educators and inspirers now form a network to exchange knowledge and ideas for a better world.

[Click here to watch #FirstGeneration Global Goals Forum \(Youtube\)](#)



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Donor conference for Afghanistan: “Sweden’s support to the Afghan people remains firm”

Published 04 October 2016 Updated 04 October 2016

On 4–5 October a major donor conference for Afghanistan will be held in Brussels, and many countries are expected to confirm their continued support to the reconstruction of the country. At the same time, the Afghan government will present what has been achieved in terms of the reforms it committed to implementing and show how this work is being pursued. Sweden’s long-term commitment until 2024 makes Swedish aid to Afghanistan unique.

"My message during the conference will be clear. Sweden's support to the people of Afghanistan remains firm. The situation in the country is worrying and we will continue to work hard for democratic and peaceful development. Women's participation in society and in peacebuilding is crucial if the country is to manage to lift itself out of poverty, war and violence," says Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin.

Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries. Almost 40 per cent of the country's population lives below the international poverty line and it is primarily women and children in rural areas who are the most vulnerable. International aid has been absolutely essential for the progress made over the past 15 years, and the continued support of the international community is a prerequisite for continued reconstruction efforts.

Afghanistan is currently the largest recipient country of Swedish aid. Together with other donors, an active dialogue is held with the Afghan government on the importance of implementing long-term reforms to strengthen the Afghan state institutions, reduce corruption, enable free democratic elections and improve legal security and human rights. Economic reforms are crucial if Afghanistan is to reduce its dependence on aid in the long term.

In Brussels, the international community is expected to report on plans for continued aid at the same or close to the same levels up to 2020. Sweden will confirm its long-term commitment that extends until 2024.

Women's rights important for Sweden's development cooperation in Afghanistan

The aim of Sweden's development cooperation in Afghanistan is to contribute to democratic, peaceful and sustainable development with long-term economic growth that benefits people living in poverty. Gender equality and women's rights are at the core of Sweden's development cooperation with Afghanistan. For sustainable and peaceful development to be possible, both women and men must be involved in societal developments.

Many women in Afghanistan are in a very vulnerable situation. Literacy among women is at around 18 per cent, one of the lowest levels worldwide. Women generally have poorer access to medical care than men. Forced marriage of young girls is common, as is domestic violence against women. In public, women experience an everyday life fraught with threats and violence, and women's participation in societal developments is far from self-evident.

Despite this, the situation of women in Afghanistan has slowly improved. As one of the largest and most long-term international donors to Afghanistan, Sweden has contributed to improvements in many areas.

- **Education is a key area.** Swedish aid has helped – not least through the long-term and successful work of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan – to increase the number of children attending school from 1 million in 2001 to 8.2 million today. It is pleasing to note that 40 per cent of them are girls. Schools run by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan have almost 70 000 children attending and 62 per cent of them are girls. In 2014, around 700 teachers were trained, 300 of them women. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan also trains women

teachers – a prerequisite to get more girls to be able to go to school.

- **Reduced maternal mortality and reproductive health.** Every year, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan programme trains new midwives and women teachers, which has resulted in safer deliveries and more girls attending school. In recent years, maternal mortality has fallen from 1 600 per 100 000 births to approximately 400. Sweden also supports Marie Stopes International, an organisation that helps to improve knowledge about reproductive health and family planning, and better access to clinics and services.
- **Protection against violence and discrimination.** To achieve greater gender equality, Sweden is cooperating through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency with UN Women and Women for Afghan Women (WAW). Through this cooperation we have helped ensure protection in the form of women's refuges established in some twenty provinces. They offer legal assistance and rehabilitation. WAW provides guidance and protection to women and girls subjected to gender-based violence. Sweden has also been a driving force behind the full implementation of the Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which is to protect women and girls against gender-based violence.
- **Political representation.** Sweden's aid has also helped increase women's awareness of their rights and women's participation in politics and society as a whole. The proportion of women on traditional village councils, known as shuras, is currently almost one third, and Afghanistan has 27 per cent female representation in parliament.
- **Women's participation in peace processes.** Promoting women's participation in future peace and reconciliation processes in Afghanistan is vital. The Swedish mediation network for women is an important resource for dialogue and mediation projects. The Folke Bernadotte Academy runs mediation training, to which Afghan women have been invited. Sweden is a driving force behind efforts to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, both in relation to the Afghan government and within the international advisory initiative Resolute Support Mission.

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan has made major progress in the education and health sectors, infrastructure, economic development and rebuilding political and administrative institutions, which were largely destroyed during decades of war. The Afghan government's reform agenda is ambitious. Despite this progress, Afghanistan still has a long way to go.

Like the rest of development cooperation, it will take time to improve gender

equality, education and health, reduce violence against women and increase women's participation in peace efforts. It is important to have a long-term perspective. This is reflected in the commitment Sweden has made and stands by.



Article from Ministry of the Environment

Summary of the Government's budget initiatives in the areas of environment, climate and energy

Published 29 September 2016 Updated 29 September 2016

In the Budget Bill for 2017, the Government is strengthening efforts towards a toxin-free everyday environment, a fossil-free welfare society and renewable energy. Sweden will be a pioneer on climate issues, and we will step up the pace to achieve the environmental objectives. This requires increased knowledge, new technological solutions and clear targets along the way.

Historic environment and climate budget

Since the Government took office in 2014, the appropriation to expenditure area 20, General environmental protection and nature conservation, has increased by 73 per cent, excluding environmental research. The Budget Bill for 2017 is the largest environment and climate budget ever presented in Sweden.

The Government's investments for the climate total SEK 12.9 billion for the period 2017–2020. The Climate Leap will be reinforced and extended through an investment of SEK 1.6 billion to continue to support regional and local initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In total, the Climate Leap encompasses more than SEK 3.5 billion for the period 2015–2020.

The urban environment agreements will be reinforced with an additional SEK 750 million for 2017–2018, and will encompass a total of SEK 2.75 billion by 2018. As of next year, it will also be possible to apply for

investment support for cycling infrastructure.

As part of efforts to reduce the total amount of carbon dioxide in the EU Emissions Trading System, the Government proposes a scheme to purchase and cancel emissions allowances, at a cost of approximately SEK 300 million per year from 2018 to 2040.

Knowledge-enhancing and preventive initiatives to adapt society to climate change continue. The appropriation for climate adaptation will be reinforced by SEK 10 million per year in 2017 and 2018, SEK 70 million in 2019 and SEK 120 million in 2020.

Research to meet social challenges

Strong environmental research is crucial to tackling climate and environmental challenges. It is proposed in the budget that the resources for climate and environmental research be reinforced to the tune of SEK 752.5 million in 2017–2020. The climate research appropriations to the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning will almost double by 2018. The research initiatives will be described in greater detail in the research policy bill that the Government intends to present before the end of 2016.

A special energy research bill will also be presented before the end of the year. It contains guidelines and initiatives for prioritised and more intensely focused measures in the energy area. In the Budget Bill, the Government proposes that the resources for energy research be reinforced by a total of SEK 620 million in 2017–2020.

Fossil-free travel and transport for the climate and environment

In the area of transport, the super green car rebate will be extended by one year to 2017. The autumn amending budget boosts the rebate by SEK 180 million in 2016, and the Government is investing SEK 700 million for 2017. The scheme is being extended pending a 'bonus-malus' system whereby the purchase of more environmentally friendly vehicles is rewarded via a bonus, while vehicles that emit high levels of carbon dioxide are subject to higher vehicle tax.

The Government also wants to make it easier for consumers to make

informed and environmentally friendly fuel choices, and will therefore look into the possibility of making it obligatory to provide information on the environmental impact of fuels.

The Government continues efforts for a toxin-free everyday environment

The Budget Bill for 2017 outlines a range of initiatives in the area of chemicals to achieve the environmental objective on a toxin-free everyday environment, with a particular focus on children and young people. The Government's proposed initiatives total SEK 375 million up to 2020. The Swedish Chemicals Agency is tasked with charting hazardous substances in people's everyday environments. Funds will also be allocated to establishing a centre to help businesses substitute hazardous substances in products and goods.

More protected marine areas

The Government has previously undertaken major initiatives to protect valuable natural environments, including marine areas. To meet the interim objective of protecting ten per cent of Sweden's marine areas by 2020, the Government believes that the pace of these efforts needs to accelerate. The appropriation for measures in marine and aquatic environments in 2017 is therefore reinforced in the budget by SEK 15 million.

In the autumn amending budget, the Government also restores SEK 250 million to protecting valuable natural environments. This means that initiatives for valuable forests, for example, can be implemented according to the original timetable.

Hydro-electric power with modern environmental requirements

Hydro-electric power plays a key role in Sweden's electricity supply. The physical impacts of hydro-electric plants on watercourses have serious consequences for ecosystems and biodiversity. The Government is therefore investing SEK 25 million in water-related operations in 2017, and increasing the investment to SEK 30 million annually from 2018.

100 per cent renewable energy by 2040

The Government's ambition is for Sweden to become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations. Solar panels are a renewable energy technology that is beneficial from a climate perspective. The Government will therefore continue to encourage the expansion of solar power. The funds allocated to investment support for solar power in 2017 are eight times higher than in 2015.

The expansion of renewable energy places demands on the electricity grid and on the government agencies responsible for this area. The Government intends to increase the appropriation to the Swedish Energy Markets Inspectorate by SEK 10 million annually to cover the Inspectorate's work on network concessions, for example.

The Budget Bill for 2017 is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#FirstGeneration in New York

Published 14 June 2016 Updated 14 June 2016

As part of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs's public diplomacy campaign #FirstGeneration, on 9 June the Swedish Consulate-General in New York held a seminar and panel discussion on the theme of engaging young people in the work on the UN Global Goals.

The event took place at the Swedish-owned design firm Trollbäck + Company in SoHo, and the panellists included Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin and Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin, and representatives of various UN bodies and non-profit organisations.

Following a welcoming address by Consul-General Leif Pagrotsky, the event got under way with a presentation by Jakob Trollbäck of his company's work to produce the graphic profile for the UN Global Goals.

Communicating the Global Goals, Jakob Trollbäck founder at Trollbäck+Company

This was followed by two panel discussions: 'From Words to Actions - Implementing the 2030 Agenda' and 'Empowering and Engaging Young People in Global Sustainable Development'. In addition to the Swedish ministers, the panellists included Magdy Martínéz Solimán, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and Director of the UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support; Marie Paule Roudil, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York; Zara Rapoport, Head of the Plan International UN Liaison Office in New York; Ahmed Alhendawi, UN Envoy on Youth; Coco Killingsworth, Deputy Director of Global Kids; Katie Isaak Ginsberg, founder and Executive Director of the Children's Environmental Literacy

Foundation; and Domenic Smith, President of AIESEC United States.

Panel 1: From words to Action – Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Panel 2: Empowering and Engaging Young people in Global Development

The discussions were moderated by Lance Gould from the Huffington Post.

The audience included representatives of teachers' organisations, after-school programmes, universities and various organisations with links to the UN.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs international campaign in support of the Global Goals

Published 09 June 2016 Updated 09 June 2016

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has launched #FirstGeneration, an international campaign in collaboration with international and local actors. The campaign is intended to strengthen international efforts on the 2030 Agenda and help ensure that new and younger target groups take on the challenges linked to the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Almost half of the world's population is under the age of 25. The key to a sustainable future will be determined by our ability to transform knowledge into engagement among young pupils and students. The campaign is intended to generate engagement in, strengthen communication on and broaden popular support for the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

#FirstGeneration is part of public diplomacy efforts by the MFA and Swedish embassies around the world. By working together with other actors, Sweden can have a positive influence on the work of other countries. Sweden's ambition is to remain an international role model and be a driving force in the global efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Campaigning via networks

The #FirstGeneration campaign is being run in both digital and analogue form via a series of activities and collaboration between the Swedish MFA, Sweden's embassies and consulates abroad and local and international actors. Activities around the world will highlight the Global Goals, and young people will be the focus. Teachers, educators and activists who can influence and inspire young people in the area of sustainable development are the true heroes.

"We believe in the power of networks, and that together with other actors we can engage and draw attention to young people and teachers, educators and activists around the world. Our joint networks offer us the opportunity to reach out to and influence much larger numbers of people. Many actors are hugely engaged in helping to achieve the Global Goals," says Miriam Mannbro, project leader for the #FirstGeneration campaign.

In addition to activities and initiatives being implemented by some 30 Swedish embassies in collaboration with local actors, two major events will be held in 2016. In June, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin and Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will take part in a seminar in New York. The focus of the seminar will be young people's engagement and the important role of teachers and educators in inspiring young people. Other participants will include representatives of UNESCO, the UNDP and AIESEC, the world's largest student organisation. #FirstGeneration will culminate in Stockholm on 5 October, which is World Teachers' Day and falls just after the first anniversary of the adoption of the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Some 20 teachers and activists from around the world will be invited to Stockholm, where they will be celebrated for their contributions to engagement among young people.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

A world in humanitarian crisis: Can we reverse the trend of ever-growing humanitarian needs?

Published 23 May 2016 Updated 23 May 2016

Article by the Nordic Development Ministers on the World Humanitarian Summit May 23-24 2016.

On May 23-24 the Secretary General of the United Nations has convened the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. The Summit has been preceded by consultations by a wide range of stakeholders from governments to local aid organizations. We recognize the need to address the global humanitarian situation. We are witnessing an unsustainable trend where an increasing number of people are dependent on humanitarian aid and deprived of a life in dignity. We can only bring about change through international cooperation and through our common efforts.

The humanitarian support provided by the Nordic countries has over the years helped millions of victims of natural and man-made disasters. Last year this support amounted to 1.18 billion USD/1.05 billion euros which make the Nordic countries one of the biggest providers of humanitarian aid in the world. We will continue our assistance to those most in need based on the principles of humanitarian aid: independence, impartiality, neutrality and humanity. At the same time we need to find new ways of reducing needs; it is not justifiable to keep people dependent on emergency aid for decades with no prospect of a better tomorrow. We have seen the consequences of this in a particularly dramatic way over the past year in Asia, Africa, and also in Europe, including in our own countries. The Summit must send a strong signal calling for political leadership in resolving crises. Today 80% of humanitarian needs are due to man-made conflicts and they can only be resolved through political means.

The United Nations only manages to cover some two thirds of the annual humanitarian needs. The support base urgently needs to be broadened and deepened. For the aid organizations multiannual, non-earmarked contributions are a way of increasing flexibility and rapid response in unforeseen situations and for the forgotten humanitarian crises that do not break the news. A better response is not only about increasing funding, it is also about effectiveness and accountability. We are committed to making the humanitarian aid we finance reach more people in a more effective way that takes into account local needs and local actors. We firmly believe that women can and should play a more prominent role in planning and carrying out aid activities, that people with special needs must be taken better into account, and that the private sector has an important role in finding innovative and more efficient way of helping people in situations on emergency. We also need to bridge the gap between humanitarian and long term development aid.

Emergencies cannot be eliminated, but their negative effects can be substantially mitigated by increasing the resilience of societies, particularly in areas prone to earthquakes, floods and other forms of natural disasters. This is a task for national planning and must be taken into account at all levels in all countries. We stand ready to support these efforts in our cooperation with developing countries.

The current situation where 60 million people are refugees is not acceptable. Still, we refuse to give in. Never before have so many people in need been receiving humanitarian aid. Thousands of aid workers all over the world are doing a tremendous work every single day – often in difficult and dangerous situation. They all deserve our support and recognition and we can all help in our own way, regardless of who we are and where we are. This is our responsibility and this is a sign of our respect for fundamental human values.

Isabella Lövin,
Minister for International Development Cooperation

Kristian Jensen,
Foreign Minister of Denmark

Lenita Toivakka,
Minister for International Trade and Development of Finland

Lilja Dögg Alfredsdóttir,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

Børge Brende,
Foreign Minister of Norway



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin meets Aung San Suu Kyi

Published 04 May 2016 Updated 04 May 2016

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin has visited Myanmar to strengthen relations with the new Government. Important steps towards democracy have been taken in recent years but many challenges remain. Ms Lövin visited Yangon and Naypyidaw, the country's capital, for talks with government representatives, members of parliament and civil society representatives.

"Sweden supports the country's democratisation process and its peace and poverty reduction efforts. It is important for us to talk to decision-makers and other actors about the ongoing democratisation process and how we can deepen our cooperation with Myanmar," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

Ms Lövin also travelled to Rakhine State in western Myanmar for talks on how the situation of the Rohingya Muslim minority can be improved. Sweden has a clear position on issues such as on sexual and reproductive health and rights, media freedom and women's rights in Myanmar. Sweden's aid strategy for Myanmar is due to be reviewed and the Minister's trip is an important part of this work. Sweden's current strategy is for the period 2013–2017 and will provide a maximum SEK 750 million in total.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin visits Nepal one year on from earthquake

Published 28 April 2016 Updated 28 April 2016

On the anniversary of the devastating earthquake in Nepal, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin is visiting the country to follow up relief efforts.

One year ago, on 25 April, Nepal was struck by a devastating earthquake, which was followed by another quake two weeks later. Almost 9 000 people lost their lives and the earthquake destroyed over 800 000 homes, schools and official buildings. Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin is now in Nepal to follow up on the humanitarian operation following the disaster.

"The terrible earthquake affected hundreds of thousands of people. Now it is important to learn lessons so that we can see how the effects of similar disasters can be mitigated and how relief efforts can become even better. These lessons are important ahead of the international humanitarian summit in May," says Ms Lövin.

Ms Lövin is meeting Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli and Finance Minister Bishnu Prasad Paudel, as well as the national reconstruction committee, to discuss reconstruction. Ms Lövin is also meeting representatives of IM Swedish Development Partner and of local civil society organisations. Sweden's support to Nepal amounted to over SEK 90 million last year, including through the World Food Programme, the

International Committee of the Red Cross and IM Swedish Development
Partner.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Today is International Women's Day

Published 08 March 2016 Updated 08 March 2016

Equality between women and men is a fundamental aim of Swedish foreign policy. Ensuring that women and girls can enjoy their fundamental human rights is both an obligation within the framework of our international commitments, and a prerequisite for reaching Sweden's broader foreign policy goals on peace, and security and sustainable development.

The situation in the world calls for a feminist foreign policy that aims to strengthen women's rights, representation and access to resources.

On international women's day, join us in drawing attention to the #3rs of gender equality.

Rights

The human rights of women and girls are violated all over the world. The full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls must become a reality, including by combating all forms of violence and discrimination that restrict their freedom of action.

Representation

Women are still under-represented in influential positions in all areas of society and in all processes. Women's equal participation and influence in decision-making processes must be promoted at all levels and in all areas of society, including all stages of peace processes and peacebuilding. Research

shows that inclusive peace processes pave the way for a greater number of possible solutions that become better established and are more sustainable.

Resources

Women and girls often lack social or economic rights, including access to and control of economic resources, quality education, land, inheritance rights, productive work and equal pay. Women and men must have the same power to shape their societies and their lives. Resources must be distributed differently to promote equal rights and opportunities for all. In global terms, a larger proportion of aid must go to promoting gender equality and women's rights.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for International Development Cooperation visits Tonga, Fiji and Kiribati

Published 17 February 2016 Updated 21 February 2016

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin is in the Pacific Region to visit island nations whose populations are among the most affected by climate change. The purpose of these visits is to determine how Sweden can best help these extremely vulnerable countries and is part of the Government's commitments at the climate change conference in Paris.

Ms Lövin is the first Swedish minister to visit the Pacific Region. She will travel to Tonga, Fiji and Kiribati. Ahead of the conference in Paris, the Government worked closely with the small island nations and now work is entering a new phase to implement the commitments. Sweden is the largest per capita donor to the Green Climate Fund, which will help developing countries adapt their societies to be better equipped to handle the effects of climate change, and in the transition to renewable energy.

"I will listen, learn and see how Sweden best can help these countries' populations, whose future is literally in jeopardy. For these people, there is nothing abstract about climate change. It is very real and happening now. They are paying the price for rich countries' emissions. We have an obligation to help them," says Ms Lövin.

In Tonga, Ms Lövin took part in a ministerial meeting with heads of government and representatives from Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia, where a follow-up from Paris, access to climate financing and sustainable oceans were on the agenda. Participants noted that climate change as well as

sustainable oceans are central to the region, where the greatest resource is precisely the oceans.

Ms Lövin will also visit projects that focus on curbing coastal erosion to save villages so that the inhabitants can continue living there. The Government will also adopt a new regional aid strategy for Asia which will include the Pacific Region for the first time. To get better insight into the Pacific Region, Ms Lövin will also meet, in addition to government representatives, representatives of a number of regional organisations such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Pacific Islands Forum, the Pacific Islands Development Forum, the UNDP and the Women's Crisis Centre.

Together with Fiji and small island nations, Sweden has also taken the lead to save the world's oceans and maintain political pressure to achieve the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals on sustainable oceans. This is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals on which the UN Member States agreed in 2015. As part of these efforts, a UN-led high-level conference will be held in Fiji in 2017.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Feminist energy policy for the climate

Published 08 December 2015 Updated 08 December 2015

If we are to tackle the challenge of climate change, both women and men must be involved. In many low income countries, women must devote many hours each day to carrying wood and fetching water.

We must therefore invest more in small-scale production of renewable energy such as sun and wind, which can easily be installed even in small villages far out in the countryside. This will contribute to reduced emissions and simplify everyday life for these women.

This was Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin's main message when she spoke today at the climate change conference in Paris at a side event that focused on 'Women and Sustainable Energy'.

In connection with the Paris climate conference, the Swedish Government has announced that it is giving an additional SEK 15 million to the Sustainable Energy for All initiative, and an additional SEK 20 million to the World Bank's programme to increase support to renewable energy in low income countries.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani visits Sweden

Published 04 December 2015 Updated 08 December 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today met Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani. In connection with the meeting, it was announced that negotiations will begin on an agreement concerning migration issues and readmission of those Afghans whose asylum applications in Sweden have been rejected. More than 30 000 Afghans have come to Sweden this year, of whom more than 20 000 are unaccompanied minors.

The Swedish measures in Afghanistan are long-term and have focused on political, diplomatic, police, military and aid-related areas, covering both humanitarian support and development cooperation. Afghanistan is one of the largest recipients of Swedish aid. Sweden has announced an aid package of up to SEK 8.5 billion for the period 2015–2024. A significant part of our aid focuses on improving the situation of women and children.

During the visit, Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin and President Ghani signed a cooperation agreement on aid. This is the first time that Sweden has signed an agreement of this kind with Afghanistan. The agreement affirms Sweden's aid commitments and deepens the countries' relations. It means that there will be regular, structured follow-up meetings at political level on aid and development in the country, which will complement the ongoing dialogue. Swedish aid is long-term and contributes to creating jobs, helping more children attend school, strengthening women's rights, fighting corruption and strengthening democratic institutions.

The difficult security situation in Afghanistan was also discussed. Since 2002, close to 10 000 Swedes have helped try to improve the security situation in the provinces that were part of the Swedish military area of responsibility in Northern Afghanistan. Today, the Afghan security forces have assumed responsibility for security throughout the country, which is an important step towards Afghan ownership and leadership. The Government recently presented a bill on an extension of the Swedish training mission in 2016.

President Ghani also held bilateral talks with Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström. The talks were followed by a lunch hosted by Ms Wallström. Ms Wallström began by thanking Mr Ghani for coming to Stockholm and pointed out that this year marks 75 years of diplomatic relations between Sweden and Afghanistan. Topics discussed during the lunch included foreign, security and defence issues. The agenda also included development policy, economy and social issues, and the topical migration issues.

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér also took part on behalf of the Government.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for women and girls in a crisis-prone world

Published 04 December 2015 Updated 04 December 2015

Isabella Lövin, Minister for International Development Cooperation, opened a seminar in Stockholm on 3 December about SRHR in humanitarian situations. Ms Lövin emphasised that conflict and natural disasters affect women, men, girls and boys in different ways.

When a crisis strikes, women and girls are disproportionately disadvantaged, and less prepared or empowered to survive and recover.

"Women's rights are not a soft issue, they are a matter of life and death. Yet far too often, they are neglected by humanitarian actors. As the world's fifth largest donor country of disaster relief, Sweden bears a special responsibility," said Ms Lövin.

The importance of ensuring access to SRHR for women and girls in humanitarian situations was highlighted. Refugees now spend an average of 20 years away from home. Linking humanitarian and development actions together through increased collaboration was identified as a core element in achieving sustainable solutions. Promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls are critical priorities for the Swedish Government that will be pursued at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016, as well as during Sweden's incoming chairmanship of Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.

At the seminar, UNFPA launched their State of World Population report "Shelter from the storm – A transformative agenda for women and girls in a

crisis-prone world". Astrid Börjeson (Doctors without Borders) shared her field experience from working with displaced woman and girls. Agnes Björn (Plan Sweden) stressed why SRHR is important for children's rights organisations and young girls' need of protection in humanitarian situations. Finally, Madeleine Lundberg, Swedish Red Cross, spoke about gender-based violence in disasters.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin visited Afghanistan

Published 25 November 2015 Updated 26 November 2015

Minister for International Development Cooperation
Isabella Lövin has just returned from a visit to Afghanistan to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations and discuss developments in the country and Swedish support. Ms Lövin met President Ghani, several ministers, parliamentarians and civil society organisations.

Afghanistan is one of the largest recipients of Swedish aid. The country finds itself in a difficult situation, with a coalition government that has recently taken office while peace talks have been put on hold and the security situation worsens. The increasing number of unaccompanied refugee children coming to Sweden was one of the issues on the agenda, as were Swedish support to peacebuilding and statebuilding, and women's rights.

“There is an opportunity to reverse the worrying trend and Sweden is ready to give its support. The new government has expressed the clear intention of securing peace and fighting the corruption that is threatening development in the country. Young people must be able to feel confidence in the future again,” says Ms Lövin.

“I am proud of Swedish aid to Afghanistan. It's making a difference and helping to strengthen women's rights. The situation of women is crucial for development in the country. Women's active participation in peace work, in the labour market and in politics is key to sustainable democratic development,” says Ms Lövin.

Besides Kabul, Ms Lövin also visited Mazar-e-Sharif, where she met the Swedish contingent and the governor and looked at activities financed by Swedish aid, including a school run by the Swedish Committee for

Afghanistan.

Sweden's aid strategy for Afghanistan applies for the period 2014–2019 and amounts to SEK 4.87 billion. The focus is on institution-building, human rights (including gender equality), education, economic development and employment.

Swedish aid has contributed to a major increase in the number of children enrolled in school from around 900 000 in 2001 to almost 8 million today. In 2001 only a few girls were enrolled, but today they account for almost 40 per cent, and the number of women teachers is increasing, although a great number more are needed. Sweden is contributing to better education through its support to UNICEF, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, UNESCO and the World Bank.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin led meeting on peacebuilding

Published 05 November 2015 Updated 05 November 2015

How will countries affected by conflict be able to implement the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? This is one of the items on the agenda as the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding met in Paris 4 November, under the leadership of Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

A decision will be taken during today's meeting on the continued work of the International Dialogue. How countries affected by conflict will be able to implement the new SDGs is one important item to be addressed at the meeting, attended by representatives from conflict-affected countries, international development partners and civil society.

“Efforts to prevent wars and conflicts are more important than ever. The number of wars is rising and according to forecasts, poverty will be increasingly concentrated in conflict-affected countries. The International Dialogue is an important tool for strengthening peacebuilding efforts,” says Ms Lövin.

Ms Lövin is co-Chair of the International Dialogue, whose work is based on five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals, known as the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. The New Deal, adopted in Busan in 2011, is an agreement between fragile and conflict-affected states, international development partners and civil society organisations to improve support to fragile and conflict-affected states. An evaluation of the New Deal will also be presented at the steering group meeting.

The International Dialogue holds a global meeting at ministerial level once a year. Ms Lövin will announce at today's meeting that the next ministerial meeting will take place in Stockholm in April 2016.

More information on the International Dialogue:

The Government on the International Dialogue

The International Dialogue



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden supporting people who are fleeing

Published 22 October 2015 Updated 22 October 2015

Over 60 million people are currently displaced around the world. This is the highest number since the Second World War. People are fleeing to Europe mainly from Syria, where the civil war is now in its fourth year. Almost 8 million Syrians are currently displaced in their own country and more than 4 million have fled from Syria. This corresponds to half of the Syrian population.

To help these people who are fleeing from war and violence, many people have been getting involved collecting basic necessities and offering assistance. At the same time, Sweden is supporting people fleeing from war and unrest. Since the war started in Syria, Sweden has contributed almost SEK 1.6 billion in humanitarian support. During last year alone, Sweden gave more than SEK 500 million to help people caught up in the Syrian crisis.

Alongside this emergency support to people in distress, Sweden is also supporting the UN bodies operating in Syria and its neighbouring countries through non-earmarked funding – what is known as core support. Sweden is the largest donor of core support to the UNHCR. Sweden is also the largest donor to UN Women (2014), which strengthens women's rights in the world both in peace time and times of war and disaster.

Last year, Swedish aid amounted to over SEK 38 370 000 000 – or SEK 11 per person and day. Sweden is the fifth largest aid donor (2014) when it comes to providing support for people in acute distress, known as humanitarian aid.

Sweden is not going to reduce its commitment, but the EU needs to do more. To improve the EU's refugee policy, Sweden is pursuing 10 standpoints. These include the EU needing to have a more active foreign and aid policy to help people on the ground, and that the EU needs to drastically increase the number of quota refugees.

The Government's ten standpoints to reform the EU's refugee policy



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development, A call to action

Published 26 September 2015 Updated 14 October 2016

The world must get off to a flying start in realizing the new ambitious and transformative sustainable development agenda.

We, the presidents and prime ministers of Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Liberia, South Africa, Sweden, Tanzania, Timor-Leste and Tunisia, have come together today in an initiative aimed at supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We believe that the effective and universal implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires efforts at all levels, and across all sectors. Government's efforts alone will not suffice. But we are committed to lead by example and we pledge to do our share.

We will work actively during the coming months to rally support for the implementation of the Agenda. We will promote the sharing of experiences and best practices and a continuous engagement at the highest political level around the world.

The 2030 Agenda is an agenda of the people, by the people and for the people. We therefore invite all stakeholders, governments, parliamentarians, civil society, business sector, labor unions and academia to join us in calling for action. We need sustained engagement, dedication and leadership at all levels to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development in all its dimensions by 2030.

We will make it our joint mission to ensure that no one is left behind!



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Sweden taking responsibility to implement the UN global goals for sustainability

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson and Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin are attending the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York. On 25–27 September, the new global Sustainable Development Goals will be adopted by all UN Member States.

“Sweden will take a leading role also in implementing the new UN Sustainable Development Goals. Poverty reduction, environmental and climate action, and peacebuilding go hand-in-hand. Sweden will lead the way with a coherent policy that takes into account the perspective of poor people, human rights and planetary boundaries. Efforts to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals in Sweden are starting now,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

During the summit, the Prime Minister will deliver a speech, attend meetings, seminars and roundtable discussions, and have bilateral talks with the heads of government of other countries.

“These global goals are needed for the countries of the world to work together to stop and prevent conflicts and refugee crises. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace, security and respect for

human rights. The global goals give us fifteen years of opportunities for a better world,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

“It is extremely positive that the world is now agreed on the importance of sustainable development. An ambitious climate agreement in Paris this December is our first opportunity to show what this means in practice. All countries have a responsibility to contribute to climate change adaptation. By taking responsibility at home, Sweden is taking the lead and showing that adaptation is both possible and profitable,” says Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson.

From a Swedish perspective, it is important to underline three dimensions of sustainability – economic, social and environmental. The rights perspective, including freedom from discrimination, and gender equality in particular, is a top priority, as are employment and the goal of decent work for all.

“In unsettled times in which the challenges faced by the world can sometimes seem insurmountable, the fact that the countries of the world have now come together and shown that change in a positive direction is possible inspires hope and confidence, as does the fact that we stand united in the battle against poverty, repression and climate change,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

In connection with the summit, a large number of charity events and a music gala – the Global Citizen Festival – will take place in Central Park in New York. The festival will focus on inequalities in the world and access to clean water and sanitation.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government decides on core support to multilateral organisations for 2015

Published 03 September 2015 Updated 03 September 2015

Today the Swedish Government decided on core support for fifteen UN bodies, active in fields including assistance to people in distress, promotion of women's rights and reducing child mortality worldwide.

Unlike earmarked support, core support enables multilateral organisations to distribute resources flexibly according to existing needs, as the contributions are channelled directly into the organisations' budgets. Core support is a prerequisite for maintaining an effective organisation. It gives organisations greater flexibility and enables them to plan their activities over the long term, while being able to respond rapidly in the event of a crisis. Distressed and desperate people should not have to wait for each individual donor's analysis, grant management and, in the worst case, policy decisions before the response can be set in motion. Sweden's support enables immediate assistance for women, men, girls and boys who, in many cases, are fighting for their lives. As the largest donor of organisational support to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) we have helped it provide rapid and vital protection and assistance to people in places ranging from Ukraine and Iraq to the Philippines, South Sudan and Ethiopia.

Sweden's support to and involvement in multilateral organisations also gives us access to decision-makers in virtually every country in the world and the opportunity to influence the shape of strategies and work plans.

The role of core support in a feminist foreign policy

With its feminist foreign policy, and as a champion of women's rights

throughout the world, Sweden's support to multilateral organisations also represents an important opportunity to pursue issues of women's rights and economic empowerment.

UN Women, in which Sweden plays a very central role, is responsible for coordinating the UN bodies' work on gender equality and is a key body in gender equality efforts in the UN. UN Women has also played a very active part in producing the new sustainable development goals, and has advocated successfully, alongside Sweden, for a separate goal on gender equality.

Sweden is also the largest donor of core support to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), which works to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights, focusing on women, girls and young people.

Sweden has also contributed to the UN's World Food Programme (WFP) now taking a modern approach to gender equality efforts, with men and boys also included in the implementation.

Sweden can make a real difference in gender equality

Support to women in war and conflict

Women and girls make up approximately half of the 59.5 million forcibly displaced people in the world. They are particularly vulnerable as they flee, when the risk of falling victim to sexual and gender-based violence increases, as has been the case during the worsening crises in Iraq and South Sudan in the last year.

The UNHCR takes an integrated approach to gender equality issues in its regular activities including setting up refugee camps, providing training and distributing food, as well as through specific initiatives to combat sexual and gender-based violence. In 2014, Sweden was the fourth largest bilateral donor to the UNHCR, and we also provide targeted support via Sida for the implementation of the UNHCR strategy to combat sexual and gender-based violence.

Conflicts and natural disasters reinforce existing inequalities between men and women. Vulnerable groups, including women and girls, become increasingly exposed. Sweden has worked proactively to counter this in various contexts, such as via the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which has a coordinating role and builds capacity in the humanitarian system with the help of gender advisers.

Furthermore, in 2015–2016 Sweden will take on the leadership of the Call to Action on Protecting Girls and Women in Emergencies, an initiative that is in line with Sweden's high profile in both humanitarian assistance and gender equality.

Towards seventeen new global sustainable development goals

In September this year, the UN General Assembly is due to adopt seventeen new global sustainable development goals (SDGs). These are to replace the eight Millennium Development Goals. Core support is, of course, not only important for the SDGs; it has also played a key role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Core support has helped ensure that the multilateral organisations have been able to focus on the Millennium Development Goals according to their comparative advantages.

Major challenges remain, but through Sweden's active engagement on the boards of these organisations and via our representations throughout the world, we have a good insight into activities, and the possibility to ensure that funds really are used as agreed. We will also continue to conduct a dialogue on key issues with these organisations, with the aim of achieving change and results that are in line with Sweden's feminist foreign policy.



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin attends World Economic Forum Africa

Published 04 June 2015 Updated 04 June 2015

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin is in South Africa attending the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Ms Lövin had the opportunity to meet Archbishop Desmond Tutu and discuss developments in South Africa and in the region. The Archbishop sends his warmest wishes to the people of Sweden and expresses his gratitude for Sweden's support in the fight against apartheid and in the ongoing work for democratic development in South Africa.

Thursday 4 June, Ms Lövin took part in a panel on blue economy – on how the oceans can be administered and used sustainably to promote development. Ms Lövin also discussed actions by the international community with regard to Ebola.

Another question for discussion during the WEF will be how Africa's energy potential can be paired with climate challenges. Sweden is investing a great deal in sustainable energy development in Africa, via for instance Power Africa. Climate and the environment will be a priority issue in the upcoming regional aid strategy for Africa.

“More than 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa have no electricity, a lack that affects their lives and their possibilities to lift themselves out of poverty. This is an immense challenge, and at the same time, there is great potential to invest in small-scale renewable alternatives that reach rural areas. Sweden can play a role here,” says Ms Lövin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is hosting the Stockholm Forum on Security and Development 2015

Published 13 May 2015 Updated 19 May 2015

On 12-13 May, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, together with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), is co-hosting the international conference Stockholm Forum on Security and Development. The conference will deal with the link between peace, security and development cooperation and will be held at the Münchenbryggeriet Conference Centre.

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin will join 150 policymakers, researchers and organisations at the conference to discuss international measures and cooperation on the theme of 'Promoting Sustainable Peace'.

A number of roundtable discussions with experts and policymakers will be held on various themes during the conference. Topics will include gender equality, climate change, new sustainable development objectives, peacekeeping operations and various regional security issues.

Two new reports will be presented during the conference: the OECD's 'States of Fragility 2015' and Small Arms Survey's 'Global Burden of Armed Violence 2015'.

- Speech: Opening address at the Stockholm Forum on Security and Development 2015

- Report: OECD - States of Fragility 2015
- Small Arms Survey: Global Burden of Armed Violence



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- Opening address at the Stockholm Forum on Security and Development 2015

- Report: OECD - States of Fragility 2015
- Small Arms Survey: Global Burden of Armed Violence



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin in Sendai

Published 17 March 2015 Updated 19 May 2015

Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin is taking part in the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction on 14-18 March in Sendai, Japan. World leaders are gathering to agree a new international framework for disaster risk reduction and resilience.

The number of climate change disasters is likely to rise, resulting in significant economic and human costs. The costs associated with natural disasters have now risen to USD 250-300 billion annually, which is twice as much as development assistance.

"More action must be taken to prevent disasters. Otherwise, crises and disasters will be a constant threat to progress and sustainable development. We need to combat the impacts of climate change, fight poverty and strengthen international cooperation," says Ms Lövin.

Since 2005, more than 700 000 have died as a result of natural disasters and more than 1.4 million people have been injured. Around 23 million people have lost their homes. Some 1.5 billion people have been adversely affected by disasters, which have caused material losses amounting to USD 1.3 trillion. Between 2008 and 2012, 144 million people were displaced by disasters.

Ms Lövin participated in a side event on 15 March on women's role in reducing the risk and impact of disasters and is also hosting a meeting of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on Tuesday 17 March to discuss access to climate funds and other issues.

The conference is chaired by Sweden's Margareta Wahlström, the Special

Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Speech given at the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai



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Speech given at the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai



Article from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Significantly increased level of ambition for climate action

Published 22 October 2014 Updated 18 May 2015

In 2015 the most important climate summit since Copenhagen will take place in Paris. The Government is now choosing to take greater responsibility for Sweden's climate impact and is making a commitment ahead of Paris 2015 by increasing Green Climate Fund (GCF) financing by approximately USD 550 million (SEK 4 billion) and allocating an additional SEK 500 million to international climate action.

Most ambitious contribution per capita

This contribution, which covers the period 2015-2018 and requires the approval of the Riksdag, is the most ambitious contribution per capita of the countries that have so far announced their intention to contribute to the fund.

"These decisions are fundamental to Sweden's and the EU's credibility vis-à-vis the developing countries in climate negotiations," says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin. "Climate change hits poor countries and poor people hardest. Greater action to limit greenhouse gas emissions and to support climate change adaptation is crucial for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Sweden is now demonstrating international leadership through the Government's decision," she adds.

The Green Climate Fund

At the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in 2009, the parties agreed to

establish a new climate fund: the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The purpose of the Fund is to support developing countries through climate change adaptation measures and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, including forest-related measures. The Green Climate Fund, which is in the process of being established, is expected to be of key importance in future climate financing. Against this background, the Government intends to pledge a total of SEK 4 billion to the Fund's initial resource mobilisation process.

"Sweden will participate actively in the work of the Fund's board and intends to make a significant contribution to the Fund's activities so as to set an example to other EU countries and other donors," says Ms Lövin.

Important decision ahead of Paris 2015

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol represent a double commitment for Sweden and other industrial countries: reducing our own emissions and financing emissions reductions and adaptation to a changed climate in poor countries. If the decisive Climate Summit in Paris in 2015 (COP21) is to succeed, it is crucial that the rich countries live up to their commitments.

USD 100 billion per year

In accordance with decisions taken at the UN climate summits in 2010 and 2011, the high-income countries are committed to an objective to use various sources of financing - private, public and innovative - to mobilise USD 100 billion per year for climate measures by 2020. Sweden is to take a leading role in the dialogue with other countries about how this objective is to be achieved. The Government intends to work to ensure that the EU as a whole is proactive in developing sources of climate financing and takes a constructive approach to climate financing after 2020.

Green Climate Fund