

Belgium & PEI - Side Event

Sunday, 27 September 2015 (10:00 - 11:30 am, Room 5, UN Headquarters)

Scaling up the sustainability ladder LDCs and their specific environmental challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In 2015, the world gathers to set an ambitious, global and universal agenda for poverty reduction and sustainable development. In implementing the 2030 Agenda, sustainable management of natural capital is key, especially in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that depend most on it. Digitalization can play an important role in helping them leapfrog.

LDCs, to which Belgium has decided to allocate 50% of its official development assistance (ODA), will face particular challenges to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. Natural capital in most of these countries, especially freshwater, is being harvested and degraded at a rate that threatens to undermine the well-being of the population and future economic growth.

Thus far, decision-makers have largely ignored the importance of natural resources as a capital asset. UNEP and UNDP team up in the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) to optimize the management and use of environmental assets in national development planning and budgeting, in order for inclusive and sustainable economic growth to take root and expand, including in LDCs. Climate change presents a specific challenge. The sustainable use of natural capital however empowers LDCs to meet the Agenda 2030 challenges in a more resilient way.

This side event brings together key decision makers with a clear technical understanding and political interest in the stakes and challenges in LDCs.

Topics of discussion will include: the poverty and environment nexus in a post-2015 context, sustainable use of energy and natural resources in LDCs and the role of ODA therein, and digitalization as a global, regional and local tool for scaling up the sustainability ladder.

With the participation of:

Alexander DE CROO, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development Cooperation, Digital Agenda, Telecom and Postal Services, Belgium

Achim STEINER, Executive Director, UNEP, on behalf of PEI (UNEP/UNDP)

Salio AKADIRI, Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration, Francophonie and Beninese Abroad, Benin

Liliane PLOUMEN, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, the Netherlands

Claver GATETE, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda (tbc)

Gyan CHANDRA ACHARYA, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Jean-Pascal van YPERSELE, Vice-Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Kitty VAN DER HEIJDEN, Director Europe Office, World Resources Institute

Eliza ANYANGWE, *The Guardian*, Moderator

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