

APFSD 2 country statement: Australia

Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate in this year's Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, noting that 2015 will be a landmark year for sustainable development with the upcoming Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa, and the post-2015 development agenda to be launched in September.

Australia remains committed to delivering a compelling post 2015 development agenda that focuses global efforts on economic growth and poverty reduction. Follow up and review is an important aspect of these discussions, as monitoring mechanisms can help drive implementation of the agenda, and provide regular and timely feedback on our progress against goals we have agreed. We very much valued the discussion by yesterday's panel on regional monitoring and review mechanisms part of Session 3. Our remarks go to those issues.

In a post-2015 context, with a global development agenda that will be broader and more ambitious than the Millennium Development Goals, it is critical that our follow up and review system is fit for purpose.

It should generate information that policymakers can use to plan and prioritise sustainable development investments.

It should enable participation by a wide range of stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society.

Importantly, follow up and review should not divert resources from the pursuit of development outcomes; a fit for purpose system must enable participation by countries with limited capacity, and allow governments to prioritise monitoring in line with national development and statistical strategies.

It is our view that global monitoring efforts, like those established under the Millennium Development Goals, should continue, to enable high-level reporting against the post-2015 development agenda. The High Level Political Forum will be an important global platform for policymakers and officials from across the environmental, social and economic dimensions of the sustainable development agenda to come together and exchange views on their experiences.

Regional forums, such as our Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, are a space for us to come together and highlight our successes, as well as discussing shared challenges.

Regional forums are also a locus for technical expertise. There was some interesting discussion yesterday about the importance of data collection. Australia remains committed to building statistical capacity in our ESCAP region, particularly through the improvement of Civil Registration and Vital

Statistics systems, and economic and social statistics more broadly. We recognise that credible and accessible data assists governments in formulating evidence-based policies and evaluating their impact.

Continued efforts to build national statistical capacity will be critical to the follow up and review of the post 2015 development agenda. Collaboration between statistical offices, and the expertise and coordination the international system can offer, will be crucial to delivering high-quality, comparable data in line with countries' *National Strategies for the Development of Statistics*. The Inter Agency Expert Group on SDGs is an important forum in this regard. Australia supports the Pacific region to improve the availability, quality and use of statistics through a regional program of technical assistance for national governments.

Australia looks forward to a continuing dialogue on how follow up and review can support countries in striving towards our shared goals, and welcomes the views of others on how this can best be achieved.