

# ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2017

"Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific"

29-31 March 2017 | UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE CENTRE . BANGKOK, THAILAND

## VNR Learning Café Concept Note

**Venue:** Engagement Space at the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, UNCC

**Date:** 29 March 2017

**Time:** 15:30-17:00 (coffee and refreshments will be provided)

### Background

The overall theme of the fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) is "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific." Dedicated roundtable sessions will be organized based on the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017 cluster of SDGs1, in line with the UN General Assembly resolution on follow up and review 70/299. A dedicated session on Voluntary National Reviews will create a platform for the VNR participating countries to highlight experiences from the first year of SDG implementation and to exchange perspectives on the role of regional follow-up and review in supporting national and global review.

To create an additional informal atmosphere for networking, exchange of experiences and good practices for integrated and inclusive approaches for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, including spaces for exhibition, engagement and peer-learning, is being set-up, and side events are being organized.

### Scope of the VNR Learning Café

In preparation for the panel discussions in the plenary on the next day, representatives of the VNR participating countries will be invited to join a VNR Learning Café. Experts will have an informal opportunity for exchange of experiences and discuss ideas on processes and tools for follow-up and review, including stakeholder involved and the role of regional networks. The VNR Learning Café will be set up at the Engagement Space of the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development which is designated to facilitate informal peer-learning experiences throughout the duration of the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the APFSD. The target participants will consist of a technical-level professionals, institutional actors, academia representatives, scientists, as well as contributors from civil society.

### Objectives of the VNR Learning Café

<sup>1</sup> SDGs 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere); 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation); and 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), as well as Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development)

The objectives of the VNR Learning Café are two-fold:

- To provide a space for informal engagement, peer-learning and dialogue on the main theme of the APFSD;
- To offer opportunities to learn and explore applications of innovative engagement methods that delegates could utilize in their own contexts.

### **How would it work?**

Facilitated discussions will be held in small working groups around the following areas:

- 1) Ongoing or planned national-level follow-up and review, and challenges;
- 2) Processes and tools to facilitate preparation of VNRs;
- 3) How to undertake meaningful stakeholder engagement in follow-up and review.
- 4) Regional commonalities and lessons learned from VNR preparations undertaken so far;

Summary of these discussions will be developed by the facilitators and will inform ESCAP's capacity building strategy to support ESCAP's SDG focal points and regional VNR focal points.

In addition, participants will have the opportunity to provide their direct feedback on the **VNR Wish Wall** and on the **Engagement Wall** with the questions "What will you contribute to the 2030 Agenda?" and "What support would you need from us to do that?" during the designated time of the *VNR Learning Café* and at any other given time during the APFSD.

### **Additional Information Charing Opportunities**

Representatives of the VNR participating countries are invited to share audio-visual materials and publications related to success stories in implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the SDGs at the Engagement Space at the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, which will allow wider outreach and sharing of experiences.