

PREFACE

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World Sustainable Development Outlook 2024 includes a selection of the best papers presented during the World Association for Sustainable Development's (WASD)ⁱ 22nd Annual International Sustainability Conferenceⁱⁱ, held for the second time at the United Nations, Palais des Nations in Geneva, 22–25 July 2024.

WASD is delighted to have been working very closely with various United Nations Agencies, such as UNEP, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, and most specifically with the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system (JIU)ⁱⁱⁱ. Both JIU and WASD are inspired by the conviction that the United Nations' Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SD) and its 17 SDGs provide the momentum for renewed UN engagement with the public and private sectors (*watch video*^{iv}).

Following WASD's successful conference co-organised with the JIU in 2018, and as an expression of a participatory, open and multi-stakeholder approach that underlies Agenda 2030, we invited all stakeholders, including universities, to join us in this global conference to explore innovative strategies, collaborative initiatives, and transformative approaches that empower educational leaders, policy-makers, and stakeholders to accelerate progress towards a sustainable future.

Similar to previous Annual Conferences^v organised by WASD at the UN, the conference brought together many top experts in the field of SD; these included UN officials, Ministers, company CEOs and directors, university leaders, high government officials and policy-makers,



academics, researchers, NGOs, women, youth, etc., and leading individuals and institutions from around the world. The conference therefore acted as a forum that allowed all participants to share experiences, develop innovative approaches, and create partnerships to enhance knowledge sharing and international scientific co-operation.

The conference discussed the key question (*practical and theoretical*) of how to accelerate the pace of the implementation of Agenda 2030 at half-way to its finishing line^{vi}, and the vital role of universities in driving forward the implementation of the United Nations' Agenda 2030^{vii} and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)^{viii} to achieve Sustainable Development (SD) across the world. We therefore aimed to pull together a conference that focussed on some of the key policies and challenges facing the entire world; it is certainly an exciting, if uncertain, time to hold a conference.

During the conference, WASD also formally launched its major Sustainable Development Goals Universities Initiative (SDGsUNi)^{ix} and Sustainable Development Goals Who's Who Initiative (SDGsWho'sWho)^x interactive and smart digital platforms. Also, to mark the official global launch of these various initiatives next month, WASD offered selected countries' organisations the opportunity to benefit from several levels of engagement in the conference, including spaces in the SDG Exhibition organised alongside the conference.

The conference was therefore a golden opportunity for all Higher Education Institutions (HEI) (universities, colleges and research institutions) that have played, and continue to play, a key role in transforming their teaching and research for the implementation of the UN Agenda 2023 and its 17 SDGs.

The structure of the conference's myriad knowledge and learning events were designed to foster maximum peer-learning and experience sharing. The format allowed for panellists to present their views on specific topical issues followed by a question and answer session. This provided opportunities for delegates to effectively engage in dialogue and share their individual experiences and perspectives on the given issue or topic.

The response to our call-for-papers was very high with more than 156 abstracts and papers submitted covering a wide range of focus and scope of the theme of the conference. The papers selected had tremendous scope in both focus and source, covering a broad geographical spectrum including Africa, America, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Middle East.

The main topics of the papers were: *Knowledge and Learning; Higher Education; Artificial Intelligence; Innovation Management and Sustainability; Leadership; and Health and Well-being.*

We hope that the ensemble of papers presented in this volume will help to stimulate debate amongst scholars, researchers and policy-makers, and that you will find this volume interesting and thought-provoking.

We would like to congratulate the authors for their valuable contributions, and we are grateful to our track chairs and many reviewers for graciously offering their invaluable comments that have enriched the quality of the papers in this conference and its related publications, and for making available to us their valuable time and efforts.

We highly appreciate the generosity and full support of Her Excellency Dr Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General, United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) in officially opening the conference and delivering her keynote address. We are also very grateful for all the support and assistance we received from the different departments and units from the UNOG, including but not limited to the Meetings Management Section, Information and Communication Technology Service, Audio-visual Services, and the UN Restaurant.

We are also very grateful to the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar at the UNOG for their full support in facilitating this conference with the different departments at the UNOG. We very much appreciate the full support provided to the conference by Her Excellency Dr Hend Abdulrahman Al-Muftah, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the UNOG, and other International Organisations in Geneva. Her support for this conference is of no surprise to us as, for a very long time, she has always been a key member in all WASD activities, contributing to our journals, books and conferences. She believes in all the work we do at WASD, hence her endless support and assistance for more than 20 years. We are also very grateful for the endless support we received from Mr Elobaid Elamin, Ms Johara Abdulaziz Al-Suwaidi and their colleagues from the Permanent Mission of Qatar to the UNOG.

Finally, we would like also to thank all the members of WASD organising committee, particularly Mrs Janet Snow (International Co-ordinator and Editor), Kumar Gaurav (Webmaster), Souheil Zaied (Lead Graphic Designer), N. Joseph Navinraj (Director of ePublishing), Dr Samar Ahmed (WASD Executive), Lena Alam (Youth Champion), and all the volunteers from across the world for their continuous and endless assistance and support to the conference.

We hope that you will find this volume informative and engaging. Any feedback you can provide will be greatly appreciated as we are always looking at ways in which we can improve your experience.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





END NOTES

- i www.wasd.org.uk/
- ii www.wasd.org.uk/listing/accelerate-sdgs-2030/
- iii www.unjiu.org/
- iv www.youtube.be/xtnyeVXxOKY
- v www.wasd.org.uk/conferences/search/
- vi www.wasd.org.uk/listing/accelerate-sdgs-2030/
- vii www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/
- viii www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/
- ix www.sdguniversities.org/
- x www.sdgswhoswho.org/

