EVENT SUMMARY

May 5th, 2017

2030 VISION
LOCALIZING THE SDGs
IN THE ANDEAN REGION
1. Introduction

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) depends on their successful localization. Namely, on the capacity of countries to adapt these global goals to their local realities and from that perspective identify significant and impactful actions to achieve them. Localization exercises require open discussions and knowledge sharing among stakeholders, key local actors, and organizations with capacity and expertise on sustainable development projects.

In order to contribute to the process of localizing the SDGs in the Andean region, on May 5th the Andean chapter of the SDSN (SDSN Andes) held a high-level meeting of SDSN member organization’s representatives and special guests. The event took place at the Secretariat of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), located in Quito, Ecuador. The meeting convened over 40 people from 23 different organizations, encompassing academia, civil society, youth groups, government, and international organizations, and coming from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru (Figure 1).

The aims of the event were:

- Take stock of the implementation of 2030 Agenda in the region.
- Share experiences and information on current solution initiatives among participant organizations.
- Discuss some of the challenges to advance the local implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.
- Share ideas on how the SDSN Andes may contribute to overcoming some of the identified challenges.
- Promote trust and partnership among participants.

1 See the detailed list of participants here.
2. Agenda Overview

To accomplish the aforementioned goals the event involved:

- A pre-survey to participants to assess which topics to focus on during the event.

- Opening keynotes given by UNDP Resident Coordinator in Ecuador Arnaud Peral (ex UNDP Country Director of Colombia), Ecuador’s Minister of Social Development Gabriela Rosero, WWF Amazon Coordinator Tarsicio Granizo (now Ecuador’s Minister of Environment), University of La Plata’s Research Secretary Javier Surasky, and the Director of Ecuador’s National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) David Vera.

- A series of speed talks (5 minutes presentations) given by organizations’ representatives about their current initiatives.

- Thematic work group sessions seeking to identify possible solutions to the challenges of implementing and monitoring the SDGs in the region, with the summary of each session shared in the plenary.
The dialogue had the 2030 Agenda as the general framework, yet discussions were focused on two themes (these being topics highlighted in the survey):

- Data for sustainable development
- Climate change and biodiversity conservation

Along these lines, presentations delved on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the global level (by Arnaud Peral, UNDP), regional level (by Javier Surasky, University of La Plata), and national level (by Gabriela Rosero, Ecuador’s Ministry of Social Development).

Regarding data for sustainable development, there were presentations on monitoring the SDGs at the national level (by David Vera, INEC), and at the subnational level through community engagement within country regions (by Juan José Herrera, Grupo FARO), the use of open data (by Andrea Vivero, LINQ), and data reconciliation initiatives with the private sector (by Camilo Gamba, CEPEI).

Regarding climate change and biodiversity conservation, the presentations focused on the vulnerability of the Amazon rainforest to climate change (by Tarsicio Granizo, WWF), community-based management of natural resources and biodiversity protection (by María José Valdivia, AMPA), sustainability as value-added for businesses (by Manuel Guzmán, KLN), and the prospect of developing a bioeconomy (by Daniel Ortega, ESPOL).

After an intense exchange of ideas, the following challenges and opportunities were identified.

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2 See the event’s agenda [here](#).
3. Regional Challenges

Some of the main challenges for implementing and monitoring the SDGs in the Andean region are:

- **Dialogue and trust-building**: The need to create and maintain spaces for multi-stakeholder, multi-sectorial, and multi-organizational open dialogue, building trust and allowing for the sharing of ideas and initiatives in order to identify collaboration opportunities.

- **Dissemination, appropriation and consolidation**: The need to propel the momentum forward on the 2030 Agenda forward, promoting the local appropriation of the Agenda and adoption of the SDGs.

- **Monitoring capacity**: The need to aid governments’ statistical capacity for monitoring SDGs indicators.

- **Policy coherence**: The need to promote policy coherence at different levels of policy-making, with regards to the SDGs.

3.1 Dialogue and trust-building

While national governments are primarily responsible for implementing the 2030 Agenda, success will require other actors such as academia, civil society, community organizations, youth groups, and the private sector, to join forces for achieving the SDGs. Such multi-stakeholder, multi-sectorial (as well as inter-sectorial), and multi-organizational partnerships will need greater and continuous dialogue between organizations; an open and action-oriented discussion that promotes trust and collaboration, and reduces isolated work and the duplication of efforts.

The need to build trust between organizations and different sectors of society was emphasized throughout the event. Given that the sense of competition...
for resources can be one of the main threats to trust and the generation of effective and necessary partnerships, in these spaces of dialogue it is important to promote the understanding that implementing and monitoring the SDGs is incompatible with working in “silos”, and that partnership can strengthen multi-organizational work groups, allowing for more ambitious results and consequently for new and greater funding opportunities.

3.2. Dissemination, appropriation and consolidation

More needs to be done to disseminate the 2030 Agenda and the benefits of its implementation in the Andean region. Some organizations and local authorities do not consider the 2030 Agenda to be relevant to them, because they see it as a global commitment applicable only at the national level. Also, some perceive it as being too broad (due to the number of goals and targets). This has deep implications on their appropriation of the Agenda. It is fundamental to let local actors to understand that the Agenda is a tool for action in their territories in order to make progress towards particularly relevant SDGs.

In addition, many countries in the region are facing, or are about to face, changing political situations. For example Ecuador has begun a new presidential period (May 2017), legislative elections will be held in Argentina on October 2017, Chile will soon face general elections (November 2017), as will Colombia next year (October 2018), and there will be elections for local authorities in Peru (October 2018). In this scenario is important to consolidate the commitment of new government officials to the 2030 Agenda.

3.3. Monitoring capacity

“It is impossible for National Statistical Offices to effectively monitor all SDGs without partnerships with the academia and the private sector”

David Vera
Ecuador’s National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC)

Many governments in the Andean region are adapting SDGs indicators to their national contexts. A good example of this is the work being done by Ecuador’s INEC in its Statistical Development Plan for Reporting on SDG Indicators. However, this efforts recognize that National Statistical Offices have capacity limitations, and that the effective monitoring of many indicators will require
expanding that capacity as well as identifying (in specific cases) alternative indicators to the ones proposed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDGs Indicators (IAEG-SDGs).

3.4. Policy coherence

Governments and other stakeholders have several plans and commitments related to national and international agendas. Under such scenario, the 2030 Agenda is often seen as yet another commitment, rather than as an "umbrella" that encompasses many commitments and connects the work of different institutions thus contributing to the achievement of particular plans and goals. It is important to promote the latter view and to try to ensure that actions taken at different levels of government remain consistent among them and with the SDGs (particularly in terms of climate change action and biodiversity protection).

"For our region the 2030 Agenda is an opportunity.
To effectively define and assess public policy we need to be capable to make accurate and comprehensive diagnoses of our reality"

Gabriela Rosero
Ecuador’s Minister of Social Development

4. Opportunities

The aforementioned challenges bring a number of corresponding opportunities for the SDSN Andes to foster the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in the region, such as:

- **Dialogue and crowdsourcing initiatives:** Create scenarios for and facilitate multi-organizational dialogue, either through events like this one and/or through online platforms, which may also be used for sharing information, ideas, and crowdsource initiatives.

- **Joint advocacy:** Lead advocacy campaigns in the countries of the Andean region, promoting the alignment of national and local development plans with the 2030 Agenda.

- **Work groups for specific solution initiatives:** Support the capacities of member organizations through focused multi-organizational partnerships to work on data and resources management.
4.1. Dialogue and crowdsourcing initiatives

The SDSN Andes Secretariat can play an important role in creating opportunities for and facilitating multi-organizational dialogue. This can be done through events like this one, where SDSN member organizations and key actors in the region get together to have open discussions on the challenges faced and on what can be done, as a network, to overcome them. This dialogue can also take place through online platforms, which may be used for sharing information, ideas, and for crowdsourcing initiatives, all of which contribute to the local appropriation of the Agenda. Combined with a mapping of the scope and focus of SDSN member organizations in the region, this may also allow for the identification of opportunities of collaboration.

Crowdsourcing initiatives can be promoted among SDSN member organizations, and secondly among the general public. On the latter, it is perhaps worth mentioning examples such as MyWorld Survey, used to know citizens’ priorities across the world, and Ideas for Bogotá in which inhabitants were asked for innovative ideas for the city in the context of mayoral elections.

“The youth is an important actor and one ready to help devise solutions and take action”

Nicolás Serrano
SDSN Youth coordinator for the Andean region

4.2. Joint advocacy

A key incentive for organizations to become SDSN members is to have opportunities that they would not otherwise have on their own. For example, advocacy strategies are more effective when they involve several organizations rather than one, or just a few.

With this in mind, the SDSN Andes can lead advocacy campaigns in countries of the Andean region, promoting the alignment of national and local development plans with the 2030 Agenda. Considering the aforementioned political scenario (see section 3.2), advocacy for the SDGs is crucial to propel the momentum of the 2030 Agenda forward and to ensure the commitment of governments in the region to its implementation.

4.3. Work groups for specific solution initiatives

Another incentive for organizations to become actively involved in the SDSN is
the opportunity to strengthen their work. In this sense, the SDSN Andes Secretariat can support member organizations by promoting partnerships among organizations in a way that complements them and creates synergies. Such multi-organizational work groups may also bring opportunities to access to new financial resources together (rather than competing for traditional ones). The work of the SDSN Andes Secretariat in aiding fundraising efforts is key in this regard. To the extent that work groups materialize and brings concrete results, trust in the network and in multi-organizational collaboration will be built.

Taking into account the themes which this event focused on, possible multi-organizational work groups are:

A. Data work groups to support the capacity of National Statistical Offices to monitor SDGs indicators at the national level, as well as to promote innovative initiatives to monitor the SDGs at the subnational level. Some considerations for the creation of such work groups are:

- Many SDSN members in the Andean region are leading initiatives oriented towards data for sustainable development, and Colombia is the South American representative at the IAEG-SDGs.

- The SDSN and SDSN Youth are members of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. One of the commitments of both organizations with the Global Partnership is to create thematic groups on data and information systems. The SDSN Andes could join their efforts for the Andean region.

B. Resources management work groups to develop conservation strategies and promote management policies that are coherent with the SDGs. Some considerations for such work groups are:

- Resource management is at the center of many development plans of countries in the Andean region, and there are several political frameworks that can be used to support initiatives for the sustainable management of resources (e.g. the rights of nature recognized by the Ecuadorian Constitution).

- There are a number of organizations, across sectors, leading initiatives on the sustainable management of resources (e.g. for water).
5. Lines of Action

In order to address some of the aforementioned challenges and opportunities, and considering the current work of participant organizations, the following initiatives were conceived:

- **SDSN Andes platform for solution initiatives**: The creation of an online “area” to share ideas, projects under planning and/or under development, along with a list of the technical, human, and financial requirements to materialize them. This, in order to promote multi-organizational dialogue, crowdsourcing initiatives, and allowing organizations to identify opportunities for collaboration.

- **SDSN Andes advocacy for the SDGs**: The development of joint statements to be presented to governments in the Andean region, advocating for the mainstreaming of SDGs in public plans and policies, along with the need to conceive pathways to achieve them, and also stating the capacity and willingness of SDSN members to collaborate in such endeavor.

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- **Work group for environmental flow assessment and policy**: The collaboration with IKIAM, ESPOL, and INABIO in the materialization of their initiative to advocate for the regulation of environmental flows and aid national institutions in Ecuador in its assessment.

- **SDSN Andes 2018 meeting**: The development of another event, in 2018, to localize the SDGs in the Andean region, where progress on the above activities will be assessed, and new lines of action will be set, accordingly.

In order to maintain and build on the conversation, as well as to continue developing trust and partnership among organizations, the SDSN Andes will develop a space on its website (within the members and partners area) where organizations will be able to share solution initiatives for the Andean region, ranging from ideas of possible projects, projects in a planning phase, and ongoing projects. Within each, organizations will be able to list the series of technical, human, and financial needs in order to materialize such projects. This compendium of information will allow other organizations to identify opportunities for collaboration and will guide the work of the SDSN.
Andes Secretariat in the ways in which it can support member organizations and promote multi-organizational projects.

**Current initiative leader:** SDSN Andes Secretariat  
**KPI:** Platform (first version) created by September 30th, 2017

### 5.2. SDSN Andes advocacy for the SDGs

In the aforementioned political context (see section 3.2), the Andean network will advocate for the mainstreaming of the SDGs in public planning and policy making, at different levels of government, and for working on pathways to achieve them. A first statement will be presented to the newly appointed Government of Ecuador. The statement’s objective will be twofold: First, it will promote an integration between the National Development Plan ("National Plan for Good Living") and the 2030 Agenda, by highlighting the connections between the SDGs and the country’s “Good Living” framework ("Buen Vivir" in Spanish, "Sumak Kawsay" in Kichwa) recognized by the Ecuadorian Constitution and adopted by the government as its guiding principle. Second, the document will state the capacity and willingness of the SDSN Andes and its member organizations to support the achievement of the SDGs, and consequently to contribute to the National Development Plan. Building on this experience, similar documents will be presented to elected officials (and/or main candidates in coming elections) in other countries of the Andean region.

- **Current initiative leaders:** SDSN Andes Secretariat, ESPOL, FFLA and Grupo Faro (first statement).  
  **KPI:** First statement delivered by September 30th, 2017. Dates and leaders for following statements to be defined by November 30th, 2017.

### 5.3. Work groups to support monitoring the SDGs at the national level

The INEC has finished a diagnosis of its statistical capacity for reporting on SDGs indicators. Indicators have been categorized as Tier I (measurable with current statistical capacity), Tier II (partially measurable, requiring the strengthening of statistical capacity), and Tier III (non-measurable, requiring alternatives). Out of the list of proposed SDGs indicators presented by the IAEG-SDGs, 34% are Tier I, 38% are Tier II, and 24% are Tier III (with 4% being non-applicable). The SDSN Andes Secretariat will mobilize academic institutions to try to generate work groups that will address Tier II and III indicators through specific projects. Building on this experience, similar efforts will be developed in other countries of the Andean region.

- **Current initiative leader:** SDSN Andes Secretariat (in coordination with the INEC)  
  **KPI:** Assessment of possible working groups finished and fundraising proposals drafted by November 30th, 2017. Communication with National Statistical Offices in other countries of the Andean region by December 31st, 2017.
5.4. Work group to support monitoring the SDGs at the subnational level

The Grupo FARO and the FFLA, with the support of the European Union, have launched a three year project to create participatory platforms and citizen observatories to advance the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in Ecuador, at the subnational level. The project encompasses five Ecuadorian Provinces (Azuay, Galápagos, Manabí, Napo and Santo Domingo). The SDSN Andes Secretariat will explore the possibility to extend this initiative to other provinces of Ecuador, as well as to Colombia, in view that this initiative shows potential synergies with a binational biodiversity conservation initiative to be launched by other SDSN Andes members in the following months.

Current initiative leaders: SDSN Andes Secretariat, FFLA, Grupo Faro, Randi Randi Corporation Group.

KPI: Project concept note finished and fundraising proposal drafted by April 30th, 2018 (when both independent projects are to be running).

5.5. Work group for environmental flow assessments and policy

The Ecuadorian Constitution recognizes the rights of nature, as well as water as a human right. It also states that energy sovereignty shall not be attained to the detriment of food sovereignty. While in the last decade the country has strived to achieve energy sovereignty by tapping into some of its water resources for the development of hydropower, less attention has been given to water as a key resource for the integrity ecosystems and communities. In that view, three SDSN member organizations (two universities: IKIAM and ESPOL; and Ecuador’s public research Institute for biodiversity: INABIO) are keen on starting a project to advocate for the regulation of environmental flows and to support the capacity of national institutions (such as the National Secretary of Water: SENAGUA) to measure such flows; thus working to ensure the aforementioned constitutional principles. The SDSN Andes Secretariat will collaborate with these organizations in the conception of their project.

Current initiative leaders: IKIAM, ESPOL, INABIO with the collaboration of the SDSN Andes Secretariat

KPI: Project concept note finished and fundraising proposal drafted by December 31st, 2017

5.6. SDSN Andes 2018 meeting

Finally, the SDSN Andes Secretariat will commit efforts to hold another meeting in spring 2018 to localize the SDGs in the Andean region, assess the progress and results of the actions laid down in this document, and to define new lines of action (as needed). Recognizing that these first initiatives have involved mainly Ecuadorian organizations, which clearly is a reflection of larger participation from this country (see Figure 1), the next event will be developed in another country of the Andean region (tentatively Argentina).
**Current initiative leader:** SDSN Andes Secretariat

**KPI:** Event concept note finished and fundraising proposal drafted by September 30th, 2017

These initiatives constitute the lines of action of the SDSN Andes Secretariat for the coming months. For an overview of these and their connection with the identified opportunities and challenges, see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Connection between challenges, opportunities, and lines of actions
Arrows show how actions reflect on opportunities, which in turn answer to identified challenges

For further details on this event and its conclusions visit [www.unsdsn-andes.org](http://www.unsdsn-andes.org) or write us to [info@unsdsn-andes.org](mailto:info@unsdsn-andes.org)
Acknowledgements:

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