

Where do we want to go?

EU for Talanao

Ligia Noronha,

UN Environment

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- The answer to ‘where do we want to go’ is to a large extent technically defined in the Paris Agreement in terms of the longer term temperature targets of well below 2 degrees with efforts to limit warming to 1.5. More existentially, however the answer is towards a shared future for all of us that is climate safe, resilient, just, healthy and prosperous. A world that we can as responsible parents leave to our children and grandchildren. A world that as responsible citizens and leaders of today we can leave for tomorrow but also have today for the growing number of young people who are all striving for a “good life”.
- The world’s present development path is neither ecologically sustainable, nor equitable; The current gap of 11-13 gigatonnes to keep temperatures below 2 degrees is about a quarter of global emissions. And around 1.1 billion people still have no access to energy; a quarter just in India. fracture lines persist as evident in overconsumption by some and underconsumption by others, for example, in food, energy use, and mobility. Impacts of climate change may push people back into poverty and increased human insecurity. Conflict may worsen due to displacement and resource shortages induced by climate change.
- The future however while uncertain, is also one of opportunity. Not only do the concerns over climate and inequality push for new ways to live differently, but also the changes in business models, the emergence of new technologies, force us to think beyond ourselves and our immediacy and engage in collective action. Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement provide us with goals that would enable a world that is prosperous, climate safe, and just; where adaptive capacity is enhanced, resilience is strengthened, and vulnerability reduced.
- Inclusive green economies, we believe, are the economic paradigm, that can help further the achievements of these goals, based on renewable energy, energy and resource efficiency improvements, sustainable consumption, circularity and just transitions. A safer, pollution-free world achieved through sustainable lifestyles and gender equality needs to be the global social norm. Natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystems can no longer be ‘by the way’ or their use considered as “external costs”. Instead, they need to be recognized as central values driving our measures of health, wealth and well-being.
- Going green however, is not enough. Economies have to be centred on values and rights and justice. Transitions have to be just. Humanitarian-development concerns need to become centre stage. We need an understanding of the winners and losers in the transition, a strong attempt to provide social safety nets and floors is a must if the future we want to go towards is to be a humane one. In my own country, India, more than a million people make a living in the coal sector, and while a transition out of coal to sustainable energy is a must over time, for

climate and pollution reasons, it will only succeed if new opportunities and skill sets are developed for those that “lose” in the transition. Social learning, for example, needs to be facilitated to understand the implications of new technologies that may be used to increase the deployment and scale of climate actions; more sustainable lifestyles and education are a must to scale up, but also to allow space for the poor and the disadvantaged to prosper. The potential of greater decentralization of new energy systems with many more suppliers means that not only can we have more control over choices at the consumer and producer level, the emergence of the ‘prosumer’, but also globally, the potential of more positive sum geopolitics.

- Integrated and system wide actions and innovations are key to this future.
 - The Three Ds - decarbonising, decoupling and detoxifying – taken together can be powerful levers to ramp up actions towards that world – through system wide approaches, strategic policy and market instruments, sustainable urban and energy infrastructures and a deep commitment to innovation to enable the deployment of these integrated actions at scale. This is what UN Environment is focusing on now to bring work to scale. Sustainable consumption and production is integral to this future we want, Sustainable Development Goal 12; it is key to transform economies to a pollution free planet and the focus of attention both in UNEA 3 but now is also part of the theme for the Fourth UN Environmental Assembly in 2019 on “Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges and Sustainable Consumption & Production” The International Resource Panel indicates that investments in resource efficiency represent one of the least-cost approaches to meeting the sustainable development goals and the Paris Climate Agreement. The economic benefits from decoupling technologies could provide, globally, resource savings of 2.9 to 3.7 trillion US dollars each year by 2030. By 2050, policies to improve resource efficiency and tackle climate change could reduce global resource use by up to 28% globally; cut global greenhouse gas emissions by 74% and increase global economic activity by 6% by 2050.

We need enhanced ambition today for this world. Without enhanced ambition the carbon dioxide budget for the 2oC scenario will be close to depleted by 2030, and the 1.5oC budget well exceeded. Can we bridge the emissions gap in 2030? The short answer is “yes, we can”. If we act now and at scale. The emissions reduction potential in six key sectors, -solar and wind, energy efficient appliances and cars; reforestation and reduced deforestation -, is sufficient to close the emissions gap in 2030, if implemented immediately and at scale. But this requires "everybody to do everything as fast as possible". This is possible if leaders emphasize greater collective action, multilateral, transregional, and multi-actor responses, more dedicated research and greater financing to enable action.

- But achieving this ambition needs a change in the rules of the game: It requires more financing, greater capacity building, technology sharing, changes in rules that regulate trade to enable a greater resilience of the global economic system through market access, and access to clean technologies as both preventive and disaster responsive measures, and greater international collective action. Our work with UN Environment Finance Inquiry to change finance flows and align them with sustainable development, the work with the World Trade Organization to make

trade work for the environment, resilience and prosperity; the Climate Technology Centre and Network that we host to share and transfer climate technologies are some of the ways we seek to work within the rules but also to help change them.

- This new world needs strong leadership: Financial, business, political, non state, and local authorities
 - Financial: where we want to go needs trillions of dollars of investment and champions to bridge it. While some change is happening, much more is required by way of leadership in this space. In the lead-up to Conference of Parties 21, UN Environment Finance Initiative co-launched the *Portfolio Decarbonisation Coalition* with a goal of mobilising investors to commit, in aggregate, to decarbonising \$100 billion of their investment portfolios. We surpassed the target and this coalition has now grown to \$800 billion of assets under management committed to decarbonisation.
 - Business leadership is crucial. RE100 has estimated, for example, that if 1,000 of the world's most influential businesses become 100% powered by renewables, they would decarbonize almost a tenth of all electricity used worldwide and cut more than 1,000 million tonnes of Carbon dioxide every year – 3.4% of global emissions. This is possible, but needs commitment
 - Political: The Group of 7 Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities, is very welcome in this context. Group of 20 members are on a likely track to meet the middle range of their Cancun 2020 pledges, but there are differences between countries and the pledges. The 2019 Climate Summit led by the UN Secretary-General, aims to increase the ambition. It will work on 6 transformative areas to achieve its goal: energy and industry transitions, climate finance and carbon pricing, resilience, nature based solutions and cities and local actions.
 - Non state actors are key to the transition to a climate safe world: The number of non-state commitments and actions continue to increase. The UN Climate Secretariat Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action platform currently records over 12,500 climate commitments, mostly from individual cities, regions and companies, but also from investors, civil society organisations, and cooperative initiative. The Global Climate Action Summit in California in September will provide a unique opportunity to showcase these efforts.
 - Cities are critical in this transformation as they are sites of agglomeration benefits that drive innovation, job creation and business development, and as such are uniquely placed to create solutions for sustainability, efficiency, and equity. Cities present opportunities for addressing both risks and resilience in a transformative way, as they allow integration across sectors, jurisdictional levels and different actors.
- To conclude: we want to go Towards a shared future for all of us that is climate safe, resilient, just and prosperous. Collectively we can do this. May the deliberations here today and for the rest of this year chart and facilitate a path towards that future.