

The new Post-2015 Zero Draft: Why the silence on sustainable energy for all?

ACCESS response to *Transforming our world by 2030: a new agenda for global action – Zero draft for the outcome document for the post-2015 development agenda*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Energy SDG 7 has a potentially transformative, global reach due to its promotion of environmental and social co-benefits – *without sustainable energy for all there can be no sustainable development for all.*
- This almost total omission of reference to sustainable energy in the declaration is concerning and should be addressed.
- Concrete ways this could be done include:
 1. *Point 2 in the Preamble:* include reference to “universal access to energy” as a basic service, as well as in para 15.
 2. *Para 27:* include language recognising that a sustainable energy shift is critical to action on climate change in the paragraph relating to UNFCCC COP21 (para 27). For instance, “Transforming our energy systems is an essential building block of climate protection, as well as reducing energy poverty”.
 3. *Paras 30-37 on Implementation:* mention the need to support low-carbon development paths through adequate and appropriate financing, technology transfer and capacity building for poorer countries so they can decarbonise existing energy systems or leap-frog to cleaner energy systems. There should also be a reference to rebalancing the current bias in public subsidies away from polluting fossil fuels towards renewable energy and energy efficiency.

ACCESS members:

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Green Africa Foundation (Kenya)
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The release of the Zero Draft moves us a step closer to agreement of the Post-2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We welcome Member States' commitment to a universal Agenda that addresses the three dimensions of sustainable development in an integrated way. To be truly transformational, the new Agenda should be people-centred, focus on the development needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people to ensure that *no one is left behind*, and integrate social and environmental objectives, in particular maximizing co-benefits.

Energy SDG 7 on “access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all” is one of the goal areas where such social and environmental co-benefits can be achieved. The SDG discussions have recognised that access to sustainable energy is crucial for many areas of poverty reduction and development as well as for addressing climate change. Billions of people worldwide still do not have access to electricity or clean cooking solutions – and progress to end energy poverty remains worryingly slow. At the same time, shifting to more sustainable and efficient energy systems globally is crucial for preventing climate change – the most serious threat to future poverty eradication – as well as eliminating the negative health impacts from outdoor and indoor air pollution.

We welcome the fact that Energy SDG 7 integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development with three targets on ending energy poverty and ramping up action on renewables and energy efficiency – although we think the renewables and energy efficiency targets need strengthening to incentivise sufficient action by 2030 to prevent dangerous global warming. All 3 targets must also have indicators that are robust and fit for purpose to “measure what matters” and track progress through clear milestones.

The Energy SDG has a potentially transformative and global reach – in fact, *without sustainable energy for all there can be no sustainable development for all*. This makes the almost total silence on sustainable energy in the declaration baffling. It is not included as one of the 9 headline points for the Agenda in the preamble. There is no standalone paragraph on the need for sustainable energy access for both poverty reduction and climate protection. In fact “modern energy” is only mentioned briefly in relation to growth (para.24) and energy efficiency in the context of sustainable cities (para 26).

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