



Special Session 4

Collaborative futures: strategic foresight for sustainable development in a world of crisis

Wednesday, 06 March 2024, 4:15–5:45 p.m. Beirut Time

Background and objective

Three interconnected crises—climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution—are putting our economic and social well-being at risk, while undermining opportunities to reduce poverty, and improve lives and livelihoods. Furthermore, they also risk irreversibly changing our relationship with the natural world. These crises are primarily linked to unsustainable patterns of consumption and production.

In the face of the ever-growing challenges posed by the triple planetary crisis and guided by the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change, the imperative for strategic foresight and futures-thinking becomes apparent. Emphasizing real-time monitoring of emerging signals of change, this approach is essential for navigating current uncertainties and disruptions.

The aim of this session is to create a discussion among various stakeholders in the Arab region about strategic foresight and horizon scanning, and to explore proposed solutions that contribute to its institutional implementation. This discussion aims not only to foster a proactive stance, but also to guide the Arab region towards addressing future challenges in order to achieve sustainable development goals, especially those related to the environment, which are centrally important in achieving all goals, particularly in the face of the continued crises and challenges facing our Arab region.

Questions to be addressed

- In what ways can strategic foresight and futures-thinking empower the Arab region to overcome challenges and accelerate progress towards the SDGs?
- How can strategic foresight effectively guide decision-making in times of the triple planetary crisis? And what tools and methodologies are crucial for real-time monitoring of emerging signals of change, and how do they inform strategic planning?
- How can institutions integrate and institutionalize strategic foresight and horizon scanning for sustained impact?
- What actionable pathways can be identified through strategic foresight to ensure sustainable and resilient responses to the challenges posed by the triple planetary crisis?
- How can the energy, innovation, and perspectives of youth be strategically harnessed to drive sustainable development, foster resilience, and actively contribute to the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change, ensuring enduring solutions for long-term prosperity?

Moderator

Mr. Abdelmenam Mohamed - Regional Coordinator for Science-policy, UNEP Regional Office for West Asia

Introductory Remarks

Mr. Mounir Tabet - Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCWA

Guest Speaker

Ms. Paula Narváez, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, and President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

Panelists

Mr. Steven Kenney, Director, MEI Strategic Foresight Initiative

Dr. Layla Al-Musawi, Program Manager, Scientific Culture Directorate, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS)

Eng. Moutaz Al Riyami, Gas Director, Petroleum Development Oman (PDO)

Ms. Nourhan Badr El-Din, Youth Futures Senior Fellow, UNICEF innocent, global office of research and foresight

This Special Session will be organized as a hybrid event. To participate over Zoom, please [register here](#).

Those physically present at the UN House can attend the session in MZ meeting room, MZ floor.