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## SDGs for All - April 2018 In Retrospect

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India Debates Govt. Plan to Ensure Everyone Access to Water by Interlinking Rivers,  
Agroecology Key Element to Zero Hunger and Food Security, and Much More

## Kazakhstan Sets the Ball Rolling for the Landmark Interfaith Congress in Astana



By J Nastranis

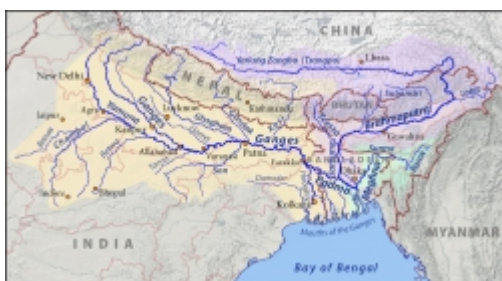
UNITED NATIONS (IDN) – "The holy scriptures of the Koran, Bible, Torah, the Bhagwad Geeta or the Lotus Sutra" underline "the vital importance to unite the efforts of political and religious leaders for the cause of security and stability across our planet," said Kazakhstan's Vice-Minister

for Religious Affairs and Civil Society, Berik Aryn, in a keynote address at an event organized by the Kazakh Permanent Mission to the UN in partnership with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC).

He was speaking on behalf of Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Head of the Secretariat of the *Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions*, Kazakhstan's interfaith initiative launched in 2003.

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## India Debates Govt. Plan to Ensure Everyone Access to Water by Interlinking Rivers



By Sudha Ramachandran

BANGALORE (IDN) – As another scorching summer threatened to grip India and rivers began running dry, a hectic debate ensued about the government's Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) program to solve the country's water problems.

Drawing attention to the water shortage and unequal distribution of water in the

country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a strong champion of the program, recently pointed out that while some rivers are in spate others are running dry. "If there is inter-linking [of rivers], the [problem can be solved](#)," he said.

There are stark differences in the per capita availability of water in India's river basins. According to a 2015 National Water Mission report, the average per capita availability of water in 2010 in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna system was 20,136 cubic meters compared to just [263 cubic meters in the Sabarmati basin](#). (P02) [HINDI](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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## The Menace of Land Degradation Threatens 3.2 Billion People

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By J C Suresh

TORNONTO | MEDELLIN, Colombia (IDN) – Deteriorating land degradation caused by human activities is menacing the well-being of the world's 3.2 billion people, driving

species to extinction, escalating climate change, triggering mass human migration and whetting conflict, according to an evidence-based assessment of land degradation and restoration.

The perils of land degradation, which cost the equivalent of about 10 percent of the global annual gross product in 2010 through the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, are spelt out for policymakers in the report produced by the 129-member [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#).

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## Africa Sends a Strong Message for Global Climate Negotiations

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By Rita Joshi

BONN | NAIROBI (IDN) – Africa has generated a distinct message for the next round of international climate negotiations in Poland from December 3 to 14, 2018, which

states: Action on climate change and sustainable development together is the way forward for Africa.

This top-line message emerged from deliberations during the [Africa Climate Week](#) in Nairobi. Some 800 delegates from 59 countries, including ministers and other high-level government and international officials, together with non-state delegates, offered their insights into the challenges and possible responses to climate change, and "harvested" those insights for consideration in the official international climate negotiation process.

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## ACP Facility Helps Fight Energy Hunger in Southern Africa

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By Jeffrey Moyo

MWENEZI (IDN) – Sixty-seven-year old Sarudzai Msipa heavily blows air in and out of her mouth, seated in the open-air on a goat skin mat outside her hut as she battles to revive a dying fire on her cooking place set up in the middle of her yard at her



remote home in Mwenezi district in Zimbabwe's Masvingo Province.

Just three sticks are in the fire to keep it alive and there is no sign of leftover firewood nearby. To Msipa, this means times are tough for her and many other villagers as the energy hunger takes a knock on them in this part of Southern Africa.

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## Africa Grapples With Financing Climate Change Programmes

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By Justus Wanzala

NAIROBI (ACP-IDN) – African countries are faced with the huge challenge of funding climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes to ensure sustainable development. Hard hit by the impacts of climate change manifested in persistent droughts, floods, storms, rising sea levels

and other forms of disasters, they are linking actions on tackling climate change as key to attainment of [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

A joint project of the 79-nation African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States is providing support for the purpose as part of a joint project with the Global Climate Change Alliance+ (GCCA) by way of offering [technical assistance](#), promoting [knowledge sharing](#), initiating [regional dialogue](#), and facilitating [regional partnership](#) on climate change issues.

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## Wanted Urgent Action on Energy to Achieve Global Goals

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By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – About one billion people around the world live without electricity. Close to three billion lack access to clean cooking solutions and are exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution, which

results in millions of deaths each year, mostly among women and children.

Against this disquieting backdrop, a new publication supported by the [UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(DESA\)](#) has called for urgent action. Without such action, the world will fall short of its 2030 energy targets and, consequently, fail to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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## 800 Million People Face Dire Prospects Despite Upturn in Global Economy - UN Report

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By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – The United Nations in a major report has warned that the prospects of about 800 million of the world's

poorest people remain dire. Though the global economy is experiencing a moderate upturn, and momentum around sustainable investing is growing, the vast majority of investment is still short-term oriented and commitments by the international community to create sustainable economies are not being met.

The report [Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects](#) finds an increasing interest in socially responsible investing, but that is no substitute for a broader transformation in the financial system, it states, adding that the current system rewards investors, financiers and project managers that prioritize short-term profits.

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## Costa Rica Advised To Make Growth More Inclusive

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By Robert Johnson

PARIS (IDN) – Costa Rica, renowned for its ecological footprint, forest protection and abundant biodiversity, has made impressive economic and social progress in recent years, with robust economic growth facilitating near-universal access to education, health care and pensions.

But the Central American country is faced with a fundamental challenge: its fiscal imbalance, which continues to remain the major threat to the country's economic stability, growth and living standards, says a new report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

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## Forward To a New Vision for the ACP Group

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By Andrew Holness

*Prime Minister Andrew Holness of Jamaica delivered a strong message on ACP solidarity in preparation for new relations with the EU when he addressed the Committee of Ambassadors of the 79-member African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States in Brussels on 16 April*

*2018. Following are extensive excerpts from his remarks, which are of particular importance as the Cotonou Agreement between the two blocs expires in February 2020 and talks for a follow-up accord are set to begin in August this year. – The Editor.*

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## UN Agency Adopts Climate Change Strategy for Shipping

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By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – More than 100 member states of the United Nations International Maritime Organization (IMO) have adopted an initial strategy to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping and, as a matter of urgency, phasing them out.

The plan adopted by IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) during its 72nd session at the organization's headquarters in London on April 13, includes a specific reference to "a pathway of CO2 emissions reduction consistent with the [Paris Agreement](#) temperature goals".

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## Donors Spend Less on Refugees, More on Poorest Countries



By Rita Joshi

PARIS (IDN) – Foreign aid from 30 opulent nations, designated as "official donors", totalled USD 146.6 billion in 2017, signifying a small decrease of 0.6% from the previous year in real terms because they spent less money on refugees hosted by them. But countries most in need of aid received more

funds.

Aid, formally labelled as Official Development Assistance (ODA), constitutes over two thirds of external finance for least-developed countries. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the [OECD](#), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is pushing for ODA to be better used as a lever to generate private investment and domestic tax revenue in poor countries to help achieve the UN [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

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## ACP Group Looks Forward To Becoming 'Effective Global Player'



By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN | BRUSSELS (IDN) – While preparing for talks on future relations with the European Union (EU) after the Cotonou Agreement expires in February 2020, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States ([ACP](#)) is engaged in concerted

efforts to reshape itself into "an effective global player" serving as a catalyst and an advocate for defending, protecting and advancing multilateralism, within the overarching framework of the UN [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) including 17 Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

An important factor for this objective to be achieved, as the ACP Secretary-General, Dr. Patrick I Gomes, told IDN's 'UN Insider', is the Revision of the [Georgetown Agreement](#) named after the capital of Guyana, where it was signed in 1975. The Revision would allow the ACP Group to deepen and widen its foundations.

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## Agroecology Key Element to Zero Hunger and Food Security



By Jaya Ramachandran

ROME (IDN) – More than enough food is produced in the world to feed everyone, yet 815 million people go hungry, according to [FAO](#), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. How to ensure that a growing global population – projected to rise to around 10 billion by 2050 – will have enough food to meet their nutritional needs,

is therefore one of the greatest challenges the world faces. Experts see in agroecology a solution.

Agroecology, they say, can help transition to sustainable food and agriculture systems that ensure food security and nutrition for all, provide social and economic equity and conserve biodiversity and the ecosystem services on which agriculture depends. (P01) [GERMAN](#) | [INDONESIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT](#)  
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