

STATEMENT FOR

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE 4

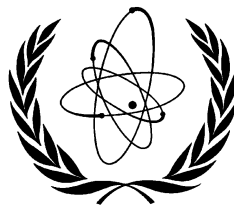
**PROTECTING OUR PLANET AND COMBATTING
CLIMATE CHANGE**

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 2015

YUKIYA AMANO

DIRECTOR GENERAL



INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Protecting the environment and combatting climate change are among the most important challenges facing us today. Meeting these challenges is essential if the sustainable development goals that world leaders have just adopted are to be achieved.

Energy is indispensable for development. Enormous increases in energy supply will be required over the next few decades to support economic development and to lift some 2.6 billion people out of energy poverty.

Many countries believe nuclear power can help them to address the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies while curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Nuclear power is one of the lowest-carbon technologies available to generate electricity, and it can play a significant role in mitigating climate change.

Some 30 countries are already using nuclear power and another 30 are considering, or preparing to build, their first nuclear power plants. Most of these possible newcomers are developing nations.

Nuclear power plants produce virtually no greenhouse gas emissions or air pollutants during their operation and only very low emissions over their entire life cycle.

Including nuclear power in the energy supply mix can also help alleviate concerns about volatile fuel prices and security of supply. Ample uranium resources are available from reliable sources spread all over the world and the cost of uranium is only a small fraction of the total cost of nuclear electricity.

It is the sovereign decision of each country whether or not to include nuclear power in its energy mix. The IAEA provides assistance and information to countries that wish to use nuclear power to help them do so safely, securely and sustainably.

The world must not only tackle the causes of climate change. The damage that climate change has already caused to the environment – and the threat it can pose to the livelihoods of communities in some areas - also needs to be addressed.

It is important that the contributions that nuclear science and technology can make to combating climate change are recognized.

In dealing with threats to the environment, governments need accurate data and skilled researchers who can devise accurate models to help predict future conditions. That way, governments can start implementing the appropriate strategies to protect the land, seas and oceans.

With specialist laboratories in Monaco and near Vienna, the IAEA helps countries to use nuclear techniques to monitor pressures on the environment.

We have launched international studies to address the effects of climate change on polar and mountainous regions.

We assist countries in developing new varieties of staple food crops such as rice and barley that are resistant to drought and other conditions. And we help countries and regions to use nuclear techniques to manage limited water resources.

A new IAEA Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre was established in Monaco in 2013 to serve as a platform for information sharing and international collaboration in combating ocean acidification.

The International Atomic Energy Agency will continue to work with our Member States and key international partners to ensure that nuclear science and technology help to protect our planet and meet the challenges of climate change.