



INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION
STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, MS JAN BEAGLE

Fourth Hongqiao International Economic Forum

5 November 2021

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

It is a pleasure to address the Fourth Hongqiao International Economic Forum on behalf of the International Development Law Organization, the only global intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law to advance peace and sustainable development.

The focus of this session on Green Development and Global Trade, against the backdrop of climate change, is both timely and important.

From droughts and forest fires to rising sea levels and flash floods, the devastating effects of a rapidly warming world are indisputable, and all around us.

By one estimate, climate change could drive as many as 132 million people into poverty by 2030.

Yet a wide gap remains between what the best available science tells us we need, and what States have committed to in their nationally determined contributions.

We are at a critical juncture.

Our choices and actions now will determine whether we continue hurtling towards a climate catastrophe, or whether we can mitigate the worst effects of climate change, and tackle its root causes, to realize green and sustainable development.

Faced with these dire challenges, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a set of common, universal objectives that can help us build more resilient societies.

The principles of justice and rule of law present throughout the Agenda, most prominently in Sustainable Development Goal 16, can be essential enablers for the full realization of SDG 13, on climate action.



In our Strategic Plan, IDLO champions the concept of “climate justice,” to enable transformative climate action, grounded in rule of law principles, to promote a more just, equitable and green form of sustainable development.

It is based on the understanding that the causes and effects of climate change, as well as the actions needed to address them, are closely linked to issues of justice.

I would like to share three insights from IDLO’s experience.

First, fair, effective and equitable laws and policies are essential for green development and global trade.

In particular, effective trade and investment frameworks can help promote green development, by facilitating access to climate-friendly technologies, supporting the transition to a low carbon economy, and incentivizing green investment, including in renewable energy and climate-resilient infrastructure.

Strong legal and policy frameworks can also unlock much-needed private investment in the green economy, while ensuring that such investment is responsive to the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

IDLO helps partners to improve their investment climate by strengthening laws and policies to attract and manage investment.

We supported, for example, the development of Kenya’s Climate Change Act of 2016, which is intended to strengthen the legal environment to improve investor confidence and attract private climate finance.

Second, Climate change disproportionately affects people living in conditions of vulnerability and marginalization who have contributed least to the problem.

Including them in decision-making can help reduce inequalities and promote a more sustainable model for green development.

People centred approaches like legal empowerment can enable people and communities to participate in climate action - giving those who are most affected, a voice in setting climate and biodiversity-related policies.

Inclusive policy making ensures that climate policies are informed by, and more responsive to, their needs.



IDLO works to support people whose lives and livelihoods are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including women and girls, indigenous peoples, local communities and climate migrants.

One model we have found effective at the grassroots level is that of the Cadres de Concertation in the Sahel.

These are consultation platforms, facilitated by IDLO, that bring together community leaders with local government officials to identify key challenges at the grassroots level and to jointly propose solutions.

This approach helps to empower people to play a role in solving their most pressing issues while building greater trust between government officials and the communities they serve.

Third, scaling up green development will require forging new partnerships between States, as well as with civil society, the private sector, youth and academia.

These multistakeholder coalitions can help ensure strong links between national and global action, and generate the political will, governance mechanisms, and resources needed for faster and more ambitious climate action.

Multilateral frameworks are essential to facilitate international cooperation and foster solidarity and coordinated action on climate change and related challenges.

IDLO will continue to advocate for bold multilateral action on climate change, grounded in rule of law principles, including at COP-26 in Glasgow.

We need to harness the transformative potential of the rule of law to address the intersecting effects of climate change in areas such as conflict and migration, food and nutrition, health, and gender equality.

There is tremendous scope for us to learn from one another how to best achieve our common objectives, by sharing experiences and expertise, and using this knowledge as a catalyst to promote the vision of a greener and more just world.

The Forum today offers a precious opportunity for such an exchange, and I hope we will have an interesting and fruitful discussion on these vital issues.