

# Synergy Solutions for a World in Crisis: Tackling Climate and SDG Action Together

REPORT ON STRENGTHENING THE EVIDENCE BASE

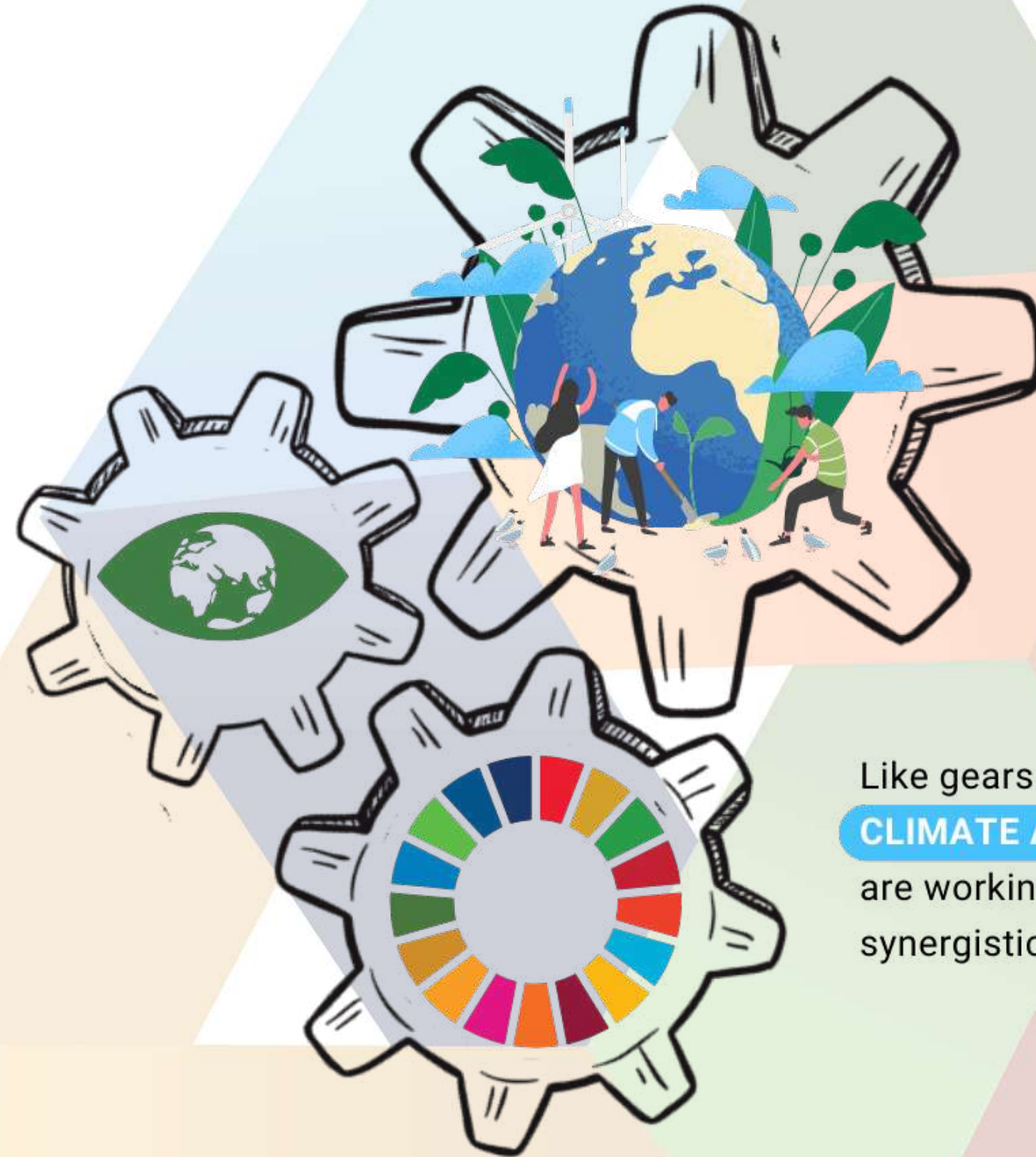
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December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023

# What is climate and SDG synergy?

**Definition:** Synergies occur when multiple actions combine to produce a result greater than their individual contributions.

In the context of climate change and SDGs, adopting a synergistic approach means addressing these challenges together, **amplifying the impact of policies** by addressing them jointly rather than in isolation.



Like gears in a well-oiled machine, **CLIMATE ACTION and the SDGs** are working together for synergistic, greater benefit

# Process towards the Report

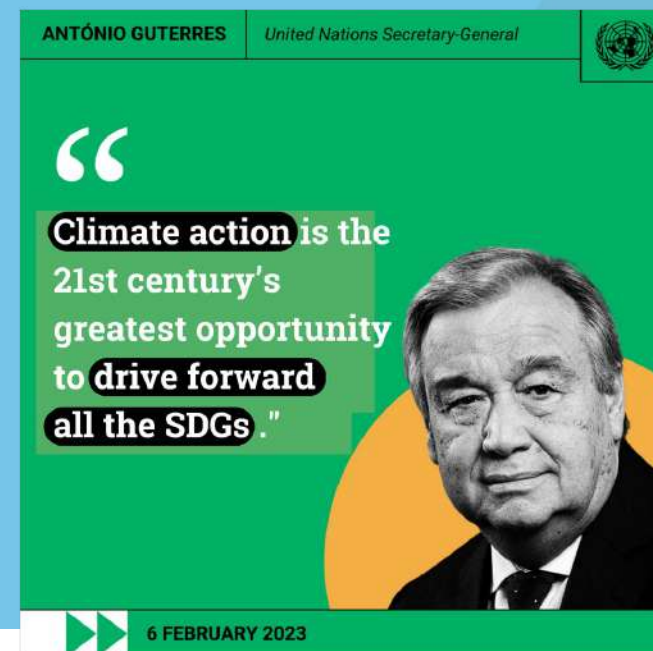
## SDGs and climate action are not on track

The IPCC and SDG Report 2023: Special Edition – global progress assessments on climate change and sustainable development – underscore the necessity of a systems approach to attain the 2030 global targets.



## UN SG's call for synergistic action

In his priorities for 2023, UN Secretary-General has called for an urgent course correction, urging world leaders to come together behind a rescue plan for people and planet — a rallying cry for synergistic action.



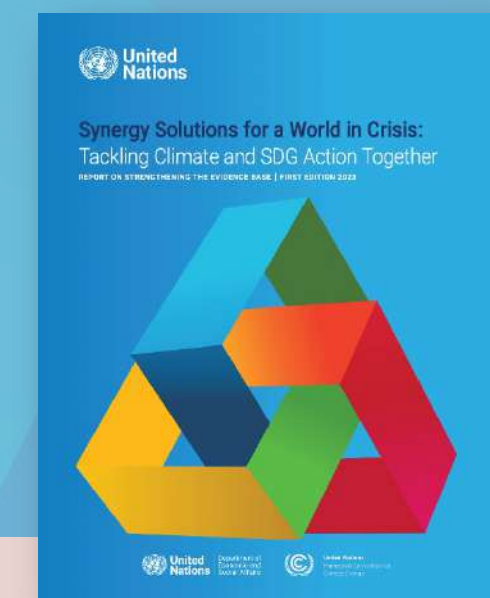
## UN DESA and UNFCCC build a plan for action

The inter-agency partnership aimed at fostering synergistic action between the SDGs and climate agenda, and the outcomes of three Global Synergy Conferences held since 2019, provide the essential platform, rationale, and urgency for this report.



## Expert Group prepares the global report

An international group of 14 experts was co-convened by UN DESA and UNFCCC to draft the first global report. It is the first collaborative effort to systematize knowledge on synergistic climate and SDG implementation, charting the course for accelerated action.



# Work of the Expert Group

**Composition:** Independent group of 14 experts from diverse thematic and geographic backgrounds.

**Objective:** To prepare the first global report that builds on evidence-base and demonstrates win-win solutions of addressing climate and sustainable development challenges synergistically.

Learn more [here](#).



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1.

# The Challenge

We must solve the climate emergency and sustainable development challenges together, or we will not solve them at all.

# Why is the Report Needed

## Some of the problems and the challenges that the report addresses:

- Increasing recognition that synergies can result in win-win situations, but evidence is dispersed, scattered and often not easily accessible – Should a platform that gathers this evidence be created?
- The absence of tools for a) identifying and enhancing synergies, and b) for policy makers to enable and promote synergies – Would an analytical framework that is easy to use by policy makers be a good solution?
- How can finance be reformed to advance this agenda – and can the current debate on the need for reform of the global finance architecture make this a critical component of that debate?
- The adequacy or inadequacy of reporting mechanisms - if synergies are so essential for the success of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030 – why are they not made a reporting pre-requisite?
- How can the topics of just transitions, leaving no one behind and equality be given higher attention in this and other debates?

# Addressing multiple crises on a short deadline

**Need for accelerated action:** Halfway to the 2030 Agenda, a mere 15% of SDG targets are on track and the climate crisis is worsening as GHG emissions continue to rise.

**Breaking siloed approaches:** Progress away from siloed approaches and towards integrated planning, implementation, and reporting is underway but needs to move much faster.

**4.3 trillion**

**USD** shortfall in financial flows by 2030 to achieve a 1.5°C global climate scenario and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change

**When acting in silos...**

**80 million**

**jobs** are put at risk with a shift to a low-carbon and resource efficient economy without a just transition

**84 million**

**more people** at risk of hunger by 2050 without SDG integration in climate efforts

# 2.

## The Evidence

Pursuing the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in concert can significantly and efficiently advance both agendas.

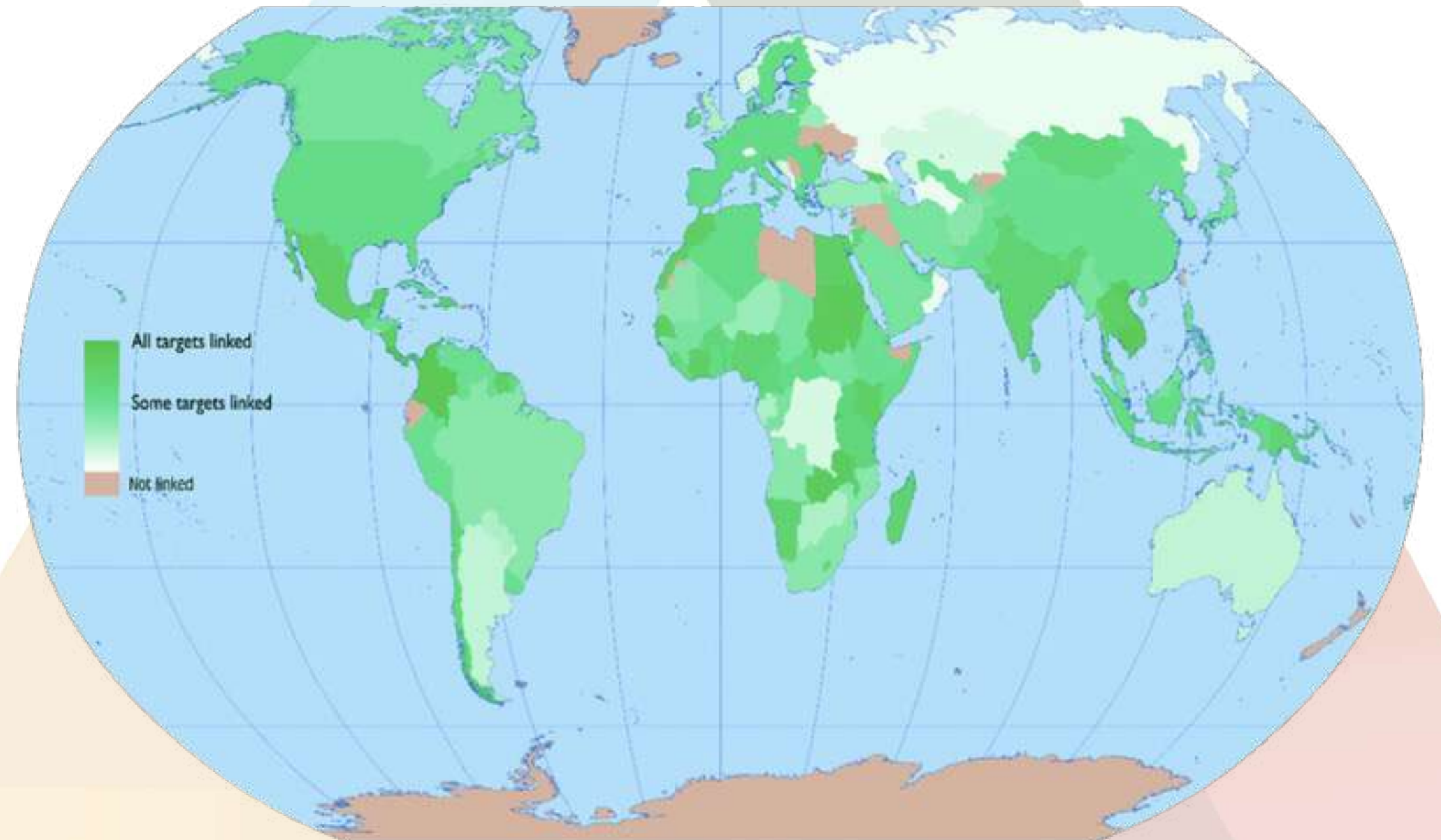


# The evidence indicates strong synergies

Evidence shows synergies between climate action and 80% of 2030 Agenda targets.

Significant overlaps found between NDC climate activities and SDGs 2, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17.

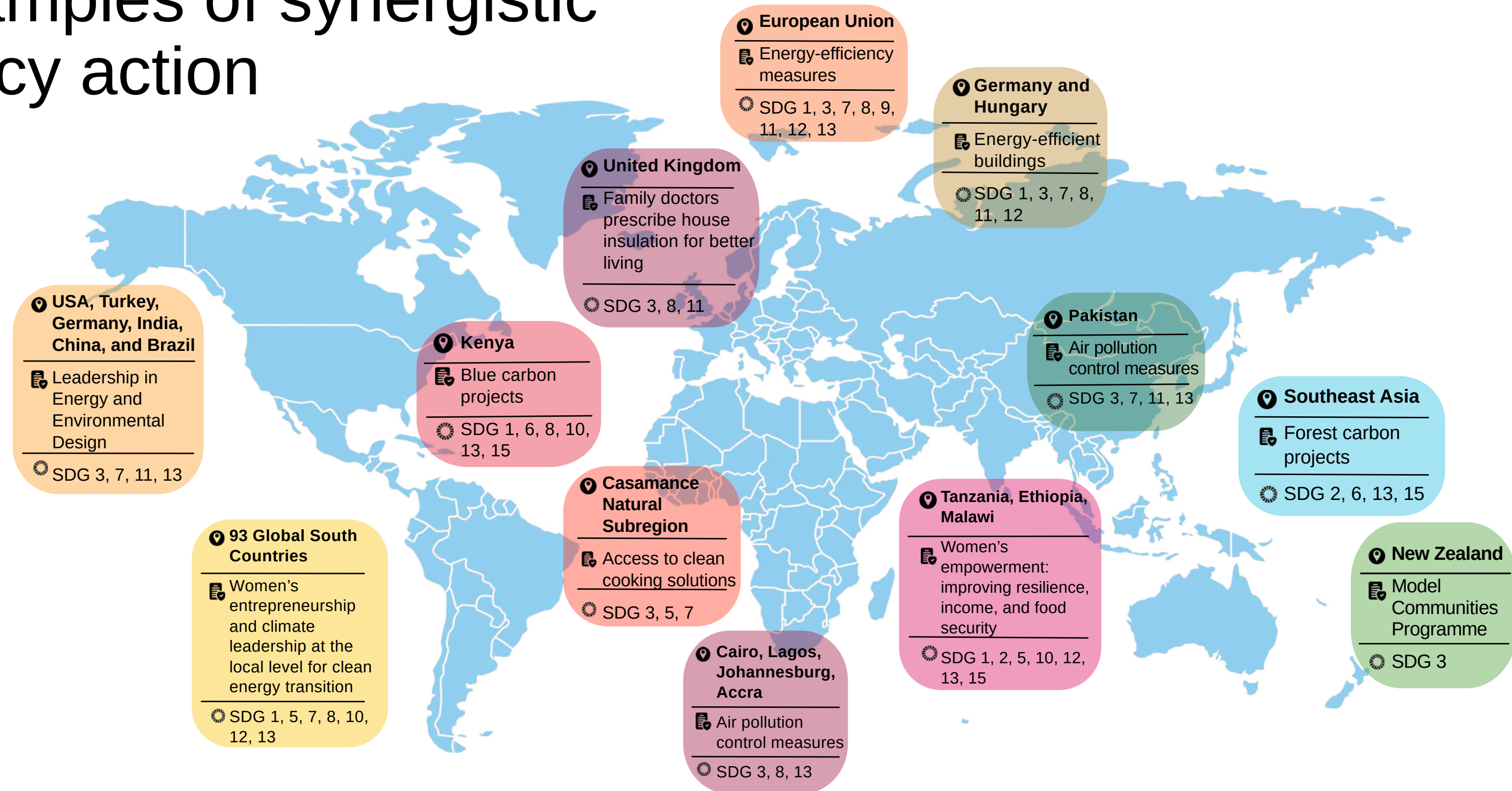
Overlaps between SDGs and NDC climate activities are more pronounced for low-income and lower-middle-income countries.



Linkage of SDGs with the countries' NDCs

Source: [Climate Watch](#)

# Examples of synergistic policy action



# 3.

## The Opportunity

Co-benefits of synergistic action significantly outweighs trade-offs. Their evaluation is key for cost-effectiveness and a just and equitable transition.

# Synergistic action will help to course correct

**Reduce financial gaps:** Pursuing development and climate targets together reduces investment gaps.

**Achieve targets faster:** Integrating social dimensions enhances chances of reaching climate targets.

**Facilitate long-term vision:** Synergistic co-benefits balance short- and long-term gains, gaining stakeholder support.

**Ensure just transition:** Synergistic planning will ensure a just transition and limit the trade-offs of climate action.

**43 trillion**

USD can be gained in economic output by 2070 when aligning climate and SDG actions

**70%**

of SDG targets are attainable with climate adaptation measures focused on co-benefits

When acting in synergy...

**24 million**

new jobs created by 2030 through renewable energy

**4x**

economic gains in co-benefits through transitioning to a green economy

**40%**

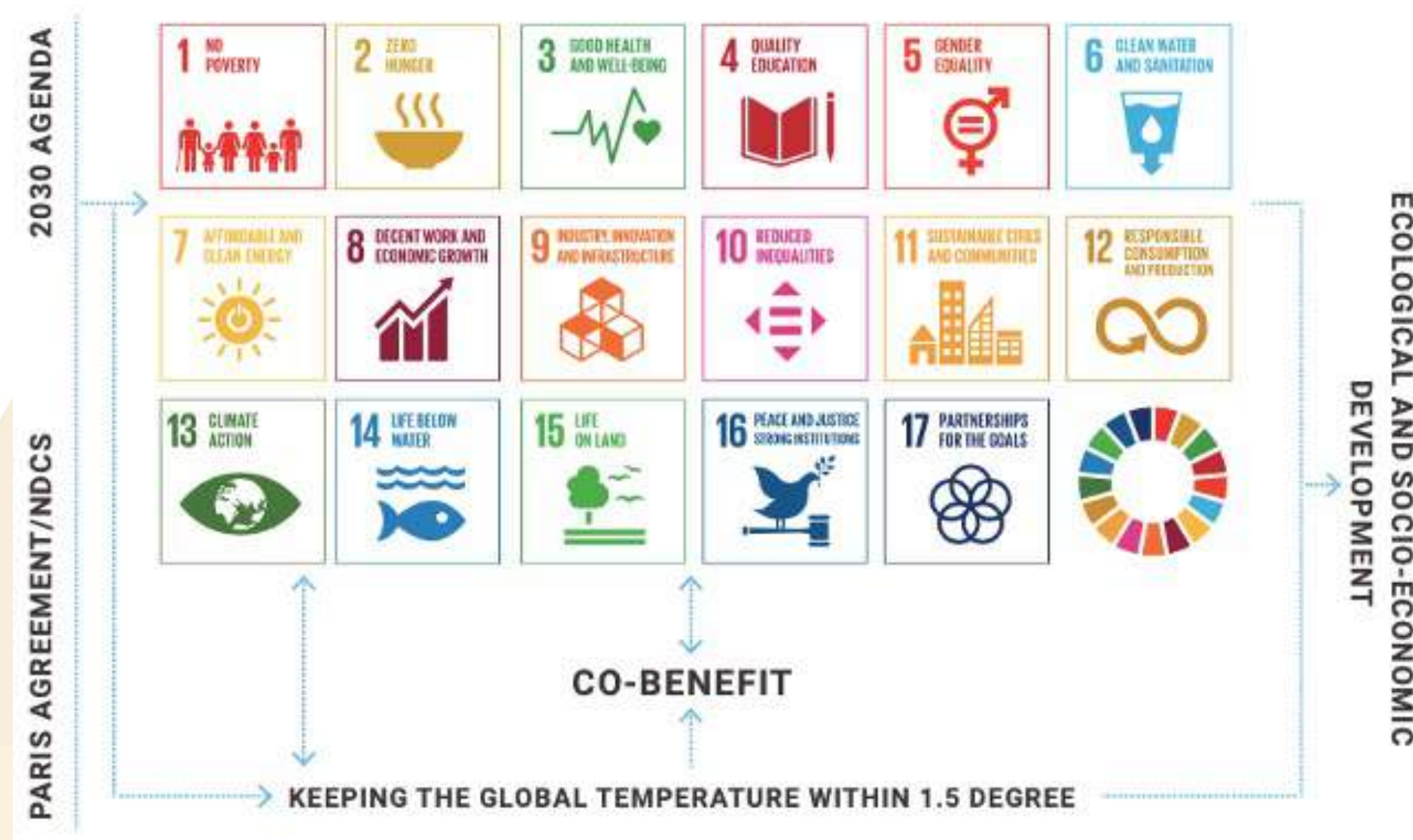
of global population could meet WHO air quality standards with strict air pollution and GHG mitigation measure

# Overcoming existing barriers towards integrated solutions

**Easier knowledge access:** addressing the sizable disconnect between scientific evidence and applied policy action.

**Improved political planning and reporting:** offering a framework for coordination and reporting across agencies on synergistic action.

**Adequate financial mechanisms:** promoting strategies for synergistic climate and SDG investment, particularly for low, lower middle-, and middle-income countries with deeper co-benefits.



# Overcoming Existing Barriers

## Knowledge

- Insufficient knowledge of SDG and climate interactions
- Lack of accessible and applicable methodologies and tools that map the nature and magnitude of interactions
- Challenges in understanding and aligning climate actions across all SDGs to ensure synergies and impacts

## Economic and Financial

- Limited national budgeting on addressing synergies
- Lack of enabling financial instruments
- Lack of clarity and evidence on the benefits and costs of co-benefits and trade-offs
- Lack of climate finance flowing to those countries facing highest risk and greatest adaptation needs

## Political

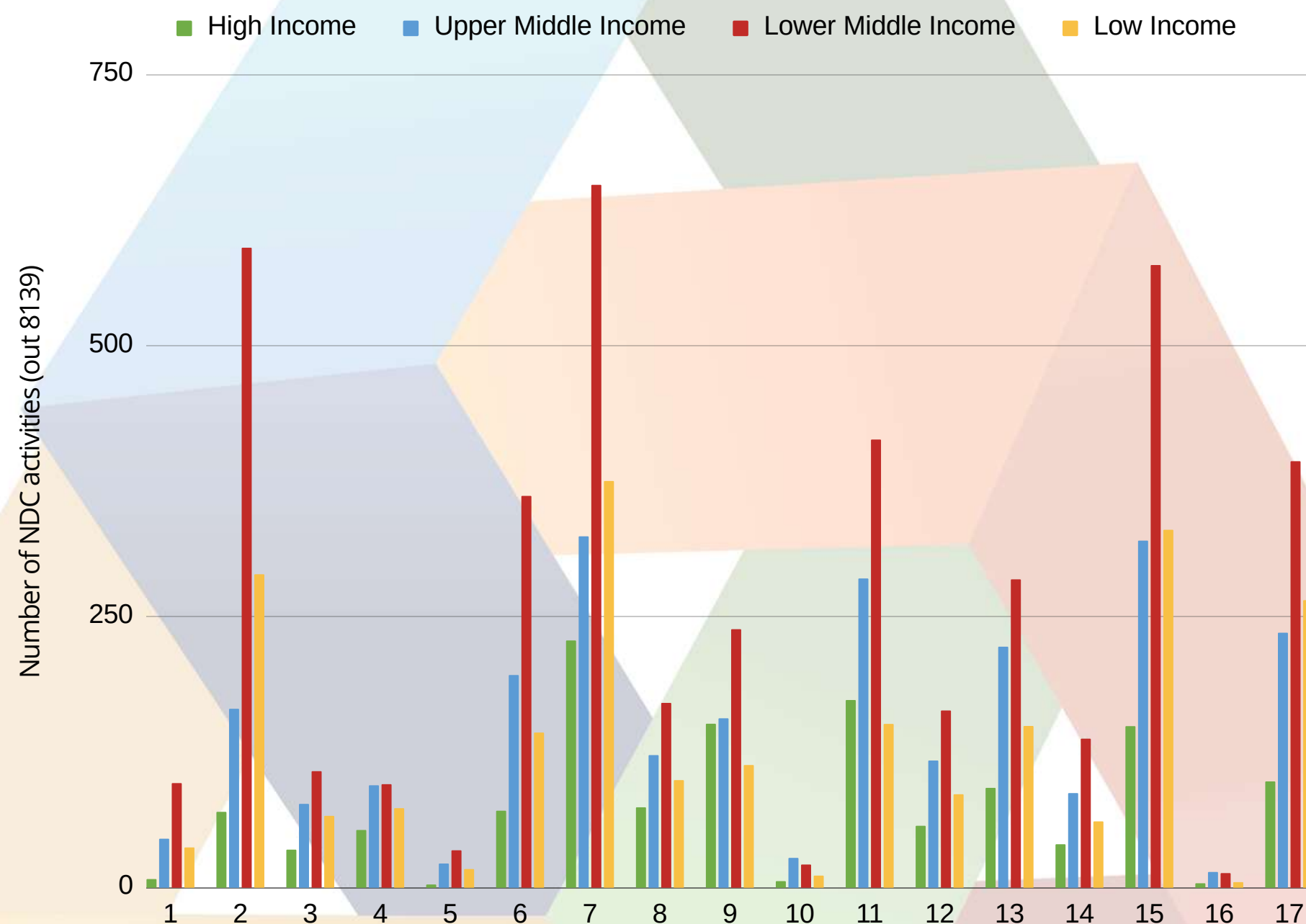
- Political cycles that cause changes in political priorities
- Lack of political motivation towards climate policies
- Lack of transparency in responsibility for implementation
- Lack of collaboration between governments and other actors
- Lack of consistency on commitments to equity, gender equality and other social justice and rights commitments across all indicators that would underpin climate justice and therefore advance synergy and impact on climate action and all SDGs

# Context-specific analysis will maximize co-benefits

**North and South:** Low-income and lower-middle-income countries experience stronger interlinkages, as SDG progress and financing challenges outweigh climate change impacts.

**Urban settings:** Cities present a major opportunities for addressing climate and development challenges in synergy, as the global urban population is projected to reach 70% by 2050.

**Tailored financial mechanisms:** Measures like encouraging MDBs and IFIs to introduce synergy-enhancing instruments can reduce the existing investment gaps in climate and development sectors.



Number of climate activities that correspond to each of the 17 SDGs across different regions.

Source: [NDC-SDG Connections \(IDOS, SEI\)](#)

4.

# Key Recommendations

Integrated climate and development action offers a vital opportunity for the course correction, addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities.



# Ten Recommendations

01

**Enhance** collective resilience against current and future global crises.

02

**Strengthen** science-policy-society interaction to advance synergistic action.

03

**Promote** institutional capacity building and cross-sectoral and international and national collaboration.

04

**Ensure** policy coherence and coordination among policy makers across sectors and departments.

05

**Develop** a 'framework for action' that can help decision makers in public, private, and civil society sectors identify synergistic action for systems change.

06

**Use** the 'framework for action' and to other means to ensure a just transition.

07

**Address** the large investment gaps in the climate and development agendas to enhance the necessary synergies.

08

**Utilize** COP 28 in Dubai to initiate and accelerate synergistic action on climate and SDGs.

09

**Prioritize** the role of synergies in the work of the UN and international financial institutions, including an improved system for sharing information to help countries in their reporting responsibilities.

10

**Treat** cities, sites of major population growth and expansion of economic activities, as an opportunity for focusing on climate and development synergies.

5.

# Towards 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Report

# Second Report – Substantive Themes and Focus

## Synthesis Report

covering all 4 thematic areas with evidence and deep analysis, providing conclusions and recommendations to be submitted to the political processes of 2024

Cross-cutting themes

### MEASURES FOR SYNERGISTIC ACTION – KNOWLEDGE AND DATA

#### Thematic Report

1. Background paper for online consultation
2. Online consultation

### POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR SYNERGISTIC ACTION

#### Thematic Report

1. Background paper for online consultation
2. Online consultation

### NEW FINANCIAL SYSTEM FOR SYNERGISTIC ACTION

#### Thematic Report

1. Background paper for online consultation
2. Online consultation

Deep-dive theme

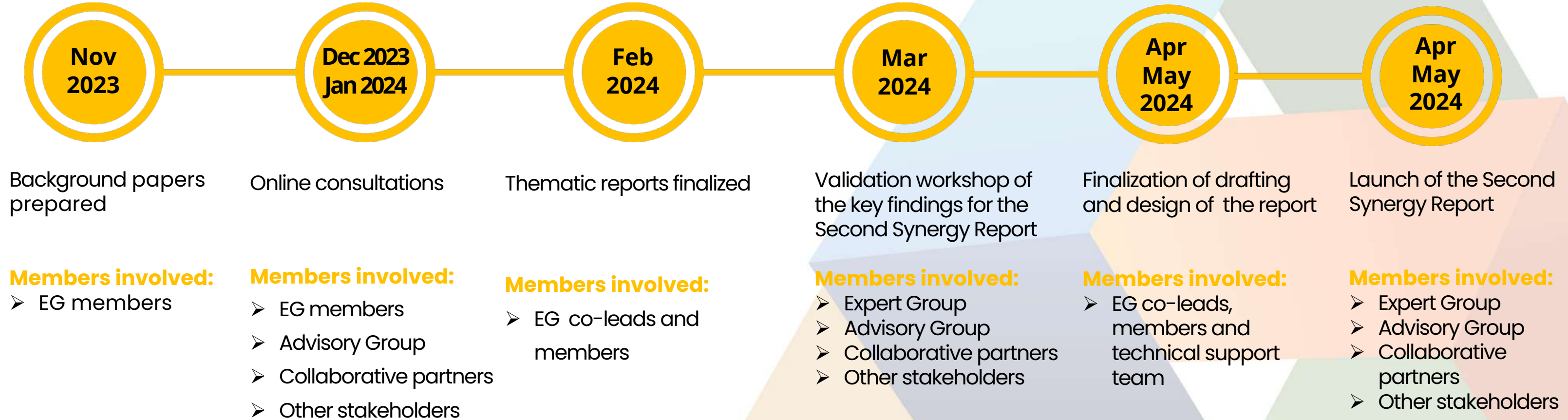
### CITIES PLATFORMS FOR SYNERGISTIC ACTION

#### Thematic Report

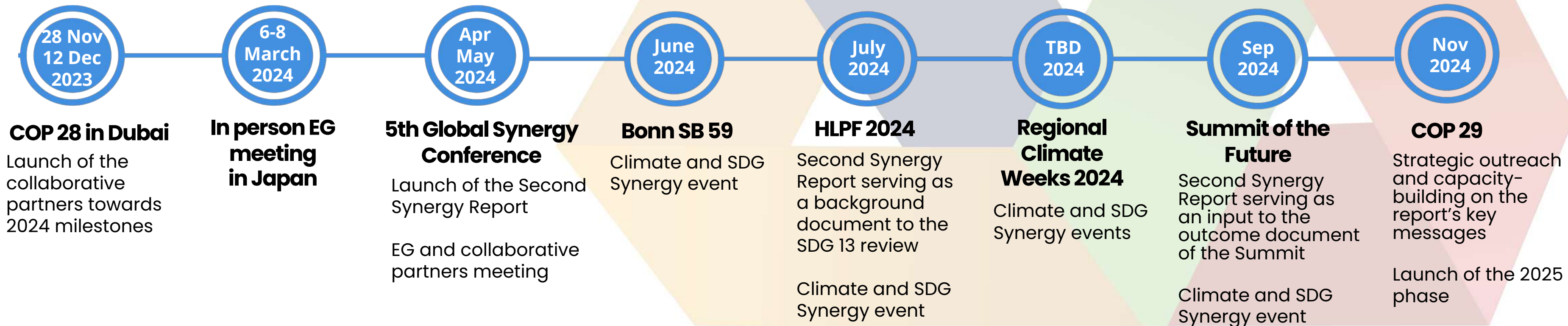
1. Background paper for online consultation
2. Online consultation

# Deliverables and Milestones (2023-2024)

## Deliverables



## Milestones



# Read the report



[bit.ly/UNSynergyReport2023](https://bit.ly/UNSynergyReport2023)

For further information, please contact:  
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Website: [sdgs.un.org/climate-sdgs-synergies](https://sdgs.un.org/climate-sdgs-synergies)  
Email: [climate-sdgs-synergies@un.org](mailto:climate-sdgs-synergies@un.org)