UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM STAFF COLLEGE

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ONLINE

10 AUG 2026 - 18 SEP 2026

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change as a Development Agenda



Climate and Environment
Governance and Human Rights
Stakeholder engagement and partnerships
Sustainable development and the SDGs

LANGUAGE	DURATION	ENROLL BY	PRICE	LOCATION	TARGET
English	6 weeks	05 May 2026	Free	ONLINE	Everyone

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This course will not be offered in 2026. While there is no edition scheduled this year, we encourage interested participants to check this page for updates on future dates and learning opportunities.

This joint UN Climate Change - UNSSC online course offers a holistic and integrated approach to climate change, and demonstrates the interlinkages and interdependencies between sustainable development and climate change, to make informed policy choices towards carbon-neutral and climate-resilient sustainable development.

This course involves a selection process. Please read the introductory section to learn more.

Introduction

Climate change is a cross-cutting development issue that affects every aspect of sustainable development and the entire 2030 Agenda.

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, along with the 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals, forms the most comprehensive blueprint to date for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet.

Together with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, these documents constitute an integral plan of action for people, planet, and prosperity that requires all countries and stakeholders to act together. Sustainable development and climate action are deeply interconnected and interdependent. For example:

- Ending poverty is not possible where the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations are disrupted by climate change-induced impacts;
- Peaceful and inclusive societies cannot be attained if climate change catalyzes the displacement of people and increases the risk of violent conflicts through amplification of already existing drivers, such as loss of natural resources;
- Achieving zero-hunger is not possible without protecting food systems from the negative impacts of climate change;
- Cities and communities cannot be sustainable without adequate protection from extreme weather events;
- Ensuring children's health is not possible without addressing air pollution and the increase in climate change-driven, vector-borne diseases;
- Economic development cannot be sustainable without reversing over-reliance on carbon-intensive energy sources.

Selection process

Participants interested in attending the course should register by clicking "Sign Up" button available at the top of this webpage. **When registering, you will be requested to submit a motivation letter. This will be used for the selection process.**

The selection criteria includes quality of motivation, professional experience and knowledge, commitment, diversity (gender, geographic region, sector, etc.), and willingness to contribute to the course.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted to confirm their registration.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain key elements of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda and the role of climate action in the broader context of sustainable development;
- Identify and articulate the interrelations and synergies between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the five critical dimensions of sustainable development: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership;
- Identify and articulate best practices to harness synergies and mutual reinforcement between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Explain existing tools and instruments to mainstream sustainable development and climate action into national development policies and planning.

Course methodology

UNSSC online courses are designed to deliver maximum learning outcomes through carefully chosen high-quality learning materials. Our facilitated online courses combine self-paced study modules with applied learning components, such as case studies, interactive exercises, and collaborative group work, specially tailored to the needs of the professional interested in deepening their knowledge on a particular subject matter.

Participants will also benefit from live moderated webinars that feature inputs from renowned subject-matter experts and allow real-time dialogue with high-level speakers. Webinar recordings are also made available to ensure that participants have a flexible and seamless learning experience.

An expert facilitator guides and assists the participants throughout the course and provides real-time feedback on activities and exercises. Our user-friendly social online learning platform provides participants with the opportunity to connect with peers from diverse organizational backgrounds, fostering peer-to-peer learning.

UNSSC online courses give learners the opportunity to complete activities when it best fits their schedule. Participants are largely free to determine their own weekly study plan. Lasting six weeks and demanding six hours of study per week, UNSSC online courses incorporate the same high academic rigour as any UNSSC face-to-face programme.

Course contents

The course frames climate change and climate action around the five core cornerstones of the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

- **Week 1:** Introduction: sustainable development, climate change and climate action.
- **Week 2:** The social dimension of sustainable development, climate change and climate action (People).
- **Week 3:** The environmental dimension of sustainable development, climate change and climate action (Planet).
- **Week 4:** The economic dimension of sustainable development, climate change and climate action (Prosperity).
- **Week 5:** Climate change and peace, justice and strong institutions (Peace).
- **Week 6:** Partnerships and means of implementation for climate action and sustainable development (Partnership)

Target audience

Development practitioners from the UN system, governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society and academia.

Cost of participation

This online course is offered free of charge.

Selected participants will enjoy the following benefits from the free online course:

- Three months access to course materials (including exclusive video material and key readings), recording of webinars and speakers' presentations.
- Participation in live webinars with renowned subject matter experts.
- Exclusive access to the UNSSC online social learning environment with training and supporting background materials, and the opportunity to stay connected with colleagues.

Joint certificates from the United Nations System Staff College and UN Climate Change will be awarded to participants upon completion of the course.