



Transformations within reach: Pathways to a Sustainable and Resilient World

Synthesis Report

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COVID-19 - From Recovery to Sustainability
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Acknowledgements

- Members of our Advisory Board
- Initiative partners
- Theme leads and teams from IIASA-ISC
- Chairs of thematic consultations
- Chairs of Break-out groups
- Moderators
- Expert participants
- Project facilitators (IIASA-ISC)

*Any flaws/controversies in the recommendations remain the responsibility of the Leadership Team of this initiative –
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The IIASA-ISC Initiative on

Bouncing Forward Sustainably: Pathways to a post-COVID World

1. A small window of opportunity to achieve transformative changes
2. Transformative potential of COVID-19
3. Resilience to systemic shocks
4. Transformative green-shoots – some valuable lessons learned to preserve
5. Recovery packages have potential to drive transformation towards a sustainable world
6. Recommendations based on trans- and inter-disciplinary expertise
7. Four key themes: Governance, Science Systems, Energy, Food.

Process and Outputs

Organized three intensive and representative consultations on each theme to identify and develop the transformations within reach, with participants from Science / academia / research communities, practice communities: private sector, finance, NGOs and Policy and decision-makers / influencers.

Used the Advisory Board for sounding out the directions in which the initiative was heading and the evolving messages.



Synthesis Report



Enhancing Governance
for Sustainability



Strengthening
Science Systems



Rethinking Energy
Solution



Resilient Food
Systems

Key Recommendation 1: Strengthen knowledge base on, and preparedness for, compound and systemic risks



Global risks are becoming increasingly complex and systemic in nature, straining governance systems at multiple levels.



Disaster management institutions must be mandated, and empowered, to address compound and systemic risks systemically based on strong inputs from science



Agility, reliability, and relevance of science are key to effective resilience and responsiveness.

Key Recommendation 2: Repurpose and redesign global institutions for the complexities of the 21st century

- ✓ Global institutions and processes must adapt to new and emerging contexts.
- ✓ Ongoing reform process of the United Nations and other international organizations needs to be urgently completed.
- ✓ "Virtual" webs of security to protect the vulnerable must be created.

Key Recommendation 3: Advance toward smart, evidence-based, adaptive, good governance arrangements at all levels

- ✓ The science–policy interface must be strengthened.
- ✓ Good governance also means more integrated governance with measurable SDG outcomes
- ✓ "Smart" cities must be accompanied by "smart" governance

Key Recommendation 4: Partnerships key to sustainability solutions



The design of a sustainable new world needs multi-stakeholder partnerships.



Science and science systems must also be more inclusive.



The private sector is a key partner in the sustainable development process.



International collaboration is necessary for furthering national interests

Key Recommendation 5: Create a pervasive, sustainable knowledge society

- ✓ Trust in science must be restored
- ✓ Science systems must promote systemic understanding
- ✓ Science must be inclusive and accessible

Key Recommendation 6: Reset economic infrastructure and development for sustainability

- ✓ A new "glocalization" must be conceived and implemented.
- ✓ Urban spaces and use must be repurposed toward sustainable living and wellbeing.
- ✓ The focus on efficiency has to be counter-balanced by sustainable and resilient perspectives.
- ✓ Redirecting demand toward services and promoting a sharing economy can enhance employment.
- ✓ Promote investments toward building a sustainable and resilient world.

Key Recommendation 7: “Sustainable and resilient” have to be the new “mantra” for development

- ✓ Growing inequality and extreme vulnerability will stymie future growth and development.
- ✓ Continued inequality is leading to societal tipping points and must be urgently addressed.
- ✓ Understanding of human security must be broadened to include systemic resilience.
- ✓ To build social resilience, recovery packages must be designed to address inequities

Key Recommendation 8: Harness the new consciousness in society

- ✓ Science-based policies need to encourage accelerated lifestyle changes toward sustainability.
- ✓ Remote functioning needs to be supported through systemic changes in institutional frameworks and infrastructure.
- ✓ Energy demand reduction must be introduced as Target 7.4 under SDG 7.

To conclude

- ✓ The transformative changes recommended here represent the low-hanging fruit that require relatively low levels of investment but with power to result in far-reaching transformations.
- ✓ The green shoots in social and economic structures and innovations resulting from the pandemic have to be encouraged to sustain.
- ✓ Building resilience to multi-hazards, and capacity to harvest multiple dividends, based on systemic analysis is an imperative.
- ✓ Identifying "Transformations Within Reach" has to be a continuous effort, based on robust scientific systems analysis, and must be supported
- ✓ Science that is open, inclusive and accessible, and accountable needs to be central to this continued analysis
- ✓ Lastly, what is clear is that the design of a sustainable new world needs international collaboration and multi-stake holder partnerships where science, public and private sectors, and civil society play a role.



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