
Abstract of the Keynote Speech

The Role of Science and Technology in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs): Opportunities and Perspectives for Developing Countries

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Human civilizations throughout our history have expanded, contracted and some even eliminated despite great advancements in science, technology, agriculture and trade. The advancements were made possible due to inventions and innovations in almost all the areas.

Many are of the view that the main reasons for failures taken place in human civilization are linked to the sustainability paradigm. Such civilizations failed to appreciate the relationship between human development including economic growth and the environment. Due to this weakness, the long-term sustainability remains disconnected to this day despite the best of efforts. When we consider those failures and taken as lessons to predict the future, one can ask following questions;

- Are we on the edge of another tipping point in human civilization?
- Will our advancements in chemicals and product development, which have enabled us to enter the information age ultimately lead to our demise as the most progressive civilization since the Romans? Do the sustainable development goals provide a way forward?
- Can Science and technology change this dangerous pathway that our civilization is currently locked in?

All these are very pertinent questions grappling both academics and policy-makers across the planet as we move to tackle global issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and right now marine plastics!

This presentation will attempt to answer the last question above and provide some insight into how this can be done, not only from a technological perspective, but also a social economic and policy perspective.