

Assembly chief urges scientific approaches to sustainable development



General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser. UN Photo/Mark Garten

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The President of the General Assembly, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, warned today that economic growth that relies on unsustainable patterns of consumption and production is undermining humankind’s quest for harmony with nature and called for science-based sustainable development solutions.

“As a human race, we have the resources, the scientific knowledge and the know-how to save our planet,” said Mr. Al-Nasser in an address to the General Assembly’s Interactive Dialogue on Harmony with Nature, organized to Commemorate the [International Mother Earth Day](#), whose

theme this year is ‘Scientific findings on the impacts of human activities on the functioning of the Earth System.’

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“I believe that future work on this new paradigm should be supported by a globally recognized and coherent science base, that is capable of creating a strong science-policy interface for sustainable development,” he said in the speech, delivered on his behalf by Ambassador Peter Thomson of Fiji, who is also the Vice-President, and currently the Acting President, of the Assembly.

The scientific model on sustainable development would provide practical tools for utilizing natural resources in a more sustainable way, and safeguarding ecosystems by promoting social and economic development at all levels, Mr. Al-Nasser said in his remarks.

He stressed that the United Nations system should work together towards supporting a stronger science-based approach to sustainable development, and encouraged Member States to continue to support the academic sector as it explores the issue.

Humankind must figure out how to sustain life while protecting the planet, and what Earth requires to support seven – soon to be nine – billion people, Mr. Al-Nasser said. The two are the human race’s “greatest existential questions,” he added.

The Assembly President said that the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as ([Rio+20](#)), in Brazil in June, will be an opportunity to assess humankind’s relationship with nature over the past 20 years; to affirm previous commitments to environmental protection; and to inject new impetus and innovation towards fostering sustainability.

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