

Guidelines for Session Moderators

Sustainable Development Conference

Purpose of the Role

The Moderator is responsible for the orderly, inclusive and timely conduct of the session.

The Moderator should facilitate the discussion without becoming its dominant voice. The principal responsibilities are to introduce the session and speakers, manage the sequence and timing of interventions, facilitate audience participation and ensure that the Chair has sufficient time to conclude the session.

The Panel Organiser will provide logistical support and, where required, coordinate with the IT team.

1. Before the Session

Please review the latest Conference programme and familiarise yourself with:

- the session title and objectives;
- the Chair, speakers and Discussant;
- the correct pronunciation of participants' names and institutional affiliations;
- the presentation sequence;
- the agreed time allocation; and
- any presentations or recorded messages that may need to be played.

For an in-person session, please arrive **10-15 minutes before the scheduled start**.

For an online or hybrid session, please join **at least 10 minutes before the start** and confirm with the Panel Organiser or IT team that audio, video, presentations and any recorded material are functioning correctly.

2. Opening the Session

At the beginning of the session:

- welcome participants and the audience;
- briefly state the session title and format;
- introduce the Chair, speakers and Discussant concisely;
- inform speakers of the time available for their interventions; and
- explain how audience questions will be taken.

Introductions should be brief. Full biographies should not be read unless specifically required.

3. Time Management

The session should conclude within the scheduled **90 minutes**.

As a general framework:

Opening and housekeeping: approximately 3-5 minutes

Chair's opening remarks: maximum 5 minutes

Speaker introductions: approximately 3-5 minutes

Speaker presentations: maximum 12 minutes each for up to four speakers;
maximum 10 minutes each where there are five speakers

Discussant's remarks: maximum 10 minutes

Question-and-answer session: normally 10-15 minutes, subject to available time

Chair's concluding remarks: maximum 5 minutes

Please provide speakers with a discreet indication when their allotted time is nearly complete.

Where a presentation substantially exceeds the allotted time, the Moderator can respectfully intervene in order to protect the time available to other speakers and the audience.

4. Managing the Discussion

During the Question and Answer segment:

- invite concise questions rather than extended statements;
- where possible, group related questions;
- identify the speaker to whom a question is directed;
- encourage participation from different parts of the audience;
- ensure that no individual or organisation dominates the discussion; and
- maintain a respectful and professional atmosphere.

For online or hybrid sessions, the Moderator or Panel Organiser should monitor questions received through the digital platform and bring selected questions into the discussion.

The Moderator should remain neutral and should not use the role to deliver a separate substantive intervention.

5. Concluding the Session

Please alert the Chair when approximately five minutes remain and invite the Chair to deliver the concluding remarks.

The session must end on time to allow the hall, digital platform and technical team to prepare for subsequent Conference sessions.

Thank you for being part of the SDC.