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Institute for the Advanced Study
of Sustainability

UNU-IAS Research Strategies for the Post-2015 Development Agenda and SDGs

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High-level Symposium on Sustainable Cities:
Connecting People, Environment and Technology

Thursday, 15 January 2015

History of UNU-IAS

Located in Shibuya, Tokyo♪



UNU-IAS (former)
established in 1996,
based in Yokohama



UNU-ISP
established in 2009,
based in Tokyo



UNU-IAS
2014-



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Mission of UNU-IAS

The mission of UNU-IAS is to advance efforts towards a more sustainable future, through policy-oriented research and education/capacity development focused on sustainability and its social, economic and environmental dimensions.

UNU-IAS serves the international community, making valuable and innovative contributions to high-level policymaking and debates in the international community, in particular within the UN system.



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Thematic Areas of Focus of UNU-IAS

Transformations toward Sustainable Societies

Exploring transformations through which societies can become more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable

Including:

- Governance for sustainable development
- Education for sustainable development (ESD)
- Water and urban planning
- Sustainable consumption and production

Natural Capital & Biodiversity

Promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems to secure their benefits for current and future generations

Including:

- Scientific assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services
- *Satoyama* and *satoumi* landscape models
- Sustainable agriculture

Global Change & Resilience

Developing approaches to adapt to climate change, building community resilience and maintaining stable environment

Including:

- Climate change impacts and adaptation
- Flood risk reduction
- Traditional knowledge



Targeted International Debates & Policy Processes

A. The Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

B. Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

C. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation

Post-2015 Framework for DRR and UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme on impacts, vulnerability & adaptation



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OWG proposal for SDGs (2014.8 A/68/970)

- GOAL 1** End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- GOAL 2** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- GOAL 3** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- GOAL 4** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- GOAL 5** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- GOAL 6** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- GOAL 7** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- GOAL 8** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- GOAL 9** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- GOAL 10** Reduce inequality within and among countries
- GOAL 11** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- GOAL 12** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- GOAL 13** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- GOAL 14** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- GOAL 15** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- GOAL 16** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- GOAL 17** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

UNU-IAS Research Projects for SDGs

A. The Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



- Institutional architecture and policy frameworks for effective SDG formulation and implementation → 1)
- Implementation of the SDGs in Asia → 2)
- Water and sustainable urban development policy in Asia → 3)
- Urban health → 4)
- Implementation of the post-2014 Global Action Programme on ESD
- Sustainable production, consumption and disposal



1) Institutional Architecture and Policy Frameworks for Effective SDG Formulation and Implementation

To explore:

How national target-setting process can be designed and connected to the global targets.

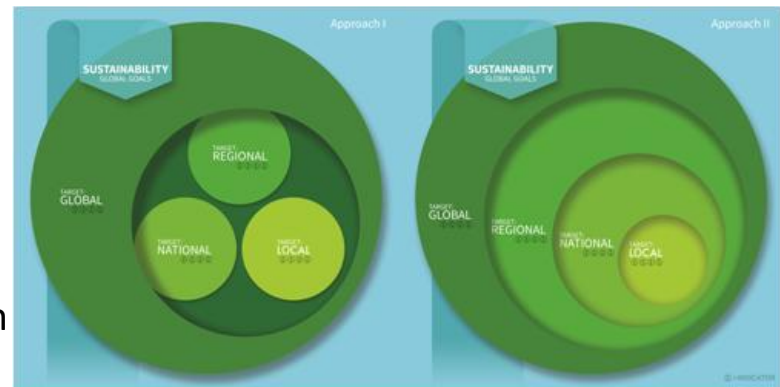
- ✓ **Advance a multi-layered model for the SDGs**, considering relationships and interfaces between regional, national and local targets, and the processes for defining them.
- ✓ **Focus on UN system mechanisms** including the development of High-Level Political Forum and its effectiveness in leading efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Two Approaches to Formulate Targets for SDGs

Global goals – systemic challenges

Multi-level of Targets – consider diversity and facilitate actions

➔ Complement legal approach to global governance



Policy-oriented Outcome

POST2015/UNU Policy Brief Series

POST2015/UNU-IAS Policy Brief #1

Earth System Challenges and A Multi-layered Approach for the Sustainable Development Goals

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POST2015/UNU-IAS Policy Brief #2

Linking Education and Water in the Sustainable Development Goals

Y
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A

POST2015/UNU-IAS Policy Brief #3

Integrating Governance into the Sustainable Development Goals

Frank Biermann, Casey Stevens, Steven Bernstein, Aarti Gupta,
Ngeta Kabiri, Norichika Kanie, Marc Levy, Måns Nilsson, László Pintér,
Michelle Scobie, and Oran R. Young

POST2015/UNU-IAS Policy Brief #4

Coherent Governance, the UN and the SDGs

Steven Bernstein, Jyoteeta Gupta, Steinar Andreassen

POST2015/UNU-IAS Policy Brief #5

Sustainable Development Goals and Inclusive Development

Jyoteeta Gupta, Isa Baud, Ralien Bekkers, Steven Bernstein, Ingrid Boas,
Vincent Cornelissen, Masahiko Iguchi, Norichika Kanie, Rakhyun E. Kim,
Mairon Bastos Lima, Pedi Obani, Petra Schoof, Casey Stevens,
and Dylan van Zoomeren



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2) Implementation of the SDGs in Asia

To address the main issues involved in the mainstreaming the Post-2015 and SDGs process, especially below the global and regional level, using a conceptual framework of a multilevel governance

- **Identify the country realities** and **develop good practice models** for achieving the Post-2015 Development Agenda and SDGs
- **Identify the influence of national and transnational networks** on multilevel governance at the city level in regard of Post-2015 process aiming toward sustainable cities

Case Studies:

- ❖ Different institutional architecture settings: Cities in different national-subnational-local institutional structures
- ❖ Linking global and local scales: Member cities of UCLG, ICLEI, C40, etc.



3) Water and Sustainable Urban Development Policy in Asia

To explore:

1. Links between water and sustainable development with a focus on urban regions
 - ✓ **Develop policy tools and information platform** to assist developing countries in planning and implementing environmental policies for sustainable urban development.
 - ✓ **Address challenges of urbanization and water sustainability** to contribute to New Urban Agenda.
2. Governance issues related to water and sustainable development, particular focus on education
 - ✓ **Develop targets for “water literacy”** in the context of the SDGs, to ensure safer water consumption, improve health and build resilience to water-related disasters.



4) Urban Health

UNU is a co-sponsor of ICSU Programme on systems approaches to Health and Wellbeing in the changing urban environment (IPO at Chinese Academy of Sciences – Institute of Urban Environment, Xiamen)

- ✓ **Responding to the pressing need** for better understanding of the underlying structures and processes that influence human health in cities.
- ✓ **Looking at health impacts** from urban transport and waste sectors (co-sponsored by UNU-IIGH, Kuala Lumpur)



UNU-IAS Research Projects Approach

1. High-level, high Impact, policy-relevant research



✓ Projects should be designed to target and influence specific UN audiences and policy processes.

2. Cross-cutting, interdisciplinary research projects



✓ Research should be oriented towards developing solutions to real-world problems.
✓ Projects should bring together experts and practitioners from various sectors.

3. Networking and collaboration



✓ UNU-IAS builds stronger and substantive links with international stakeholders, in particular within the UN system.
✓ UNU-IAS expands collaboration with leading institutions and UN agencies.



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