



GLOBALGOALS

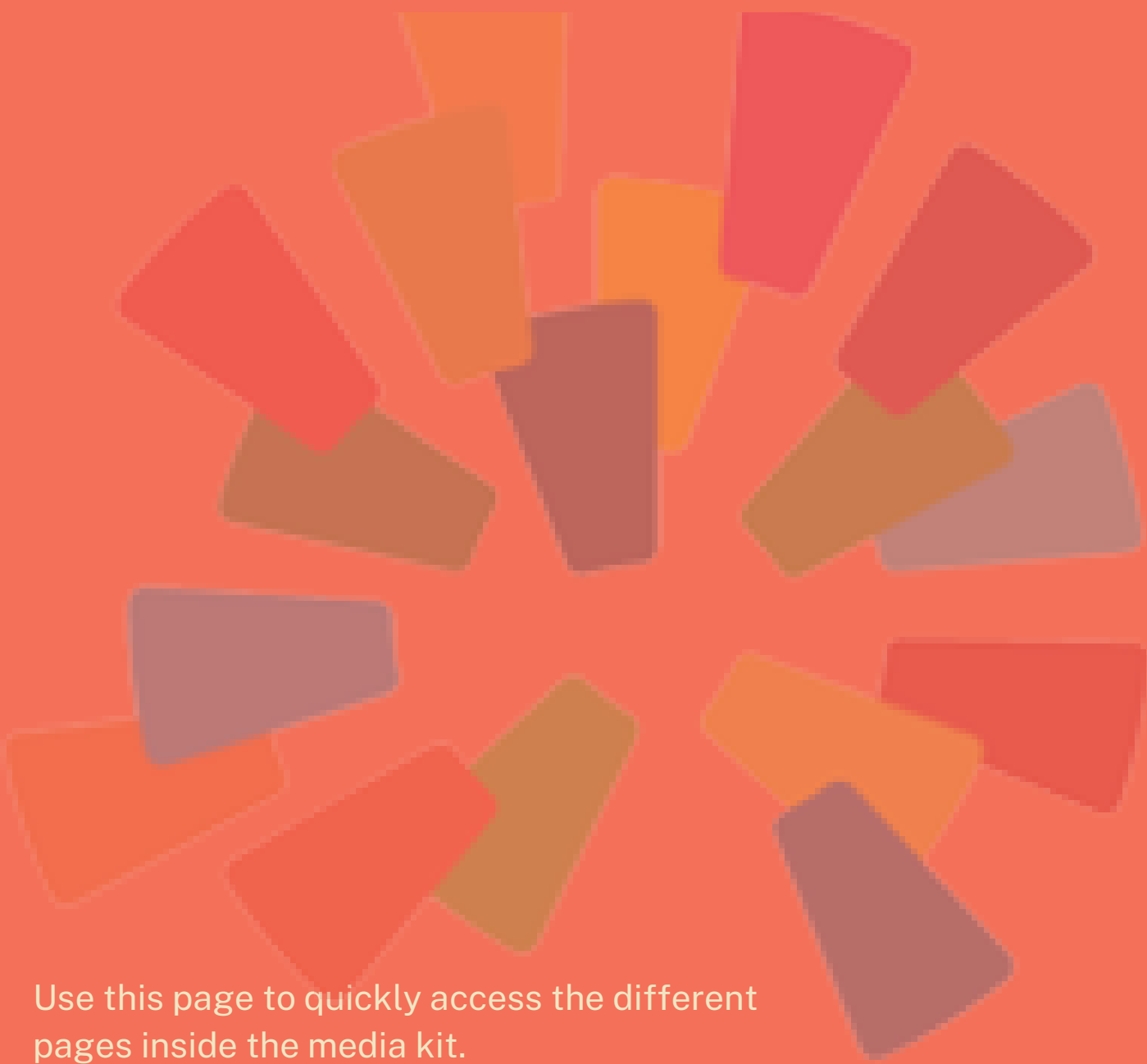
Research for Sustainability



Earth
System
Governance

Research at the halfway mark of the
2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

Navigation Page



Use this page to quickly access the different pages inside the media kit.

3	GlobalGoals Project
4	Introducing the SDG Impact Assessment
5	The SDG Impact Assessment
6	Assessment areas
7	Overarching findings
8	Research impact
9	Endorsements
10	Research projects
11	The ESG SDG Taskforce
12	Contact / Collaborate / Contribute

The GLOBALGOALS project is a vibrant international group of researchers based at Utrecht University, investigating the SDGs as novel governance interventions from varied perspectives.

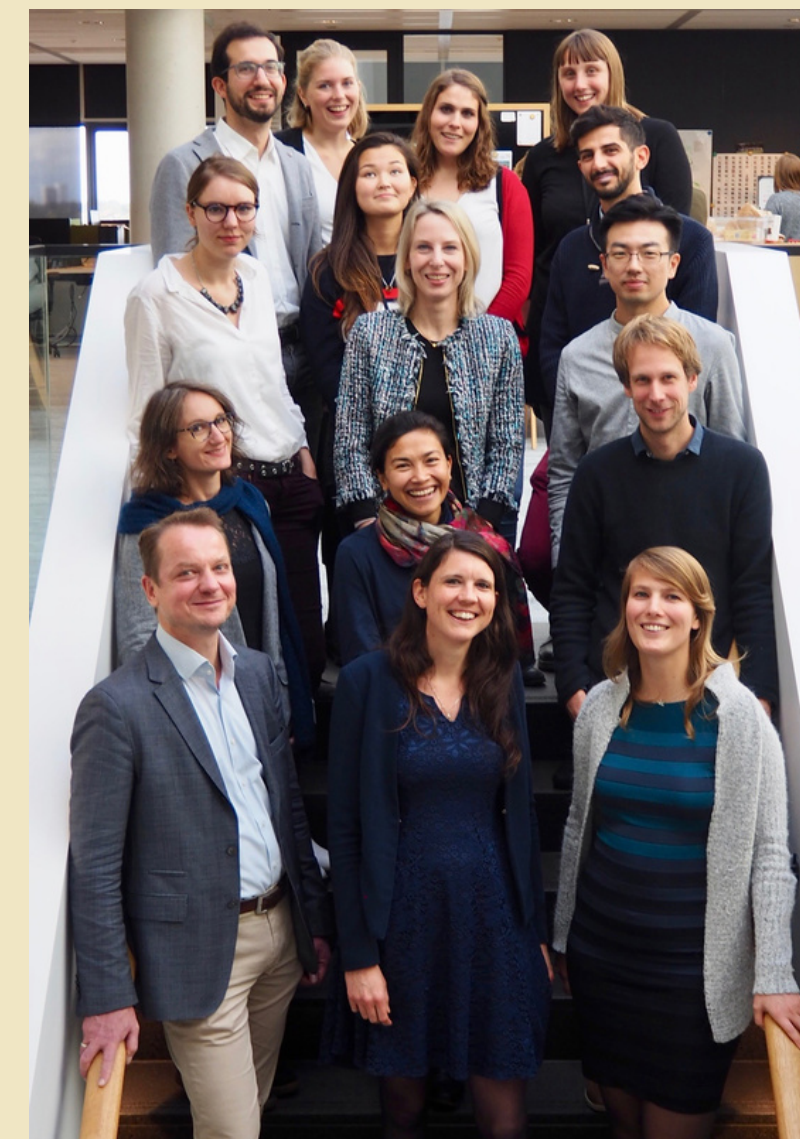
The group uses multiple quantitative and qualitative research methods and works with a global network of affiliated researchers and partner institutions.

The project is financed by a 2.5-million EUR Advanced Grant of the European Research Council.

The project is led by Professor Frank Biermann of Utrecht University.



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission





The first comprehensive global assessment of the political impact of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

[Back to
Navigation Page](#)

1 NO
POVERTY

2 ZERO
HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION

The assessment provides the most comprehensive data compilation, network mapping, and comparative institutional analysis of **the evolution, effectiveness** and **future prospects** of 'global governance through goals' as a central novel steering mechanism in world politics.

Written by a team of over **sixty experts** and drawing on over **3000 scientific studies**, this volume is a key resource for policymakers, activists and scholars of sustainable development.

[Get to know the scientific steering group, the coordinating lead authors, and the contributing authors!](#)

[Back to
Navigation Page](#)



**Global
Governance
& SDGs**

**SDGs
Implementation
at Multiple
Levels**

**Interlinkages,
Integration &
Coherence**

Inclusiveness

**Planetary
Integrity**

**Indicators &
Methods**

The research asks whether, to what extent, and how the Sustainable Development Goals have led to political and institutional changes in six key areas.

[Back to
Navigation Page](#)



Overarching findings...

The SDGs have had thus far **only limited political effects** in global, national and local governance since 2015.

The SDGs have had mostly **discursive** effects, with limited normative and institutional impact.

The SDGs sometimes **enable** civil society and non-governmental organizations to hold governments accountable.

But the SDGs are **not (yet) a transformative force** in and of themselves.



The SDG Impact Assessment was downloaded for free as an open access publication almost 8000 times in its first year.

The research has been cited in the SDG Progress Report by the Secretary-General and other key documents.

Analysis | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 20 June 2022](#)

Scientific evidence on the political impact of the Sustainable Development Goals

[Frank Biermann](#), [Thomas Hickmann](#), [Carole-Anne S  nit](#), [Marianne Beisheim](#), [Steven Bernstein](#), [Pamela Chasek](#), [Leonie Grob](#), [Rakhyun E. Kim](#), [Louis J. Kotz  ](#), [M  ns Nilsson](#), [Andrea Ord   ez Llanos](#), [Chukwumerije Okereke](#), [Prajal Pradhan](#), [Rob Raven](#), [Yixian Sun](#), [Marjanneke J. Vijge](#), [Detlef van Vuuren](#) & [Birka Wicke](#)

[Nature Sustainability](#) (2022) | [Cite this article](#)

19k Accesses | 3 Citations | 572 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

1 An [Author Correction](#) to this article was published on 27 June 2022

1 This article has been [updated](#)

Abstract

In 2015, the United Nations agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals as the central normative framework for sustainable development worldwide. The effectiveness of governing by such broad global goals, however, remains uncertain, and we lack comprehensive meta-studies that assess the political impact of the goals across countries and globally. We present here condensed evidence from an analysis of over 3,000 scientific studies on the Sustainable Development Goals published between 2016 and April 2021. Our findings suggests that the goals have had some political impact on institutions and policies, from local to global governance. This impact has been largely discursive, affecting the way actors understand and communicate about sustainable development. More profound normative and institutional impact, from legislative action to changing resource allocation, remains rare. We conclude that the scientific evidence suggests only limited transformative political impact of the Sustainable Development Goals thus far.

Access & Citations

42k

Article Accesses

43

[Web of Science](#)

49

[CrossRef](#)

Online attention



952 tweeters

22 news outlets

246 Mendeley

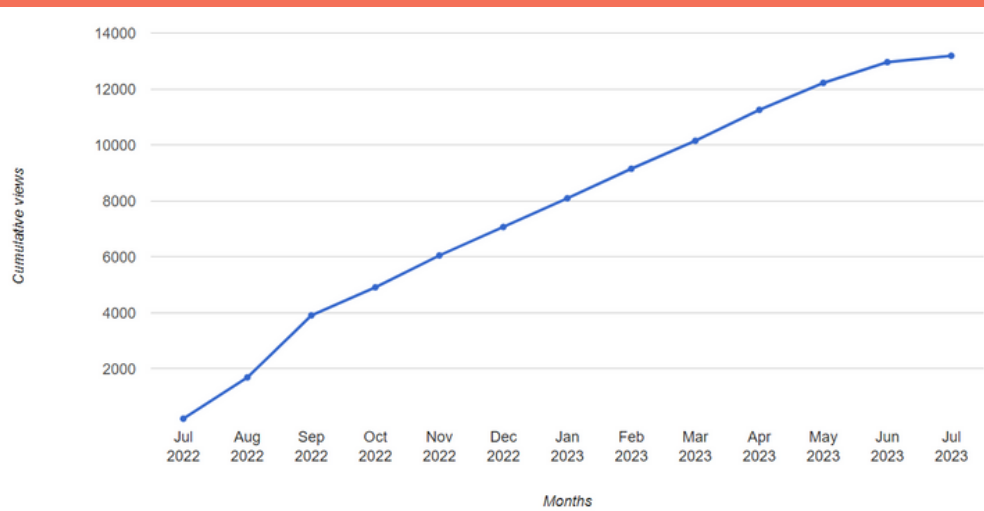
2 blogs

1 Redditors

4 Facebook pages

3 Wikipedia page

This article is in the 99th percentile (ranked 969th) of the 429,706 tracked articles of a similar age in all journals and the 97th percentile (ranked 2nd) of the 44 tracked articles of a similar age in *Nature Sustainability*



Back to
Navigation Page

“ This comprehensive and rigorous assessment is essential reading for anyone seeking to ensure that the Decade of Action means something more than words. ”



*Åsa Persson, Research Director,
Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden*

“ This is a much needed book – an evidence-based and holistic assessment of the progress towards the SDGs from global governance perspective. All stakeholders should learn from the authors on how we can achieve the SDGs. ”



*Norichika Kanie, Professor, Graduate School of
Media and Governance, Keio University, Japan*

[Back to
Navigation Page](#)

“ This study poses a timely and profound challenge to scholars and practitioners of global governance to identify what else, if anything, can and must be done in the time we have left to move societies towards positive action in securing the future we all agree we want. ”



*Heide Hackmann, Inaugural Chief Executive Officer (2018 – 2022),
International Science Council; Interim Director, Future Africa
Institute, University of Pretoria*

“ This is a critical assessment of the political change required to deliver the universally agreed UN Sustainable Development Goals. I strongly advise everyone in political office to read this book. ”

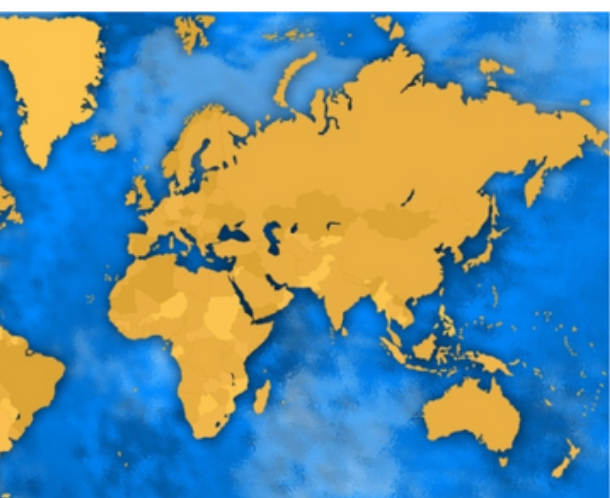


*Johan Rockström, Director, Potsdam Institute
for Climate Impact Research, Germany*



Research projects...

[Back to Navigation Page](#)



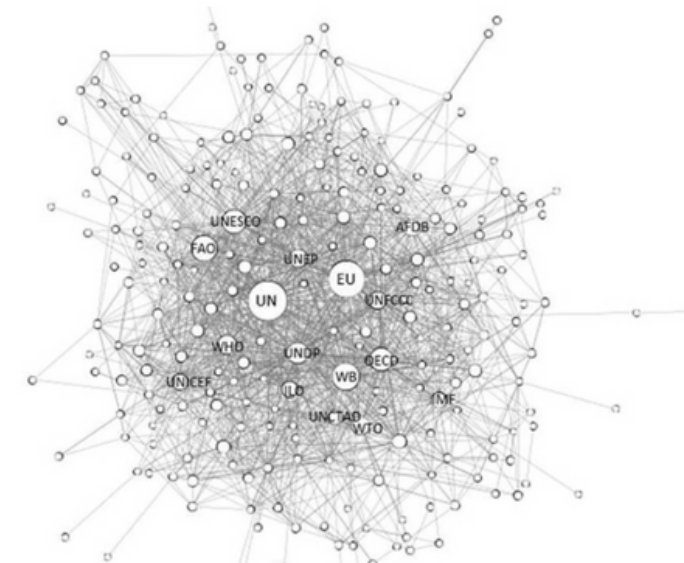
Nobody behind? The Least Developed Countries in global sustainability governance



UN Regional Commissions as orchestrators for sustainable development



Involving stakeholders in achieving the SDGs: A survey into integrated sustainability and geographical regions



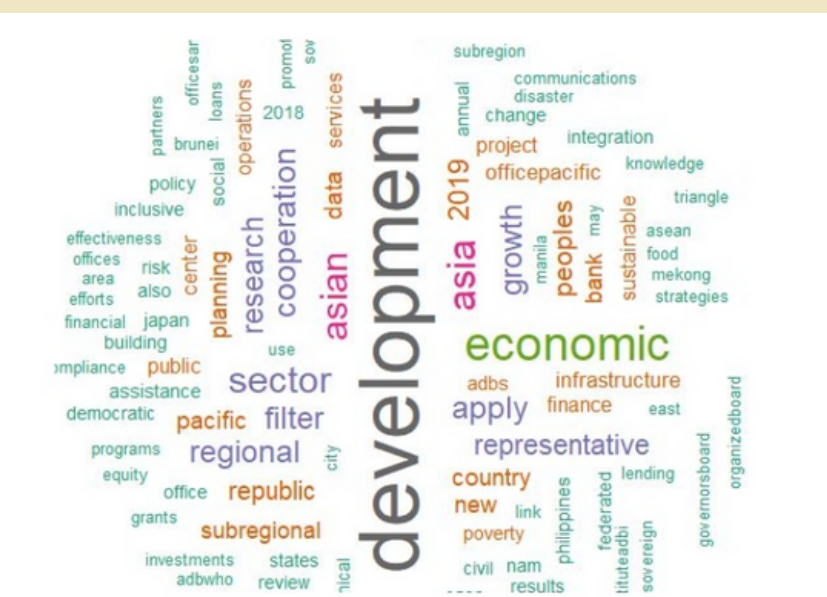
The SDGs are strengthening organizational silos



Can the SDGs green international organisations? Sustainable integration in the International Labour Organisation



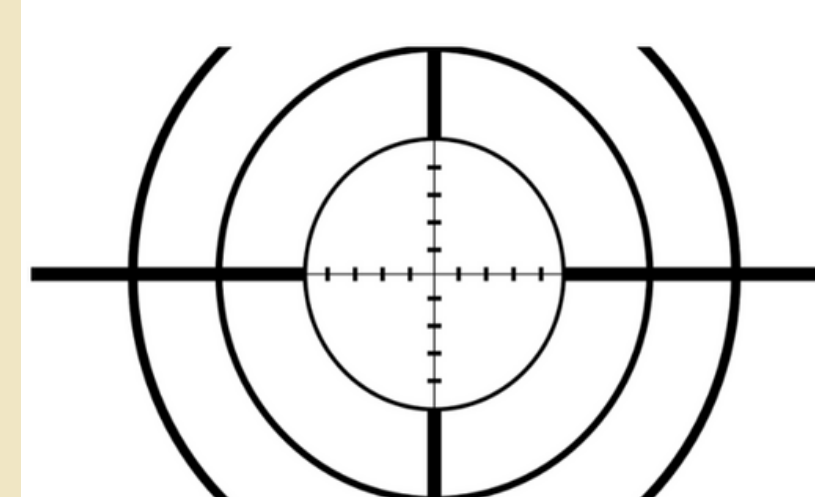
The World Bank engages with SDGs on reducing inequalities



SDG adoption and issue integration in international organizations



The great amnesia: The marginalization of Least Developed Countries in global change science



International organisations as 'custodians' of the SDGs

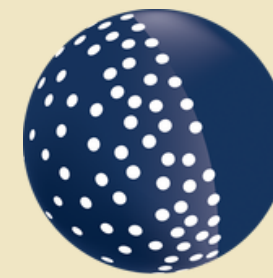


What were success factors for the Millennium Development Goals?

Further efforts to take stock of the political impacts of the SDGs as research extending from the SDG Impact Assessment are taking place within the Earth System Governance **SDG Taskforce**.

The Taskforce covers, but is not limited to, the steering effects of the SDGs on **five thematic issues** led by five working groups:

1. WG Global Governance and the SDGs: HLPF and the VNR process
2. WG National Policy Integration of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs
3. WG Sub-National Initiatives for SDG Implementation
4. WG Private Governance and Partnerships for the SDGs
5. WG SDG Education and Learning



Earth
System
Governance



Universiteit Utrecht



Taskforce on the Sustainable Development Goals

This taskforce brings together an interdisciplinary global group of scholars and practitioners to advance the scientific understanding of 'governance by global goals' and in particular the steering effects of the Sustainable Development Goals.

[Home](#) » Taskforce on the Sustainable Development Goals

Description

The Earth System Governance 'Taskforce on the Sustainable Development Goals' brings together an interdisciplinary global group of scholars and practitioners to advance the scientific understanding of 'governance by global goals' and in particular the steering effects of the Sustainable Development Goals.



[Back to
Navigation Page](#)



“ More fundamental change is needed for the Sustainable Development Goals to become ‘the bold and transformative steps ... to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path’ that the 2030 Agenda has promised. ”

[Back to
Navigation Page](#)

Contact / Collaborate / Contribute

To learn more about this broad research agenda, please visit the [Taskforce page](#).

All Earth System Governance fellows at all career stages are invited to join this Taskforce to jointly study the Sustainable Development Goals and their steering effects on the governance of sustainability challenges.

For more information about joining the Taskforce, please contact the taskforce conveners by e-mailing SDG@earthsystemgovernance.org.

