

SDG Interactions and analytics:

Peter Gluckman, INGSA
Heide Hackmann, ICSU
Ann-Sophie Stevance, ICSU
Kristiann Allen, INGSA
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The SDGs – utilitarian or not?

- The SDGs can either be seen as an aspirational set of goals or potentially a tool-kit for driving progress in nation states.
- The former largely drives a repackaging of business as usual.
- The latter is a desired approach but is not possible if there is no alignment with existing policy processes



STI, policy making and the SDGs

- The need to distinguish between policy for science and science for policy is well understood
- An analogous distinction can be made with respect to the SDGs:
 - The STI forum is largely about using the SDGs to drive STI activity that might help achieve them (policy for science)
 - There is a void relating to the question: how can robust evidence be used better to progress the SDGs? (science for policy)
- The problem is magnified because policy making processes does not align with the SDGs



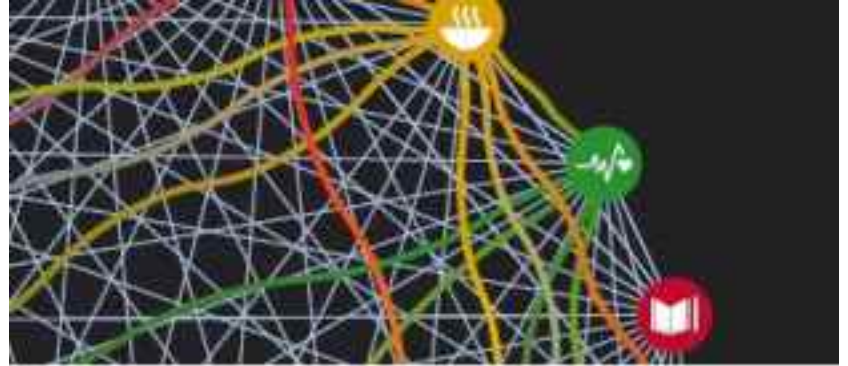
The reality of policy making

- Governments do not organize themselves around the SDGs
- The goals, targets and indicators do not necessarily reflect national priorities.
- The SDGs were not developed with policy making as the main driver, yet it is now clear that policy making is a critical element
- Policy making is the matter of choosing between different options that affect different stakeholders in different ways with differing spillover effects
- The SDGs – as they are – are too numerous for national policy makers to consider goal by goal. It is more efficient (and more realistic) to consider how the goals interact and then find where this interaction can intersect with national priorities = greater chance of uptake of SDGs by policy makers



Building on the ICSU interaction analysis framework

Next step:
prioritisation and
policy alignment



A GUIDE TO
SDG INTERACTIONS:
FROM SCIENCE
TO IMPLEMENTATION



Interactions as a key driver of effective implementation of the SDGs?

- Making the challenges of integration visible
- Some goals and targets have conflictual relationships; progress in one area may come at the expense of progress in others.
- Understanding potential synergies and trade-offs is critical for efficient and coherent implementation and monitoring
- Develop an holistic approach to drive system change

Going beyond synergies and trade-offs: a seven-point scale

COMMENT

GOAL SCORING
The influence of one Sustainable Development Goal or target on another can be summarized with this simple scale.

Interaction	Name	Explanation	Example
+3	Indivisible	Inherently linked to the achievement of another.	Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is indivisible from ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership.
+2	Reinforcing	Aids the achievement of another goal.	Providing access to electricity reinforces water-pumping and irrigation systems. Strengthening the capacity to adapt to climate-related hazards reduces losses caused by disasters.
+1	Enabling	Creates conditions that further another goal.	Providing electricity access in rural homes enables education, because it makes it possible to do homework at night with electric lighting.
0	Consistent	No significant positive or negative interactions.	Ensuring education for all does not interact significantly with infrastructure development or conservation of ocean ecosystems.
-1	Constraining	Limits options on another goal.	Improved water efficiency can constrain agricultural irrigation. Reducing climate change can constrain the options for energy access.
-2	Counteracting	Clashes with another goal.	Boosting competition for growth can counteract waste reduction and climate mitigation.
-3	Cancelling	Makes it impossible to reach another goal.	Fully ensuring public transparency and democratic accountability cannot be combined with national security goals. Full protection of natural reserves excludes public access for recreation.

- Negative interactions: cancelling (-3), counteracting (-2), constraining (-1)
- Neutral interaction: consistent
- Positive interactions: enabling (+1), reinforcing (+2) and indivisible (+3)

Nilsson, M., D. Griggs and M. Visbeck, 2016. Map the interactions between Sustainable Development Goals. Nature, 534:320-322.

Interactions matter

- Interactions matter
 - They are where much policy making occurs
 - They are where risk and benefit can be better understood
 - Often they align better with how government agencies operate
 - They can inform the policy maker of where priorities might lie
 - They illustrate tradeoffs and spillover effects
 - Discussions with policy makers and politicians in both developed countries and LMICS suggest that a focus on interactions has more meaning
 - The Agenda 2030 papers acknowledge the importance of interactions



Rationale of the ICSU-INGSA project

- Policies and institutional structures already exist; can't just map SDGs on top
- The ICSU-INGSA project
 - Focuses on interactions
 - Reframes the SDGs in a holistic, manageable way
 - Countries have the opportunity to work from manageable, but also to customize according to context and domestic priorities



Project goals

1. Advance understanding of **interaction analysis**.
2. Provide a **toolkit** and **process** for practical and contextualized interaction mapping and prioritization
3. promote **collaboration between key stakeholders** including scientists and policy makers



Phase 1: Identifying generic interactions

1. An expert group will reduce the number of significant interactions to a manageable number
2. There may be a need to add additional targets
3. Dummy sub-targets can be left for context specific addition
4. These interactions are not weighted by the expert group
5. A computer based tool-kit is developed for country level weighting
6. Some relationships are generic across borders while others are highly location-specific; and the scale of the analysis can have a significant effect on results
7. Analysis can be across all SDGs for built around core clusters



Phase 2: Country based pilots

1. Several countries are very interesting in piloting
2. National framework based on agreed clusters.
3. Separate focus groups: scientists; policy-makers ; civil society/privatesector to identify and weight the pre-identified interactions relevant to their respective national development priorities
4. Dummy variables can be used to add context specific interactions
5. Focus group analyses will be compared and where there are substantive differences in the clustered priorities, this will be subject to facilitated discussion before policy makers reweight. This conciliation process itself will be core.
6. Policy makers then prioritise the critical interaction nodes for
 - Addressing knowledge and knowledge application gaps (can feed into STI roadmapping)
 - Policy development (evidence informed)
 - Developing relevant and useful indicators
 - (can link to NASEM analytics)



Phase 3: Synthesis and follow up

- Generic tool/process will be refined for broader uptake
- Promote peer learning through feedback from pilot countries.
- Establish community of practice to apply the tool and process in other countries



Anticipated results:

- Digital Tool and Process to prioritise critical interactions between SDGs according to countries' most pressing needs
- Engagement of multiple stakeholders in a coherent process
- Prioritisation of science-to-policy pathways that are relevant to national contexts
- Clearer information to apply to STI roadmapping for a more impactful approach



Project governance and implementation



- Steering committee established
- Timeline for pilots if funding found: mid-2019 (HLPF)
- Budget: ~€500K to be raised
- Other partners to be identified (knowledge and institutional): World Bank,
- Case study countries to be identified

