

## Results from the public consultation of the draft SDSN report “An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development”

*From 7 to 22 May 2013, the SDSN held a public consultation of its draft report. During this period, the draft was posted on the SDSN website and circulated extensively through many email lists and contacts. The SDSN Secretariat received detailed written comments on the draft from over 150 organizations and many individuals (list in the Annex). We are grateful for these comments, which have helped us improve the report substantially. This document highlights the main comments that were made with regards to the draft report and how they have been addressed. It does not attempt to summarize the richness and diversity of all comments received. Any remaining errors or omissions in the final report are the sole responsibility of the authors.*

### Comments that have been incorporated:

- **General and introductory sections:**
  - Clarify the role of the SDSN in the post-2015 processes
  - Avoid the impression that the proposed additions to the MDG agenda (environment, social inclusion, planetary boundaries) **crowd out the focus on the need to finish the jobs on the MDGs**: We now highlight this as the first of the five shifts in Section II
  - **Clarify that the “four dimensions”** of sustainable development are not referred to as such in the Rio+20 document (which refers to three dimensions and highlights the governance challenges separately)
  - Ensure an adequate balance between the four dimensions (some felt the focus was weighted too heavily on environmental challenges, while others saw too much focus on ending extreme poverty)
  - Ensure balance between the rights and responsibilities of developed and developing countries
  - Strengthen the **cross-references and linkages** between the ten priorities
  - Explain that BAU is also marked by poor national policies – not just a failure of international cooperation and coordination
  - **Table 1:**
    - Explain how these assessments were determined
    - Align better with the ten priorities
    - Include the responsibilities of rich countries for approaching planetary boundaries
  - **Business:**
    - Need to distinguish more clearly between **small and larger businesses**
    - Businesses respond to prevailing market incentives; explain that **governments are responsible for setting the rules for business** but in cooperation with business—business cannot do this on its own
- **Poverty and hunger:**
  - Explain the term hunger (as comprising malnutrition, stunting, and food insecurity)
  - Explain the links between hunger and sanitation/hygiene/child health
  - Describe key strategies for reducing hunger
- **Peace and security:**
  - Strengthen references to peace and security: now included explicitly under the fourth dimension of SD and throughout the document
  - Underscore that many proposed goals address the structural causes of conflict
- **Economic development within planetary boundaries:**

- Clarify **how countries can address planetary boundaries** and the need for **better measures of economic progress**; clarify the meaning of **target 2b**
- Clarify what the report means by “**decoupling**” and clarify the language on “**sustainable consumption and production**” patterns: done in revised FAQs (Annex III) and throughout the report
- Strengthen the focus on **sexual and reproductive health rights**; avoid the impression that a fertility target might induce governments to promote coercive means to reduce fertility rates or not respect sexual and reproductive health rights in any other way [some comments have called for deleting a goal on fertility rates – even if framed in the context of realizing SRH rights]
- **Education:**
  - Broaden the education section by explaining the **non-economic benefits of education** and the fact that good education is an essential human right
  - Describe more clearly what children need to learn at school
- **Gender equality, social inclusion, human rights:**
  - Strengthen the **focus on human rights**: now referred to as one of the four normative concepts underpinning an SD trajectory (Section III)
  - Do not limit human rights to **economic and social rights** only
  - Explain the connection between inequality and peace/security
  - Refer to **gender equality** more systematically throughout the report; strengthen discussion of gender equality under priority 4; and in particular, strengthen the discussion of violence against women
  - Discuss **child protection**, including child marriage, child labor, and children living in conflict settings
  - Strengthen the language on ending **violence** (now “prevent and eliminate”)
- **Health:**
  - Underscore the need for **affordable health care** as the vital complement to access
  - Explain the **logic behind the mortality targets** (absolute mortality targets vs. percentage reductions)
  - Refer to **immunizations** in the targets
  - Explicitly refer to **HIV/AIDS, TB, & Malaria** (the infectious diseases named under the MDGs)
  - Explain what is meant by measuring “**subjective wellbeing and social capital**”
  - Strengthen the focus on **promoting healthy behaviors**
- **Food and agriculture:**
  - Expand the section to cover fisheries and livestock as a core part of the global food production system
  - Refer to the link between biofuels and food production
  - Explain how **access to land contributes** to food insecurity
  - Highlight the important role that **women farmers** play in agriculture, particularly in Africa
  - Explain the importance of reducing **food losses**
  - Cross-reference nutrition with sanitation/hygiene/health
- **Cities:**
  - Refer to **violence**
  - Include **Disaster Risk Management**
- **Climate change:**

- Call for **emission reductions by 2020**
- Clarify the language on biofuels (links with food production)
- Describe the role of short-lived climate forcers
- Address **climate change adaptation** more systematically throughout the report
- Include stronger references to **disaster risk management (DRM)**
- **Ecosystems and biodiversity:**
  - Explain how Goal 9 and its targets relate to the **Aichi Biodiversity Goals**
  - Strengthen the links between ecosystems and **human well-being**
  - Refer to marine protected areas
  - Describe in greater detail the crosscutting nature of **water**
- **Governance:**
  - Explain that governance is also an end in itself, not just a means to an end, and describe its components in more detail
  - Underscore the positive contribution business is already making to sustainable development
  - Provide more details on the financing part (domestic resource mobilization, PPPs, innovative financing, timeline for 0.7 percent)
  - Explain how the roles of multi- and bilateral development agencies might need to evolve if the world pursues SDGs along the lines outlined in the document
- **Framing the SDGs:**
  - Many comments called for a stronger focus on water and water resources management. In response, the wording of Goal 9 has been expanded, and the narrative has been revised in many places (see in particular Question 25 in Annex 2).
  - Describe data needs and how indicators will be developed
  - Describe in detail accountability mechanisms (including the role of NGOs)
  - Explain the logic for the structuring the goals and targets; why are some geographic, others thematic, and still others “crosscutting”?

**Structural comments that could not be fully accommodated:**

- Several comments suggested a reordering of the proposed goals (e.g. make SDG 4 the third goal, move up climate change, etc.). We underscore that the ordering of the goals does not imply any prioritization or hierarchy. To avoid any misunderstandings we suggest staying as close as possible to the ordering of the MDGs.
- Many comments emphasized the need for additional stand-alone goals for several issues, including: gender equality, peace and security, jobs, disaster risk management, trade, the financial system, and science and technology. These issues are all covered to varying degrees in the report. The Leadership Council feels that it is important to limit the number of goal and targets to no more than 10 and 30 respectively.
- Other comments called for fewer goals and targets. The Leadership Council does not see how the number of goals and targets can be reduced without leaving out issues that are important for operationalizing sustainable development.
- Several comments suggested that hunger should be included under Goal 6 on agriculture. The reasons for keeping hunger under the proposed SDG 1 are explained in a new FAQ.

## Annex: List of organizations that sent detailed comments on the draft SDSN report

ACSMP/UNSW Australia  
ACTION  
Action Aid  
African Food Security Urban Network  
African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town  
African Monitor and Voice African Future Initiative  
Amnesty International  
AquaFed  
ASIES  
Association pour l'Intégration et le Développement  
Durable au Burundi-AIDB  
Atkisson Inc.  
Australian Federation of Graduate Women  
BOND Disability & Development Group  
Brazilian Society of Ecological Economics - ECOECO  
Business in the Community  
CAFOD  
CEBDS  
CEEweb for Biodiversity  
Center for Social Responsibility in Mining  
(Queensland University)  
Center for Universal Education  
Brookings Institution  
ChildFund Alliance  
Christian Aid  
CIRAD  
Cities Alliance  
Columbia University  
Conservation International  
Coordinator Commons Cluster and Commons Action  
for the United Nations  
UN Rep. Association of World Citizens  
Institute for Planetary Synthesis  
All Win Network  
CTS EMBARQ Mexico  
Danish National Committee for IGBP / University of  
Copenhagen  
De Dierencoalitie  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für international  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Development Alternatives Group  
Development Initiatives  
Disability and Development Cooperation  
econsense - Forum for Sustainable Development of  
German Business  
EcoSense  
Ethical Markets Media  
EuroNGOs and Countdown 2015 Europe Networks  
Fair Trade Advocacy Office  
FAO  
Federal University of Mato Grosso  
Forum of NGOs Tuberculosis Rio de Janeiro Brazil  
German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut  
für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)  
Global Alliance for Tax Justice Coordinator  
Committee  
Global Compact  
Global Ecovillage Network  
Global Footprint Network  
GlobalForesightBooks.org  
Graduate Institute Geneva  
Greenpeace  
Groupe Solidarité Justice SHJM of Québec  
Harvard University  
HDS Systems Design Science  
High Level Task Force for International Conference  
on Population and Development (ICPD)  
Home Planet  
Human Rights Watch  
ICLEI (Secretariado para México  
Centroamérica y el Caribe)  
IDRC  
IGES  
Initiative for Equality  
Instituto de Políticas para el Transporte y el  
Desarrollo (ITDP)  
Interact Worldwide/Action for Global Health  
Integrative Strategies Forum  
Interact Worldwide/Action for Global Health  
International Christian University  
International Council for Science Secretariat  
International Crisis Group  
International Federation of University Women  
International Presentation Association  
International Presentation Association of the Sisters  
of the Presentation  
International Union of Geological Sciences  
International Women's Health Coalition  
International-Lawyers.Org  
IRRI  
IUPAC  
Joint Institute for Strategic Energy Analysis  
Kathmandu University  
LEAD Southern and Eastern Africa  
National Assembly of Nigeria  
Leonard Cheshire Disability  
Lund University  
Lyon Arboretum  
University of Hawai'i  
Madjulla Inc.

Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Colombia  
Monash Sustainability Institute  
Monash University  
Norman Borlaug Institute, Texas A&M  
Occupy San Francisco  
ODI  
OESTE ENGENHARIA  
Oxfam India  
Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport  
PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency  
Pforzheim University  
Plan International  
Population Matters  
Progressio  
Queen Sirikit National Institute for Child Health  
Rep. dos Pontos de Cultura do Rio Grande do Sul na  
Comissão Nacional/GT-Boas Práticas do  
Movimento Nós Podemos do RS pelos  
ODM/ONU  
Risk Modeling and Insurance (RMSI)  
Rutgers University  
Save the Children  
Schumacher Institute  
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
Sisters of Saint-Anne  
Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin  
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary  
Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC)  
SOS Children's Villages International  
Southern Africa HIV Information Dissemination  
Service  
SSA Social Justice Office  
Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future  
Sustainabilitycorp.net  
Sustainable Design International Ltd.  
Sustainable World Initiative  
Swedish Steering Group for Beyond 2015  
The CONVERGE Project

The Foundation for Civilizational Transformation and  
Conscious Evolution  
The Geneva Consensus Foundation  
The Interagency Child Protection Group  
The Population and Sustainability Alliance (PSDA)  
The Saltus Forum  
Transformations LLC  
UN Peacebuilding Support Office  
UN WOMEN  
UNANIMA International  
UNCCD  
UNDP  
UNEP  
UNESCO Culture Section  
UNICEF UK  
UNIDO  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)  
United Nations University  
United Nations Volunteers  
United Regions Organization/FOGAR  
United States Council for International Business  
(USCIB)  
University of Colombo  
University of Siena  
MPS Foundation  
University of Turku  
Vale Columbia Center on Sustainable International  
Investment  
WaterAid  
Waterloo Institute for Complexity and Innovation  
WEDO  
WHO  
Women's Board  
World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts  
(WAGGGS)  
World Bank  
World Business Council for Sustainable Development  
World Society for the Protection of Animals, and  
WWF