# Open **SDG**club.Berlin

## Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting 2019

Sustainability practitioners calling for action

07 – 09 May 2019, RNE Documentation

*On behalf of my colleague Ankica Todorovic and myself, I would like to thank you very much for the great conference, which was excellently organised and provided a great platform for exchange of experiences, relevant information and networking. We are really very grateful and happy that we could be part of such a refreshing and open-minded event which inspired us very much. At the same time it gave us additional motivation to continue our SDG efforts in an even more creative way.*

MILE PEJCIC

# Content

# Foreword

*by Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul*
*Member of the German Council for Sustainable Development*

When the German Council for sustainable development (RNE) started the Open SDG club.Berlin in 2016 it was to provide a transnational meeting platform for those who are working in their respective countries' civil society towards reaching the globally agreed sustainable development goals. We are more than happy that now, for the second time, people share their precious time and valuable expertise in our SDGclub.Berlin. Participants are part of multi-stakeholder bodies and initiatives, of non-governmental organisations and networks. They work in business, academia, Parliaments and local communities. They come from over 30 countries with very diverse background and outreach. All of them are living proof that the 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda that is inspiring actors all over the world. Please take a look at the stories some of them provided for this publication and let yourself be inspired by them.

For me, as elder stateswomen and for eleven years minister in the German Government, the Open SDGclub.Berlin 2019 meeting was an exciting experience. Its engaging and interactive formats created an atmosphere where everyone was empowered to speak up and to share insights – exactly what the 2030 Agenda so urgently needs. Sustainability practitioners across countries and sectors exchanged experiences, asked questions and finally came to a common understanding on recommendations.. Their Call for Action addresses leaders who will be gathering at the UN SDG-Summit in September 2019.

This publication  wants to share learnings discussed in Berlin and it underscores that the Open SDGclub follows a shareware concept that can be replicated elsewhere as Open SDGclub.xxxx.

This inspirational and encouraging meeting was only possible thanks to the creative initiative of Verónica Tomei who brought together this particular group at this particular time and created the multi-stakeholder formats, and Günther Bachmann, RNE Secretary General, who invented the very idea of the Open SDGclub.Berlin and convened the Call for Action . As an initiative of the RNE the Open SDGclub.Berlin, once again, shows the benefits and impacts those organized multi stakeholder bodies can have. The success of the 2030 Agenda depends on the engagement and empowerment of young people, women and all those who are willing and capable to think (and act) out of the box.

I can only wish for this unique initiative to live further on in Germany and other parts of our common world.

# Open **SDG**club.Berlin

# Open SDGclub.Berlin 7 - 9 May 2019 / Programme

**7 May 2019**
Hotel Rossi, Lehrter Straße 66, 10557 Berlin

| | |
|---|---|
| **10.00 am** | **Welcome** |
| | by **Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul,** Member German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) |
| | **Gesa Miehe-Nordmeyer,** Director General at the Federal Chancellery of Germany |
| | **Michael Geissler,** Hotel Rossi |
| **10.30 am** | **Starting session: 11 years to go till 2030 – What's on our journey? Milestones ahead and routes to be tracked** |
| | Conversation between **Ellen Lindsey Awuku, Riina Pursiainen** and **Rebecca Freitag** |
| | Input by **Gomer Padong** |
| | Interview with **Philipp Schönrock** |
| | Several discussion rounds |
| **12.30 pm** | **Lunch break** |
| **01.30 pm** | **Sneak preview on break-out sessions** |
| **02.00 pm** | **Break-out sessions on practical experience organized in the following teams:** |
| | **Team HLPF** led by **Andrew Griffiths** and with announced inputs by **Deirdre de Burca** and **Jan-Gustav Strandenaes** on HLPF review, **Javier Surasky** on Latin American Experiences with VNRs |
| | **Team Multi-stakeholder processes and bodies** led by **Alessandra Nilo** and with announced inputs by **Nana Janashia** on the Georgian SDG-Council, **Bjarke Vestergaard** on the Danish Agenda 2030 Panel |
| | **Team Projects and initiatives** led by **Jean-Patrice Ngoyi** and with announced inputs by **Learta Hollaj** on SDGs at municipal level and **Salimata Bocoum** on civil society involvement in Agenda 2030 implemetation |
| | **Team Subnational 2030 implementation** led by **Valeria Perez** and with announced inputs by **Sabrina Ronco** on RENN and **Luísa Schmidt** on SDGlocal |
| **04.00 pm** | **Coffee break** |
| **04.30 pm** | **Reporting back from team debates** |
| **05.00 pm** | **Debate on global context** |
| | Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Helmy Abouleish, Silvia Lara |
| **07.00 pm** | **Dinner and networking** |
| **09.30 pm** | **End of day one** |

**8 May 2019**
Hotel Rossi, Lehrter Straße 66, 10557 Berlin

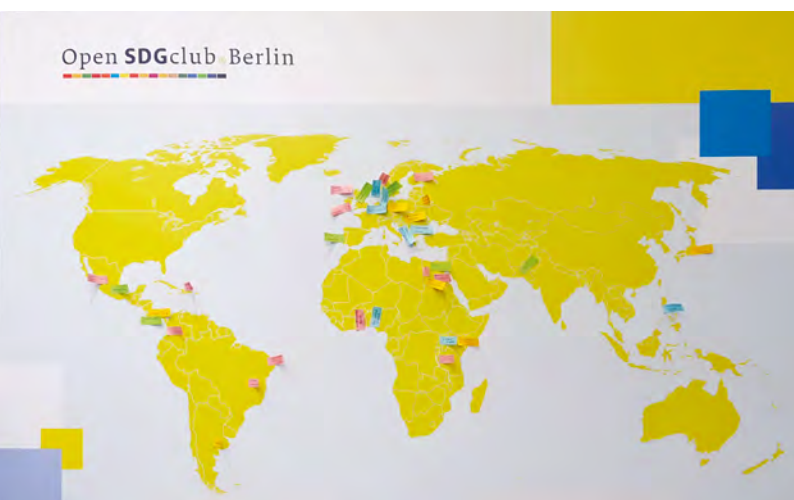| | |
|---|---|
| **09.00 am** | **Plenary exchange: Take aways from day one and new questions to teams** |
| | Introduction to Draft Call by **Günther Bachmann** |
| **10.00 am** | **Break-out sessions** |
| | in Teams HLPF, Multi-stakeholder processes and bodies, Projects and initiatives, Subnational 2030 implementation: **What recommendations can we draw from our practical experience?** |

| | |
|---|---|
| **12.30 pm** | **Lunch break** |
| **01.30 pm** | **Team rally: Presentations on team results** |
| **03.00 pm** | **Coffee break** |
| **03.30 pm** | **Open space** |
| **05.00 pm** | **Transfer to German Bundestag,** Paul-Löbe-Building |
| **06.00 pm** | **Split into 2 groups** |
| | **Group 1: Meeting with the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Development of the German Bundestag** |
| | Debate on the role of Parliaments in implementing the 2030 Agenda and preparation of the HLPF. Input by: |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Günther Bachmann,** | RNE Secretary General, |
| **Esther Passaris,** | Member of the National Assembly, Republic of Kenya |
| **Van Hung Phung,** | Member of the National Assembly of Vietnam |
| **Malini Mehra,** | Executive Director of the International Secretariat for Globe |

**Group 2: Tour-Visit of the German Bundestag**

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| **07.15 pm** | **Dinner with Members of the German Bundestag at the Parliament Restaurant** |
| **10.00 pm** | **End of day two** |

**9 May 2019**
Design Offices Humboldthafen, Alexanderufer 3 – 7, 10117 Berlin

| | |
|---|---|
| **09.00 am** | **Sustainability actors in Germany** |
| | 4min presentations each |
| **10.00 am** | **Speed dating German sustainability actors** |
| | **Round 1** |
| | · **Jessica Baier** on Global Twinnings |
| | · **Susanne Brandt** on "A white sheet of paper" |
| | · **Sonja Grigat** on the civil society network Agenda 2030 |
| | · **Angela Paul** on 2030 Initiative Programme |
| | · **Falk Schmidt** on the Science Platform 2030 |
| | · **Ulrich Walter** on Sustainable Business |
| | **Round 2** |
| | · **Marianne Beisheim** on „Follow-up and Review" of the SDGs at the annual UN-HLPF |
| | · **Jörn Geisselmann** on Partners for Review |
| | · **Marie Halbach** on RENN |
| | · **Florian Harrlandt** on the Sustainability Code |
| | · **Susanne Salz** on the Multi-Actor-Partnerships |
| | · **Janina Sturm,** SDSN Germany |
| **12.30 pm** | **Lunch** |
| **01.30 pm** | **Room for impressions and feedback** |
| **02.00 pm** | **Moderated debate with representatives of the German Government on the meeting's results** |
| | **Stephan Contius,** Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety |
| | **Ingolf Dietrich,** Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| | **Lorena Vazquez Ordaz,** the Hunger Project |
| **04.00 pm** | **We say goodbye – for this time!** |

# Summary of Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting 2019

Upon invitation by the German Council for Sustainable Development, the Open SDG-club.Berlin meeting 2019 brought together 60 sustainability practitioners from over 30 countries. Parwwticipants came from multi-stakeholder bodies and initiatives, from civil society organisations and networks, from the business sector, academia, the regional and local level, and from parliaments. Following on from 2016, this was the second Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting. Many of the participants of the first edition had continued exchange since then; some of them were present at the 2019 meeting.

Expectations voiced at the beginning of the meeting highlighted the following:
- Exchange of practical solutions-oriented ideas
- Be part of the process of changing HLPF
- Learn what is being done at local, national, regional and global level
- Highlight challenges and seek ways to deal with them
- Engage with different kinds of stakeholders
- Reach real conclusions.

The meeting alternated between plenary debates and teamwork in outbreak sessions. Whereas the meeting focused primarily on the transnational exchange among Open SDGclub.Berlin participants, several moments were organised to engage with German stakeholders. On the first day, a representative of the German Chancellery greeted

Open SDGclub.Berlin participants. On day two, the Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting participants had a meeting with the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Development of the German Bundestag to discuss about the role of Parliaments in implementing the 2030 Agenda. On day three, a dozen German sustainability actors joined the meeting to present their projects and initiatives and to exchange experiences with Open SDG club.Berlin participants. The meeting ended with a debate with representatives of the two responsible German ministries, the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation.





Participants discussed, on the one hand, concrete projects and experiences, and on the other hand, the current general political and economic context. It became obvious that although juxtaposing these perspectives is extremely challenging, it is equally important. Throughout the meeting, participants highlighted the urgency of the current situation and the need to upscale and accelerate existing good practices through enhanced political ambition. Hence the formulation of and agreement on the Call for Action included on the following page.

# Open **SDG**club.Berlin

*Future enters into us, in order to transform itself in us,
long before it happens.*

RAINER MARIA RILKE

# Calling for Action

Nearly sixty stakeholders and practitioners from more than thirty nations, all engaged in our mutual responsibility to implement the 2030 Agenda including the Sustainable Development Goals, met as 'Open SDGclub.Berlin' in Berlin, May 7–9, 2019, invited by the German Council for Sustainable Development.

In our personal capacity we reiterate the importance of the 2030 Agenda document which now needs concrete multi-lateral action. As practitioners in implementing this agenda we are part of national councils for sustainable deve-lopment and of similar stakeholder bodies and initiatives, of civil society organisations, business, academia, local and regional governmements and parliaments, all actively engaged in realizing the Agenda 2030 goals and principles. We reiterate the sense of urgency that brought Heads of State to agree unanimously to the 2030 Agenda in 2015. Imple-mentation has not yet made the difference that is needed.

**I – We call for all Heads of State to raise the level of awareness of and commitment to implementing and following up the 2030 Agenda.**

1. We encourage Heads of State to form alliances that aspire to achieve the 2030 Agenda including all the Sustainable Development Goals earlier than 2030. We all have to keep in mind that our generation is the first on earth that has the means to finally end hunger, inequalities that lead to deprivation, and to prevent the planet's life from being burnt to dust and forced to disappear.

2. We remind Heads of State that the 2030 Agenda is a huge political asset that must never be underestimat-ed. This asset connects with people's belief and hopes and is a future-bound bridge connecting nations, people, local communities and multilateralism. Inaction will be irreparable and cause social unrest. Bold actions for fully financed implementation are needed.

3. The 2030 Agenda is a done deal. Delivery of solutions is overdue. Delivery must be made the key issue for the next years. This will need new action and investments that we have not seen so far. Aligning all political processes and economic development in particular is key for implementing the 2030 Agenda, as is the empowerment of local and regional action, partnerships and networking.

INITIATORS:

GÜNTHER BACHMANN, GERMANY

VERÓNICA TOMEI, GERMANY

HEIDEMARIE WIECZOREK-ZEUL, GERMANY

HELMY ABOULEISH, EGYPT

JOSEF AHLKE, GERMANY

AHMAD ALI, PAKISTAN

ADIS ARNAUTOVIC, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

ELLEN LINDSEY AWUKU, GHANA

GÁBOR BARTUS, HUNGARY

SALIMATA BOCOUM, SENEGAL

DEIRDRE DE BURCA, IRELAND

MICHIEL DE VRIES, NETHERLANDS

JACOB ELLIS, WALES

HASSAN ELMOUELHI, GERMANY

RISA ENDO, JAPAN

MAYRA ALEJANDRA MARTIN ESPINOSA, COLOMBIA

CHRYSOULA EXARCHOU, GREECE

REBECCA FREITAG, GERMANY

ANNE GADEGAARD, DENMARK

ANDREW GRIFFITHS, UNITED KINGDOM

MARIE HALBACH, GERMANY

LEARTA HOLLAJ, KOSOVO

MARTA IREN, HUNGARY

NANA JANASHIA, GEORGIA

HUDAI KARA, TURKEY

RICHARD KIMBOWA, UGANDA

TIMM KROEGER, GERMANY

**II – We call for all parties to use the UN HLPF as the one relevant global mechanism for coordinating and monitoring the 2030 Agenda.**

1. As the global focal point monitoring progress around the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the UN HLPF is accepted by nearly all non-state and state actors. This is a valuable achievement. However, its political visibility must be increased, as a forum for innovating and encouraging bold action.

2. The HLPF must be used to take bold decisions on how to implement the 2030 Agenda. Not utilizing this potential will affect in a negative way our universal future when trying to, inter alia: broker responsible, innovative and sustainable finance action; promote circular economy and resource efficiency; linking action taken by G7/8 and G20 to the HLPF processes; using HLPF to identify gaps and emerging issues; promoting partnerships to implement the SDGs based on equal influence by civil society, the private sector and the authorities.

3. The HLPF must be given a mandate to function within the UN decision-making system; it must be provided with ample financial resources, its secretariat strengthened, and more time provided for its deliberations. We need HLPF to improve and expand mutual learning and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, also in the light of emerging issues that will add challenges to the 2030 Agenda. The digitalization and the way we are dealing with big data is one such issue; a new and growing dimension of inequality is another; a third is the increasing depletion of natural goods and life-support systems, causing and increasing conflicts that drive people into flight and migration. Against this background, HLPF must be able to verify the progress achieved. The regional performance of UN bodies has to be reformed in a way that the HLPF's functionality can be multiplied, according to regional and subnational demands.

**III – We encourage all stakeholders to advance the multi-stakeholder and multi-level approaches to the 2030 Agenda, respecting the needs of future generations.**

1. For progress to happen, a safe operating space for civil society, non-state stakeholders and community-based organisations is needed. Consistent with the 2030 Agenda's whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach, we appeal to states to be more open and to actively involve stakeholders on national and subnational levels. Additional efforts must be made to enhance cooperation and collaboration.

2. The Open SDGclub.Berlin underscores the value of stakeholder partnerships in response to the implementation challenge of the 2030 Agenda. All stakeholders need a safe maneuvering space, with a lasting structure, access to information, and transparent processes. Their efforts must be adequately resourced. Mutual and transnational peer learning is a crucial resource for implementing our universal Agenda. Peer reviewing exercises should be used more frequently.

3. A global platform strengthening national SDG-Councils and similar multi-stakeholder bodies and entities is needed as a hub for stakeholder peer learning from all regions. This would add value to the HLPF.

Approved by the participants of the Open SDGclub.Berlin, May 7–9, 2019

SILVIA LARA, COSTA RICA
BARBARA MAKOWKA, GERMANY
MEHRA MALINI, UNITED KINGDOM
CLARICE MEYER CABRAL, BRAZIL
EMILIENNE LIONELLE NGO-SAMNICK, CAMEROON
JEAN PATRICE NGOYI KASONGO, NIGERIA
INGEBORG NIESTROY, GERMANY
ALESSANDRA NILO, BRAZIL

GOMER PADONG, PHILIPPINES
ESTHER PASSARIS, KENYA
MILE PEJCIC, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
VALERIA PEREZ, MEXICO
VAN HUNG PHUNG, VIETNAM
RIINA PURSIAINEN, FINLAND
LUÍSA SCHMIDT, PORTUGAL
PHILIPP SCHÖNROCK, COLOMBIA

MICHAEL SIMPSON, CANADA
JAN-GUSTAV STRANDENAES, NORWAY
JAVIER SURASKY, ARGENTINA
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ADDYS THEN MARTE, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ANKICA TODOROVIC, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
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LORENA VAZQUEZ ORDAZ, MEXICO
BJARKE VESTERGAARD, DENMARK
LYNN WAGNER, UNITED STATES
ULRICH WALTER, GERMANY
TOLA WINJOBI, NIGERIA

## Summary of Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting 2019 – continued

To allow for **true exchange, mutual learning and shared work on conclusions and recommendations**, the Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting split up into team-based work sessions in the teams "HLPF", "multi-stakeholder bodies and processes", "subnational implementation of SDGs", "initiatives and projects", respectively.





## The team "multi-stakeholder bodies and processes"

Identified the following factors for successful multi-stakeholder partnerships: access to political actors, broad stakeholder participation, institutionalisation (best by law) and resourcing, adaptation to national/local circumstances. The team also identified challenges: too-large numbers of participants, lack of clear mandate, power imbalance among stakeholders.

Based on these experiences the team drew the following conclusions:
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships should be inclusive and evidence a balance of power.
- Goal is the sharing of knowledge and clear outcomes.
- There needs to be a free flow of information.
- Trust, respectfulness and reliability as foundation.

To implement these conclusions, we need a clear structure, a legal framework and a consultative process. The capacity of the stakeholders should be more or less the same.

The team also formulated recommendations for the global scale: first, issues that concern stakeholders should be developed involving stakeholders (i.e. HLPF Guidelines for Partnerships). Second, a global architecture for stakeholder participation, global partnerships of governmental bodies would be helpful.
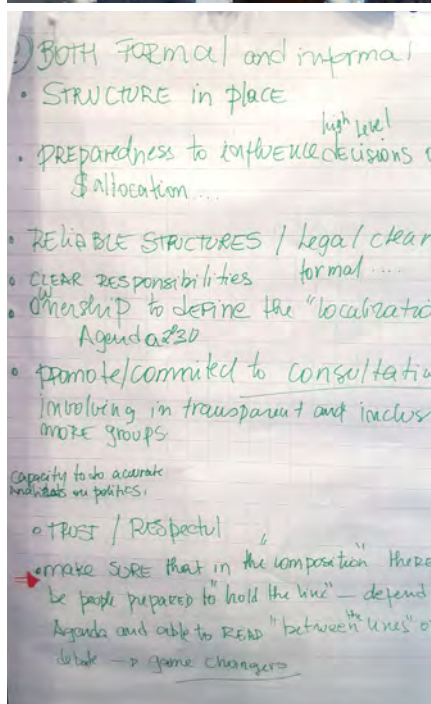
## The team "initiatives and projects"

Started with presentations of projects in Kosovo and Senegal. Based on the experiences shared, the team highlighted the issue of ownership. For the effectiveness of a project over time, it is very important to know who owns the project, on whose initiative a project is starting. The team agreed that it is the combination of both approaches – the top-down and the bottom-up approach – that is important for a lasting result. The searching for partners, building of alliances across stakeholders, seems crucial and needs an agreement on common language. The issue of data is fundamental to those initiating projects, either because data is generated to measure the project's impact effects or because data is needed in order to be able to realise the project's objectives.



## The team "subnational implementation of SDGs"

Heard a presentation on the Mexican implementation of the 2030 Agenda at local level and then presentations of practices in subnational implementation of SDGs from Germany, Canada and Wales. Participants first focused on naming challenges in localising the SDGs and identified 24 of them, which were subsequently grouped in the following categories:

- Challenges related to institutional mechanism: ownership and leadership at the community level, new local structures, integration of key players, creation of local synergies, translating ideas into action plans, sharing best practices (especially those that are fact-based practical examples), SDGs are not the core drivers of policymaking, creating knowledge/literacy of SDGs, communicating knowledge at different levels, not enough local accountability, eradicating silo thinking;
- Challenges regarding capacity: public procurement, compliance framework, measurability/scorecard of data, local indicators;
- Challenges related to resources: green finance and funding of local initiatives.

By discussing the challenges, participants also pointed out some success factors:

- The subnational level is part of the solution and not an obstacle for implementing SDGs
- Get your own house in order and others will follow
- To be implemented, the SDGs have to become a non-partisan agenda which helps in times of changes in governments

- Make the message as simple as possible; language is crucial
- Do not lose the holistic view
- It takes time and money
- Link existing best practices to the SDGs and avoid redundancies

Team's recommendations for localising the SDGs:

| No | Recommendation | Institutional Mechanism | Capacity | Resources (funding) |
|----|----------------|:----------------------:|:--------:|:-------------------:|
| 1 | Implement a legally-binding-independent body on a national, subnational or stakeholder level (best case Wales) | X | | |
| 2 | Funding local projects and initiatives | | | X |
| 3 | Mapping all contributions to the agenda (Best case Canada) | | X | |
| 4 | Identify the existing legislation regarding SDGs and fill in the gaps | X | | |
| 5 | Mapping the legal framework on each level | | X | |
| 6 | Create an integrated approach | X | | |
| 7 | Capacity building | | X | |
| 8 | Involvement of local communities and public employees on SDGs | X | X | |
| 9 | Funding institutional mechanisms | X | | X |
| 10 | Clear mandate of local authorities | X | | |
| 11 | Listen to local needs | X | X | |
| 12 | Pollinate best and share worst practices | X | X | X |
| 13 | Use practical small steps clearly articulated | X | | |
| 14 | Involve media and journalist | X | X | |
| 15 | Utilize academia to educate on SDGs | | X | |
| 16 | Peer learning | | X | |
| 17 | Create sustainability awards, recognition and incentives | X | | X |
| 18 | Use common language when sharing local experiences (interlinkage) | | X | |
| 19 | Audit boards | X | X | |
| 20 | Create fiscal taxes to fund the implementation of SDG actions | X | X | X |
| 21 | Use online platforms to communicate, monitor, report and evaluate the implementation of SDGs | X | X | |
| 22 | Subnational training on Appreciative Inquiry | | X | |
| 23 | Promote ownership of SDGs and leadership at community level | X | X | |
| 24 | Make forecasting a continuous practice and link to long-term planning | X | X | |
| 25 | Integrate budget to planning | | | X |
| 26 | Promote cultural change with regards to SDGs | X | X | |

## The team "HLPF"

First agreed on a common understanding of the current problems related to HLPF (no decision-making power, not enough time for presentation of voluntary national reviews [VNRs], VNRs are not mandatory, no visibility of HLPF at national level, no media interest) before coming up with some recommendations: HLPF should become a vehicle of change. We need better VNR presentations. Before they are presented at the HLPF, VNRs should be presented to the national governments. Also, there should be a specification on how to present them, so they can be compared with one another. The focus should be on regular and transparent VNR follow-ups (on national level). These could take place every two years. VNRs should be discussed at regional level. In general, strengthen the regional impact. There should be preparatory meetings at regional level. This would help tackle the space and time problem. Shadow reports should be published on the UN website.

We need input from other multilateral processes (such as the UPR). The timing of the respective reports is proximate and they could mention each other since they cover similar topics. Recommendations of the UPR could be included in VNRs.

Furthermore, there should be scope for peer reviews. There is a need for a financed and accessible office. We need space for interlinkages and competencies. GSDR topics should be agreed by ministerial declaration.

There is a need for more inclusive, accessible, transparent and better stakeholder coordination. Civil society should be strengthened in order to create an equal basis.

## Summary of Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting 2019 – continued



*It was a very good experience for me and many ideas come to me to improve the work that we´re doing at national and regional level*

ADDYS THEN MARTE

The first plenary session highlighted 2030 Agenda implementation experiences from the perspective of young activists, social entrepreneurs and the regional dimension of the United Nations reform process. While framework conditions are very different, Ellen Lindsey Awuku from Ghana, Riina Pursiainen from Finland and Rebecca Freitag from Germany discovered how similar their respective work is, which aims at changing social behaviour to realise sustainable development. They concluded that intergenerational negotiations about how a society wants to live in the future are necessary. Gomer Padong from the Philippine Social Enterprises Network presented social entrepreneurship as a means for inclusive development where the poor and the vulnerable become owners of the social enterprises. As next steps Gomer pointed to parliamentary debates on a social enterprise policy and to talks with government to include consideration of social enterprises in public procurement procedures. Philipp Schönrock from CEPEI was interviewed on a recent study conducted for the UN Secretary-General on the regional dimension of UN reform. According to Philipp, regions had been underestimated before, although they are the most suited fora for mutual learning and cooperation on common regional challenges.





EEAC Network @EEAC_Network · 10. Mai
How often are you enabled to have in-depth and meaningful exchange on equal footing with many inspiring colleagues from all over the 🌍🌐? The #sdgclub2019 did just that! Thank you @RNE_DE and thank you dear colleagues for the amazing exchange! 👏👏

🌐 Tweet übersetzen

# Open SDGclub.Berlin meeting 2019 – Participants' stories

**The Open SDGclub.Berlin has been initiated as a transnational SDG practitioners' platform aiming at continuous mutual exchange and inspiration. This is why the German Council for Sustainable Development has invited participants to send in their stories related to SDGs, to present activities and projects of their respective organisations, institutions and companies. The stories received are shared on the following pages.**



## Ellen's work for reaching the SDGs

I have been part of the advocacy of the post 2015 Development agenda in Ghana since 2015, specifically pushing for meaningful participation of young people. In 2017, I joined Youth Advocates Ghana as a Youth Champion on the SDGs advocating for SDGs acceleration and implementation at all levels to ensure mainstreaming into government policies and projects and integration by all institutions

In October 2017, I was selected by African Monitor, a Pan African Organization based in South Africa, as a Youth Champion on the SDGs which led to a training workshop in Johannesburg in February, 2018 on using qualitative data to hold government accountable on the SDGs promise. This led to the production of the Citizens Report on the SDGs in Ghana which was shared with the government of Ghana, in particular the Ministry of Finance and other relevant institutions. The Citizens Report is based on citizens' generated data meant to be used by citizens to hold their governments accountable for the SDGs implementation to improve development and to strengthen citizens' capacity to claim their rights and freedom.

Also in the same year, 2017, my organization, Youth Advocates Ghana, initiated and hosted the African Youth SDGs Summit which is now the largest gathering of young people on the SDGs in Africa. The first summit in 2017 attracted 450 participants from 25 countries and in 2018, the second edition attracted over 1400 people across Africa and the world. I have served on the Summit's logistics committee that coordinates all participants and also used my communication background to produce articles and other contents to project voices from the summit to the high policy circles at the national and continental level.

In January 2018, I joined Young Reporters for the Environment Ghana (YRE) Programme which was launched on 3rd January, 2018 and became the first Youth Board

Chair. Currently I am the National Administrative Coordinator. Young Reporters for Environment is a programme under the Foundation For Environmental Education (FEE Global) that empowers young people to scout out environmental issues they are passionate about and articulate these issues through the media of photography, articles and videos. Through the YRE programme, I have had the opportunity to train close to 30 young people to use purely journalistic approach in reporting on the environment. I have also written several articles and published several others from YRE-Ghana on Climate change and other environmental issues. I have organized beach clean-up activity with the Norwegian embassy and US embassy with support from other embassies and Civil society organisations, educating community people on the dangers of plastics in our oceans on marine life.

Early this year, with inspiration from Gretha Thunberg and the global movement I am leading FridaysforFuture in Ghana with YRE-Ghana and have brought together several students from many universities in Ghana to strike every Friday. My first strike was held with the mayor of Accra who promised to continuously support the movement and to ensure integration of strong policies for Climate Action. On 24th May I will be joining the global movement for the next global strike for climate with the students I have already mobilized and other CSO's who have expressed interest in joining us.

I have also been part of a team of unofficial conveners for the Accra SDGs investment fair bringing together several people from all over the world to dialogue on SDGs and opportunities for investment. This event is a government of Ghana event handled by the Ministry of Finance and the SDGs Advisory Unit to the president and is planned to be an annual event.

## The Finnish state of sustainable development 2019 report

*by Riina Pursiainen*

The state of sustainable development in Finland is followed by using ten monitoring baskets for sustainable development. This is the first comprehensive review, to be conducted every four years, of where Finland stands in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Based on the monitoring results, the key challenges for Finland relate to biodiversity and overuse of natural resources, while our particular strengths lie in social structures, including a low level of corruption.

Read the whole report here: *https://kestavakehitys.fi:8443/documents/2167391/ 2186383/The+state+of+sustainable+development+2019/caa6041c-da47-82e9-b027- c807ac8993e1/The+state+of+sustainable+development+2019.pdf*

## How is the National Assembly of Vietnam getting involved in SDG implementation?

*by Hung Van Phung, Member of the Vietnam National Assembly*



To achieve the objectives of sustainable development, the Vietnam National Assembly (VNA) has an extremely important role because the VNA decides the objectives, targets, policies and major tasks of the country's socio-economic development, makes basic policy decisions on finance, national currency, budget allocation decisions of central agencies, approves the state budget, and policy decisions on ethnic and religious matters. At the same time, it also carries out the supreme supervision of all activities of the government and administrative authorities from the central to local levels.

Over the past 15 years, since the implementation of its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the foundation of the SDGs, the National Assembly of Vietnam has developed and created the legal framework necessary for sustainable development. It issued new and amended more than 300 laws. The VNA has also passed the National Strategy on the Environment, oriented on 2020 and with a vision to 2030; issued a resolution on accelerating the implementation of sustainable poverty reduction targets by 2020; participated in developing the National Strategy on the Sustainable Development Goals. Representatives of the National Assembly bodies participated as members in the National Council of Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Enhancement.

Moreover, the National Assembly exercises supreme control over the activities of the state organs with regard to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The VNA has reviewed, made comments on and allocated budget for the national target programmes on sustainable poverty reduction, on addressing climate change, the policies and investment plans for local health and others to ensure sustainable development. The VNA also contributes to promoting the participation and implementation of sustainable development goals through examining and approving international conventions and treaties.

Vietnam National Assembly supports IPU's efforts to get parliaments and MPs engaged with the promotion of the parliaments' role in SDG implementation. Vietnam National Assembly was chosen to have the "Parliaments and the SDGs: Self-Assessment Toolkit" launched for the Asia-Pacific group in May 2017 during a regional seminar on responding to climate change actions of legislators to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Toolkit was also disseminated to all deputies to expand their knowledge of the topic.

Thus, from 17–18 December 2018, VNA held a conference for the National Assembly deputies and local council elected representatives with 200 participants, including the Secretary-General of the IPU, UN representatives and various international parliamentarians, to speak about the SDGs and share experiences with implementing the Toolkit. Earlier in March, the VNA organised a trip to Son La with Mr Kamal Malhotra, the UN country representative, to launch a pilot programme to promote the role of deputies in SDG implementation, particularly with regard to poverty reduction.

The VNA also maintains close contact with the relevant ministries, especially the Ministry of Planning and Investment, about the progress of the SDGs. For example, recently, in September 2018, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly held a hearing on the results of implementing the National Assembly's resolution on sustainable poverty reduction. In addition, some committees in the National Assembly have conducted hearings and requested the executive agencies to send reports on their respective fields.



Ellen Lindsey @malindseysocean · 8. Mai
2nd day of #sdgclub2019 in #Berlin has been very educative,transformative and fun at same time,spending the afternoon being observers at the German Parliamentary Group Council on Sustainable Development @AfricanMonitor @YagGhana @ecgyetuah @AmetepeyFrancis @ametemma @hildeopoku

Tweet übersetzen

## SDG Council in Georgia - Background Information

*by Nana Janashia*

In 2017, Georgia institutionalized the SDG Council along with its four thematic Working Groups (WGs) on Social Inclusion, Economic Development, Democratic Governance and Sustainable Energy & Environment Protection.

SDG Council was established within the auspices of the Public Administration Reform Council, which was transformed into the Public Administration Reform and Sustainable Development Goals Council through the Decree of the Prime Minister.

SDG Council has the following functions: coordination of interagency issues associated with the implementation of SDGs; adoption of decisions on updating and extending SDGs, SDG indicators, and the SDG national document; incorporating SDGs into Georgia's national policies; establishment and oversight of relevant working groups to support the strategic planning, integrated implementation, and effective monitoring of assigned SDGs and related thematic fields, etc.

The Council is chaired by the Head of the Administration of the Government of Georgia, co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and reports directly to the Prime Minister. The Policy Analysis, Strategic Planning and Coordination Department of the Administration of the Government serves as the Secretariat of the Council and provides analytical and technical support to its operation.

The Council is composed of ministries and other government agencies; however, it also allows for a possibility for the participation of representatives of UN agencies, EU delegation, non-governmental organizations, business associations and academia, without voting rights. Each Working Group has held an inaugural first meeting in 2018, while SDG Council has held two meetings (in 2017 and 2019).

**CENN and SDGs**

CENN is a regional organization working to protect the environment through fostering sustainable development in the South Caucasus region. CENN specializes in a number of areas including sustainable management of resources, building healthy and prosperous climate resilient communities, and empowering women and girls to participate in creating and implementing inclusive solutions. Some of the current projects implemented by CENN are directly linked to relevant SDGs.

Upon creation of SDG Council Working Groups, there was an open call for all interested stakeholders to register in the relevant thematic group. CENN is registered as a member in three out of four Working Groups (WG) – Social Inclusion, Economic Growth and Sustainable Energy & Environment Protection. In 2018, three co-chairs were elected for each Working Group (representing public sector, civil society and UN agency). CENN was elected as a co-chair in two WGs: WG on Sustainable Energy & Environment Protection (along with Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and UNICEF) and WG on Economic Development (along with Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and UNDP).

**Lack of inclusiveness**

The Working Groups were designed as multi-stakeholder platforms with involvement of civil society, business, international organizations and academia. However, the first meetings of each WG were limited to information sharing and discussion on general progress of government institutions on SDG-related issues rather than decision-making. Starting from the production of monitoring reports there will be increased need for the Council and its WGs to expand their current functions and assume a key role in data collection and analysis. The lack of inclusiveness is a two-way process and has two main reasons:

(i)  From the perspective of the Government
  - Difficulty in coordinating SDG nationalization process – lack of relevant data, structural changes, differences in capacities of state institutions
  - Lack of inclusion of SDG nationalized targets and indicators into existing policy system
  - Lack of proactive disclosure of SDG-relevant information (all data and documents related to monitoring including but not limited to baseline and target indicators, data sources for each SDG target etc.)
  - Lack of consultation before/after decision-making process and lack of direct engagement of non-state stakeholders into decision-making process

(ii) From the perspective of non-state stakeholders (including youth, civil society, business, academia)
  - Lack of understanding the role of non-state stakeholders in SDGs - false perception of SDGs being solely responsibility of the government
  - Lack of capacity to provide shadow monitoring
  - Lack of information about opportunities for engagement (limited information about SDG implementation and monitoring)

## SEKEM Initiative and the SDGs

*by Helmy Abouleish*

Since its foundation in 1977 SEKEM committed itself to sustainable development by a holistic approach. This means for us to work with nature and not against it, by cultivating land organically and biodynamically. This already includes several SDGs such as saving water (we need up to 40% less water than conventional agriculture; SDG 6)), working against climate change (our soils are sequestering tons of $CO_2$; SDG 13)) or renewable energies (we use for instance several solar water pumps to irrigate our fields; SDG 7)). Furthermore, our sustainable agricultural methods support food security (SDG 2), and for reclaiming desert lands, we received the Land for Life Award by the UN in the context of SDG 15.

For us, sustainable development can only be realized by an inclusive approach which means that we do not only promote a sustainable ecology but also a fair economic system as well as education and societal development. In this context, we run our own companies that process our products. Our employees are working in a decent environment and receive regular development trainings. Our aim is not economic growth, but rather to produce good and healthy products in a responsible way (SGD 8 and 12). In our companies as well as all other institutions, we foster gender equality for instance by a comprehensive Gender Strategy (SDG 5) and include people with disabilities not only in our School for Children with Special Needs, but also into working life (SDG 10).

In several schools and training institutions, we teach children and adults by a holistic and interactive concept, which shall not only educate people but rather unfold their individual potentials (SDG 4). Last but not least, we provide a Medical Center for our employees as well as several thousands of people from the surrounding villages (SDG 3).

## Civil society contribution to Agenda 2030 implementation in Senegal

*by Salimata Boccoum*

The civil society network (CONGAD consortium that regroups more than 200 organizations) has been a key player in the implementation of the MDGs at both the national and regional levels and has contributed significantly to the process of developing the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Building on this, CONGAD set up a CSO Working Group to strengthen the process of citizen participation and public policy monitoring with a view to achieving the SDGs in 2030 in Senegal, through dialogue with public decision makers and the different social actors. The Working Group brings together a category of civil society actors (NGOs, organizations of people with

disabilities, young people, women, rural producers, etc.). This working group, coordinated by Sightsavers, has facilitated several actions:

### Action Monitoring data

Work around data to share, analyse and formulate proposals on indicators for monitoring the SDGs and the information modalities defined by the State. Proposal to agree on common guidelines for the establishment of a national civil society platform for the dynamic generation of data and information.

### Action Consultations with local actors

This activity led to a first identification of "people left behind" and strategies formulated to ensure their inclusion in the implementation of the SDGs. It also contributed to the appropriation of the SDGs by local actors (CSOs, community radios and decentralized state structures) from the 14 regions of Senegal.

### Action Design strategy to LNOB

This is an important moment of sharing information, analysis and guidance to better support vulnerable groups in the implementation of public policies and programs of social protection, territorial equity and local governance. A mapping of the current and potential "left behind" in the implementation of the SDGs was made. Participants took ownership of the Inclusive Data Charter and formulated an action plan to facilitate its implementation. Strategic axes were also identified, as well as a methodological approach for the finalization of the national strategy "LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND".

### Action Support Senegal voluntary review

As part of the process of participation in the national voluntary review on the status of implementation of the SDGs in Senegal, the Working Group supported the production of the civil society report through the following activities: information and preparation of the participation of CSOs in the national voluntary review; inter-regional consultations with participants from civil society organizations (NGOs, women's organizations, disabled people, producers, trade unionists, consumers, young people, mutual health organizations) and local authorities.

### Action Monitoring SDG implementation

As part of the strengthening of CSO dialogue, the Working Group organized, in partnership with Sightsavers and several technical Ministries a sectoral meeting with the aim to contribute to the better monitoring of SDGs by civil society organizations.

Key results include CSO ownership and analysis of the baseline situation and status of implementation of SDGs (Policies and programs, sectoral monitoring arrangements, indicators, targets, etc.) in addition to the development of action plan and tools for CSO monitoring.

RENN.leitstelle @RENN_Netzwerk · 13. Mai
Thank you to all #SDGclub2019 participants also from the #RENN_de network!
We learned so much from all of you and hope the exchange & cooperation will
continue! #SDGs #Agenda2030

Nachhaltigkeitsrat @RNE_DE
Once more a big #ThankYou to all participants from
around the 🌍 for joining us at last week's #SDGclub2019
#Berlin! @EEAC_Network @RebeccaLFreitag
@PursiainenRiina @malindseysocean @JacobDEllis ...

Diesen Thread anzeigen

# RENN
## Regional Hubs for Sustainability Strategies

## A sustainability network creates new alliances

*by Sabine Gerhardt*

The 17 goals created for the first time a shared point of reference for sustainability being put into practice by people in their day-to-day lives (within the family, in day-to-day purchases, on holiday, when eating out, etc.), at companies, in education and vocational training, in civil engagement and in terms of societal and political participation. Numerous stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations and from the fields of business and science, embarked on adapting the SDGs to their own activities. The German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) sees this as a positive development. RNE projects such as the Sustainability Code, the Sustainable Shopping Basket, the Sustainable City dialogue with mayors, and Project Sustainability are attracting more and more interest and are encouraging new stakeholders to get on board.

The RENN hubs nevertheless fill a gap. What was missing was a governance instrument that forged a link between initiatives that went beyond Berlin and other conurbations, got new stakeholders excited about sustainable development and gave structure to the inspirational exchange of experience and opinions. This gap meant that the holistic and bridging intention of the 2030 Agenda – both vertically and horizontally, politically and thematically – could not be realised as wished and needed in particular among the various levels and sectors in spite of the endeavours of a wide variety of sustainability stakeholders in Germany. What was needed was for all

too rigid demarcations and "silos" to be made more flexible, for the stakeholders to be given access to the SDGs and for expertise regarding new forms of dialogue, communication and cooperation to be built up. The idea of a new sustainability network was born. It needed to spread best practices at the federal, state and municipal levels and bring ideas together. The RNE's proposal for such a networking project was called RENN, which stands for Regional Hubs for Sustainability Strategies. The name reflects the innovative and experimental character of the project.

What stands out in particular in the project name is the word "regional". As a federal country, Germany is made up of the national government, the federal states (or 'Länder') and municipalities – regions do not exist in the political sense. The idea behind the RENN network is to tie in with this federalism by focusing on regional pooling while also establishing experimentation space for new dialogue and partnerships. This is in line with past recommendations from the RNE made to the Federal Government.central and the Länder that they strengthen not only sustainability initiatives and endeavours at the local level, but also dialogue at the regional level. This is what the RENN hubs were designed to achieve, and four such regional hubs were planned, together encompassing all 16 Länder. This would make them each large enough to explore new avenues, while nevertheless giving them roots at the local level. The purpose of limiting them to four hubs was to promote cooperation, action-driven coordination and commonality across formal boundaries. The expectation is that, with this structure, the RENN hubs will take the SDGs to rural areas as well and support implementation of sustainability strategies at the federal, state and municipal levels.

The term "hub" illustrates that what the Council wishes to do most of all is create a space for communication, dialogue, professionalisation and scaling. The fundamental idea was that establishing new communication channels and better interlinking would advance the concept of sustainability through the creation of an infrastructure for dialogue and offering greater freedom for concrete action. The network ideas are practised differently within the respective RENN hubs. It is the partners' own responsibility to determine which issues and target groups they wish to focus on and which activities they want to carry out, the only condition being that the funds they need be available. The network is thus very diverse. This set-up means the RENN stakeholders do not simply remain advocacy groups, i.e. describing and evaluating other people's actions. Rather, they have to make their own decisions and take effective action themselves. The success of this is clearly illustrated by the increasing quantity and quality of the entries submitted to Project Sustainability and the fact that the number of citizens' initiatives during the German Sustainability Action Days has increased to more than 3000 since 2016.

RENN.north comprises five Länder – Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein. Each of the states has a project partner. This hub is managed in Hamburg.

RENN.central likewise comprises five Länder – Berlin, Brandenburg, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. Each of the states has a project partner. This hub is managed in Thuringia.

RENN.south consists of the two Länder Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, each of which has a project partner. It is managed in Baden-Württemberg.

RENN.west is made up of four Länder – Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland. Hesse and Saarland both have one project partner, while North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate each have two. This hub is managed by one of the partners in North Rhine-Westphalia.

*When it comes to sub national grass roots implementation we need the stories and inspiration and multilateral coordination that is provided by the open sdg club.*

MIKE SIMPSON

## Implementing Agenda 2030 in Kosovo

*by Learta Hollaj*

Four years into the Agenda 2030, while understanding the importance of advancing efforts to meet the 17 SDGs, Institute for Development Policy – INDEP decided to take a concrete step in this regard and engage actively in working with public institutions in the country to push for a higher and a genuine institutional and societal commitment in this regard.

Although Kosovo is not yet a member of United Nations, in 2018, the Assembly of Kosovo adopted the Resolution for Sustainable Development as well as established the Committee for Sustainable Development. Seeing that the focus was rather at the central level, we decided to work in parallel with the local governance structures, respectively 7 municipalities and help them towards the adaptation of concrete measures to implement Agenda 2030. The start was rather slow as Agenda 2030 is still a distant concept for quite a big number of central institutions and even more so for local authorities. Through the project 'Sustainably Developing (Local) Governments for Sustainable Development Goals – SDG4SDGs' – a project supported by GIZ through the 2030 Agenda Transformation Fund, we are working with the 7 beneficiary municipalities on many fronts, i.e. informing about and communicating clearly the Agenda, highlighting the importance of the direct involvement of local governance structures in this regard, evaluating capacities of these municipalities to implement the Agenda 2030, and wrapping up with the drafting of Local SDG Plans. The Local SDG Plan will

provide a baseline assessment of the municipal capacities and selected local strategies vis-à-vis the SDGs, as well as a set of practical tools and recommendations regarding public investments, municipal mechanisms, capacity strengthening and strategy adjustment required to integrate the SDGs at the municipal level. In addition, the Plan provides key information regarding the Agenda 2030 and the initiatives that Kosovo institutions have undertaken for localizing the SDGs at the national level. The Plan is based on extensive desk review of local strategies of partner municipalities and budget expenditure trend, municipal survey which examines municipal capacities with regards to localizing the SDGs, drafting local strategies and managing inclusive policy making processes, data management, coordination and collaboration with the central government, the civil society and inter-municipal cooperation. In this entire process, we made sure that the municipal representatives feel a sense of ownership and actively contribute in the drafting of the plans through custom designed exercises held during the workshops that we organized with them, as well as, through individual meeting sessions and by inviting them to complete a capacity assessment questionnaire. Although the work with the municipalities lies at the core of this project, we are also actively engaging with the newly established Committee for Sustainable Development towards advising them how to effectively deliver on their mandate in line with best international practices. While, we have also initiated a campaign to increase awareness about SDGs for the population at large through the distribution of hard copy and electronic brochures that make Agenda 2030 easily comprehensible for everyone.

It is worth emphasizing that although we are half year into the project, the most rewarding outcome thus far is the fact that our beneficiaries started to realize themselves the importance of engaging actively with Agenda 2030 and understand how working in this direction will be beneficial, rather than burdensome, for them in the mid-to-long term.

## LocalSDG – Municipal Platform for the Sustainable Development Goals

*by Luísa Schmidt*

"LocalSDG" is an ongoing project, deeply marked by its transversal nature, relative to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a dynamic, technology-based online tool that allows municipalities to monitoring, analysing, visualizing and communicating their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. By monitoring both:
- top-down (national)
- bottom-up (municipal) indicators
- mapping top-down (municipal best practices)
- bottom-up initiatives (projects from the civil society), the LocalSDG wants to foster the sustainable development.

This pilot-project was designed and developed by a consortium constituted by a partnership between the (CNADS - National Council of the Environment and Sustainable Development), academy (OBSERVA - Observatory of Environment and Society and MARE - Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre), business (2adapt – Climate Adaptation Services) and the municipalities itself, in a synergetic and highly complementary environment of co-creation. The project aims both:
- to stimulate municipalities to comply with the SDG, in the framework of the Agenda 2030.
- to develop and present a dynamic online tool to monitor, analyze, visualize and communicate the municipal contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The LocalSDG Consortium is dedicating 7 months (from October 2018 onwards) to developing a prototype for a LocalSDG viewer, guaranteeing the technological quality, ensuring the scientific rigor of the contents, as well as an effective communication strategy, including organization of dissemination events. This strategy started with two workshops mainly thought to define strategy and involve municipalities. We have chosen seven pioneer municipalities: Bragança, Cascais, Castelo de Vide, Coruche, Loulé, Seia and Viana do Castelo - participated in the project workshops (the First Workshop took place at ICS-ULisboa on January 22, 2019, the second on April 23) and contributed to build and refine the platform functionalities, as well as to define basic indicators.

The first Workshop had two main objectives: the first was to approach and select quantitative indicators, as well as create a shared and common baseline among the municipalities involved; the second was focused on defining the indispensable and desired

functionalities for the future LocalSDG platform. For the second Workshop, the consortium proposed a challenge to the municipalities – each one should prepare a 10-minute presentation about the SDGs in the context of their municipality, to be presented at the LocalSDG workshop (April 23 of 2019), resorting solely to the LocalSDG platform as information source. Before the presentation, and once the platform was ready to be tested by the participants, 2adapt (the climate-risk services consultant integrated in the consortium and responsible for developing the online tools) composed a manual with guidelines for using and uploading information to the platform, which anticipates possible doubts and constraints arising from present and future use of the LocalSDG online Platform.
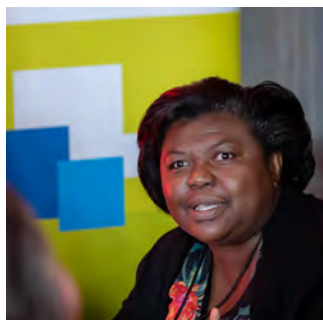


## The Institut de la Francophonie pour le développement durable (IFDD - Institute of the Francophonie for Sustainable Development) is a subsidiary body of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF - International Organization of the Francophonie) headquartered in Quebec City, Canada.

*by Emilienne Ngo-Samnick*

After the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), its mission is to contribute to the implementation of the SDG in the Francophonie's member states.

In particular, the Institute is assuming, in partnership with other units of the OIF, the leadership of the implementation of the four main initiatives related to SDG:

- To increase the capacity of targeted countries to develop and implement regional, national and local sustainable development strategies that are inclusive, participatory and results oriented;
- Strengthen the capacity of various categories of Francophone professionals to actively participate in the SDG implementation, as well as in their national review.

In addition, to support the diagnosis of sustainability's of municipalities as well as training and field projects of civil society, the IFDD launch two dedicated online platforms:
Training and field actions of civil society: *www.objectif2030.org*
Sustainable development diagnosis of cities: *https://villesdurables.ifdd.francophonie.org*

**Objectif 2030 initiative**

Objectif 2030 aims at facilitating concrete progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It seeks to address the need for comprehensive information on sustainable development and to support innovative actions and solutions that combine social inclusion, economic growth and nature protection. The Initiative has three components:

1. A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC),
2. A technical and financial participatory support tool, which aims at presenting initiatives dedicated to sustainable development and creating solution-based communities around them.
3. A communication space diffusing case studies and audiovisual contents showing progress of participatory projects and thus contributing to capacity-building and replication

For more information: *www.ifdd.francophonie.org*

# German Council for
## S U S T A I N A B L E
## Development

## The German Council for Sustainable Development

*by Verónica Tomei*

I joined the RNE's office the very same month the 2030 Agenda was adopted and after the Council had published a recommendation to the German government stating that the 2030 Agenda should be implemented in, with and by Germany and that the German sustainable development strategy should have a much stronger international focus. At that time, and coming from another consultative body, I did not know yet that RNE does not limit itself to just delivering recommendations but that it lives very much up to its mandate to foster societal dialogue on sustainable development. Later on, and having had the chance to directly working with RNE Members as the German leaders in sustainable development, I realized that it is precisely that part of RNE's mandate and its implementation that makes this Council quite unique.

RNE fulfills its mandate through four types of projects run at its own initiative: There are projects supporting sustainability initiatives (see for example the Sustainability Culture Fund), other projects highlight best practice examples (such as the competition Project Sustainability, the German Sustainability Action Days or also the German Sustainability Almanac). Another type of RNE project aims at connecting sustainability actors and fostering new sustainability action and progress by bringing like-minded and / or new actors together (see the Lord Mayors' Dialogue or RENN, regional hubs for sustainability strategy, described earlier in this publication). Yet another type of project is the facilitation of a multi-stakeholder dialogue on a particular issue not yet dealt with by politics but where RNE sees societal demand for further progress (see the Sustainability Code or the Hub for sustainable finance).

These projects correspond to RNE's mandate to foster societal dialogue on sustainability issues, whereas at the same time this practical work provides insight enriching the Council's advisory role towards the Federal government. With this understanding of its mandate and the broad and diverse outreach of its projects, RNE is living up to the 2030 Agenda's whole-of-society-approach and wants to further engage in transnational exchange of these experiences and learnings.

For further information on RNE's individual projects please check:
*www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/en/*

**Some Open SDGclub.Berlin 2019 registered participants, for diverse reasons, could not attend the meeting in the end. They sent their stories on how they contribute to realising the principles and goals of Agenda 2030 in their respective area of responsibility.**

## Darjeeling Organic Tea Estates Pvt Ltd (DOTEPL) and the SDGs

*by Sanjay Bansal*

No Poverty: We work with an ethical agriculture model that provides the employees at the tea estates, job security along with housing facility such that their standard of living is adequate.

Zero Hunger: Our employees are assured of income above the minimum set by the Government. Therefore, they are able to take care effectively of the nutrition requirement of their families. Good Health & Wellbeing: One of the most important mottos of Organic Bio-Dynamic agriculture is to ensure good health and wellbeing of society. Being Organic & Bio- Dynamic ensures a pollution free and clean environment, which has resulted in the reduction of dermal, optical, peptic and respiratory diseases. Quality Education: We believe that Education is the pillar of civilization; the company runs 36 schools at its plantations, which provide quality primary education to the children of the employees for free. Education includes sports, cultural activities and computer training. We offer scholarship to meritorious students, from the employees' families, to pursue higher education. Gender Equality: At our company, there is no gender discrimination across functions. The workforce at the estates is positive in favour of women with 56% being women employees. The remuneration is based on work and is free of any gender bias. Clean Water & Sanitation: We ensure clean water supply and as we follow Organic practices, there is no grey water generation. Affordable & Clean Energy: We were amongst the first to set up Micro Hydro Projects at our plantations without diverting or mining water. By 2025, we aspire to produce 100% of our tea using renewable energy. Our mid-term goal is to supply green energy to the employees to meet their domestic requirements. Decent Work & Economic Growth: We provide vocational training to the members of the employees' families for skill development and thereby prepare them for self-reliance. Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure: We collaborate with leading Education and Research Centers like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) to develop technology for energy efficient and high out-put machines. Reduced Inequalities: We do not indiscriminate on caste, creed or religion and endeavours to sincerely provide equal opportunities to all. Sustainable Cities & Communities: We ensure free potable water, effective sewage, garbage collection and recycling of waste materials for our communities. In a medium to long term, we envisage gated communities for our employees, where most of the everyday needs of the people are met. Responsible Consumption & Production: We practice Biodynamic agriculture, a system that advocates self- sufficiency with minimum use of off-farm inputs, judicious

use of all inputs and reuse and recycle of resources wherever possible. Our farms make their own compost and agricultural inputs; crop residues and waste is composted. For the most part packing material is reused and recycled. Teas produced by the Bio Dynamic method are environment sensitive and clean products. Climate Action: By virtue of our Bio-Dynamic agricultural production we sequestrate substantial C in the soil. The sequestrated value overruns the value of emissions by many folds. All the employees at the farms cook with LPG. We focuse on reducing consumption of fossil fuel and are working towards producing 100% of our tea with renewable energy by 2025. We aim to reduce the use of plastic and work with only compostable plastic in the future. Life Below water: As Bio Dynamic practices are followed on the farms, we never discharges any grey water. This protects the natural water bodies within our territory. It ensures healthy aqua life. Water bodies are never filled, favouring acquatic life. Life On Land: Our farms have a vibrant and healthy ecological balance with well conserved indigenous species of plants and animals. Peace, Justice and Institutions: DOTEPL ensures workers' representation and participation in decision making process. The workers' rights are well represented and protected through Workers' Unions. Partnerships for the Goals: To realize the set goals, partnering with the workers is essential. The workers are given cows that give them milk; the dung and cow urine is bought by the company for making farm inputs. Not only does it make available an essential farm input, this creates additional income for the workers as well. As a policy of no chemical use, the company gets the homesteads of the workers certified organic. It would not be possible to meet the set objectives without such collaboration.

## The Open SDG Club @South Africa

*by Namhla Mniki-Mangaliso:*

For the SDG's to be truly transformative, power and influence over the SDG implementation and review process must be shared with civic actors. Within these processes, it is important to position citizens and civil society as rights holders, using a rights-based framework to participate in the review process and to demand accountability from the state. This right to participate is already enshrined in the constitution of South Africa; however greater investment is required to build capacity of citizens to present their experiences by creating an enabling environment for participation.

The Open SDG Club (12 – 14 June 2019) presents an opportunity for civil society and other civic actors in South Africa to review the SDGs and share perspectives in an open, inclusive and collaborative platform. The symposium is designed as an inclusive collaborative platform to showcase and encourage the transformative nature of the SDGs.

The Open SDG Club South Africa symposium has been preceded by a necessary consultative and report writing process covering the VNR 2019 goals. The VNR 2019 Citizens Report will be validated at this event, and further presented to the state and will be used as a basis for civil society contributions into the official VNR 2019 report.

**Objectives**
The Open SDG South Africa is a national symposium for civic actors to validate civil society's contribution to the VNR 2019 report and showcase innovative contributions to the SDG agenda. Through this symposium

- Findings on SDG progress will be presented and validated by civil society
- The South African government will present the national VNR report and governance architecture for sustainable development
- Innovative and transformative solutions to achieve the SDGs will be showcased

# List of Participants

| Name | Institution / Project | Country |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Abouleish, Helmy | SEKEM Group | Egypt |
| Ahlke, Josef | RENN.mitte / Zukunftsfähiges Thüringen e.V. | Germany |
| Ali, Ahmad | Institute of Social and Policy Sciences (I-SAPS) | Pakistan |
| Arnautovic, Adis | Center for youth education | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Awuku, Ellen Lindsey | Citizens Report Project | Ghana |
| Bachmann, Günther | German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) | Germany |
| Baier, Jessica | Engagement Global / Service Agency Communities in One World | Germany |
| Bartus, Gábor | NFFT - Hungarian Council for Sustainable Development | Hungary |
| Beisheim, Marianne | Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik | Germany |
| Bocoum, Salimata | CONGAD/SIGHTASAVERS 2030 Agenda transformation fund | Senegal |
| Brandt, Susanne | Büchereizentrale Schleswig-Holstein | Germany |
| de Burca, Deirdre | Forus | Ireland |
| de Vries, Michiel | EEAC Network | Netherlands |
| Delfs, Stefan | Auswärtiges Amt | Germany |
| Ellis, Jacob | Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales | Wales |
| Elmouelhi, Hassan | Berlin Technical University - Campus Elgouna | Germany |
| Endo, Risa | Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES) | Japan |
| Espinosa, Mayra Alejandra Martin | Confederación Colombiana de ONG - CCONG | Colombia |
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| Geisselmann, Joern | GIZ / Partners for Review | Germany |
| Griffiths, Andrew | Sightsavers | United Kingdom |
| Grigat, Sonja | Venro | Germany |
| Halbach, Marie | LAG 21 NRW / RENN.west | Germany |
| Harrlandt, Florian | German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE) | Germany |
| Hollaj, Learta | Institute for Development Policy - INDEP | Kosovo |
| Iren, Marta | BCSDH | Hungary |
| Janashia, Nana | CENN | Georgia |
| Kangilaski, Gea | Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation | Estonia |
| Kara, Hudai | SÜRATAM - Turkish Centre for Sustainable Production Research & Design | Turkey |
| Kimbowa, Richard | Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development | Uganda |
| Kroeger, Timm | Freie Hansestadt Bremen | Germany |
| Lara, Silvia | Alianza Empresarial para el Desarrollo {Business Alliance for Development} | Costa Rica |

| Name | Institution / Project | Country |
|---|---|---|
| Makowka, Barbara | Project Manager "Projekt Nachhaltigkeit" | Germany |
| Malini, Mehra | GLOBE International secretariat | United Kingdom |
| Meyer Cabral, Clarice | Sustainable Cities Institute/Sustainable Cities Programme | Brazil |
| Ngo-Samnick, Emilienne Lionelle | Institut de la Francophonie pour le développement durable (IFDD) | Canada |
| Ngoyi Kasongo, Jean Patrice | JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE COMMISSION (JDPC)/TOGETHER 2030 | Congo |
| Niestroy, Ingeborg | IASS & SDG Watch Europe | Germany |
| Nilo, Alessandra | Gestos– HIV, Communication and Gender | Brazil |
| Padong, Gomer | Philippine Social Enterprise Network | Philippines |
| Passaris, Esther | National Assembly, Republic of Kenya | Kenya |
| Paul, Angela | GIZ | Germany |
| Pejcic, Mile | City of Bijeljina | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Phung, Van Hung | the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam | Vietnam |
| Pursiainen, Riina | Prime Minister's Office / The National Agenda2030 Youth Group | Finland |
| Salz, Susanne | GIZ - Platform for Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Implementing the 2030 Agenda | Germany |
| Schmidt, Luísa | National Council on Environment and Sustainable Development | Portugal |
| Schmidt, Falk | German Science Platform Sustainability 2030 | Germany |
| Schönrock, Philipp | Cepei | Colombia |
| Simpson, Michael | British Columbia Council for International Cooperation | Canada |
| Strandenaes, Jan-Gustav | Stakeholder Forum/ Pure Consulting (Oslo)/ IGEA-Forum (Norway) | Norway |
| Sturm, Janina | Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), Germany | Germany |
| Surasky, Javier | Cepei | Argentina |
| Tarasiuk, Siarhei | International Foundation for Rural Development | Belarus |
| Then Marte, Addys | Alianza ONG | Dominican Republic |
| Todorovic, Ankica | City of Bijeljina | Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| Trautmann, Sven | City of Leipzig | Germany |
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| van Weerelt, Patrick | UN System Staff College- Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development | Netherlands |
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| Vestergaard, Bjarke | Global Focus | Denmark |
| Wagner, Lynn | IISD/SDG Knowledge Program | United States |
| Walter, Ulrich | Ulrich Walter GmbH/Lebensbaum Group | Germany |
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| Winjobi, Tola | CAFSO-WARG for Development/CSCSD | Nigeria |

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**Olaf Tschimpke**, Deputy Chair of the RNE, President of Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, NABU)

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**Ulla Burchardt**, former member of the German Bundestag

**Kathrin Menges**, Executive Vice President Human Resources, Henkel AG & Co. KGaA

**Alexander Müller**, former Assistant Director-General FAO, former State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Managing Director TMG, Think-Tank for Sustainability and Study Lead TEEBAgriFood

**Katherina Reiche**, former Parliamentary State Secretary, former member of the German Bundestag, Managing Director of the German Association of Local Utilities – VKU

**Prof. Lucia A. Reisch**, Copenhagen Business School, Chair of the Advisory Council on Consumer Affairs

**Dr. Werner Schnappauf**, former Bavarian State Minister of the Environment, Health and Consumer Protection, former Managing Director of the Federation of German Industries – BDI

**Dr. Imme Scholz,** Deputy Director of the German Development Institute – DIE

**Prof. Ulrich Schraml**, Forest Research Institute of Baden-Württemberg, Freiburg

**Prof. Wolfgang Schuster**, former Mayor of Stuttgart, Chair of Deutsche Telekom Stiftung

**Prof. Hubert Weiger**, Chair of Friends of the Earth Germany – BUND

**Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul**, former Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, former member of the German Bundestag

The Office headed by Secretary General Prof. Günther Bachmann supports the Council, maintains political relations to Government and stakeholders and manages the Council's projects and missions.
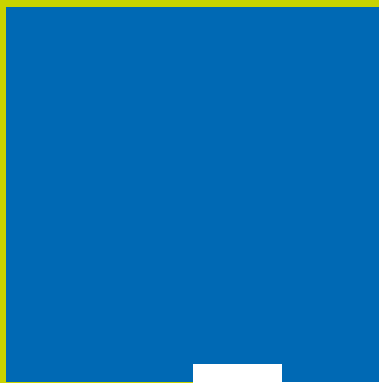
The German Council for Sustainable Development (RNE)

The Council comprises 15 public figures appointed 2013 by Federal Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel for a three-year term. The RNE was first established in April 2001 by then Chancellor Gerhard Schröder. The Council's tasks include generating contributions to the national sustainability strategy, specifying concrete fields of activity and projects and also providing contributions that make sustainability a public issue of vital importance.

For more information head for:
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