Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): situation and efforts in Finland

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The roots of concept of SDG

• Massive and long-term search for concepts and action to respond to world’s needs by UN member states:

  • **1972** Stockholm – UN Conference for Environment > UN Environmental Program (UNEP)
  • **1987** Geneva – work by WCED ‘Our Common Future’ > Sustainable Development (SD) as a global concept to ‘harmonize prosperity with ecology’
  • **1992** Rio de Janeiro – 1. Earth Summit / UNCED > Agenda 21, Framework Conventions on Climate and Biodiversity
  • **1997** Kioto – 2. Earth Summit / UNCED > Kioto protocol, commitments to decrease GHGE by a percentage from the year of reference until the year of attainment
  • **2015** New York – UN Summit on Sustainable Development > 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including 17 SDGs, with 169 targets
  • **Annual** Climate Change Conferences and Earth Summits held in different cities > IPCC reports, including Paris 2015, Climate Change and Land 2019
  • A very heterogeneous mix of voluntary adoption by public organizations and commercial businesses and state ratification
The nature of the concept of SDGs

**Inherently aims at**
- Equality, equity across the world
- Better world, good life
- Humanistic progress based on shared resources
- Country based developments under global governance

**Inherently deals with**
- Differences between religious, natural, cultural and historical resources
- Unequal division of power, entitlements, responsibility, efforts and repercussions

**Inherently works with**
- Country-based zone of proximal development with long-term aims
- Introduction of societally organized approach, selected relevant goals, indicators, implementation and metrics
- Reporting to the global entity – with repercussions?
Initially, sustainability discourse meant incremental and innovative change. These take place continuously – however, seen as ineffective piecemeal developments. Systemic approaches cover interdependent action entities. Holistic approaches knit together convergent systemic approaches. Voluntary approaches grow into laws and regulations. Even stronger centralizing tendencies amidst increased individual freedoms.

SDGs aiming at new systemic policies for delivery
SDGs in Finland: governance

• Prime Minister’s Office hosts General Secretariat on Sustainable Development
• National considerations about relevance of SDGs for Finnish society
• 17 SDGs translated into 8 national objectives
• Monitored in terms of 10 themes (baskets) by experts’ analyses/interpretations as statistical/administrational/people’s views (Citizen’s Panel)
• Effective dissemination to policy makers across public and commercial organizations
• To support decision-making by government (from central to municipal), businesses, associations, unions, coalitions and citizens
• Society’s 2050 Commitment to Sustainable Development as an instrument with clear measurable actions
• Operational commitments made by businesses, organizations, citizens

INFORMATION:
• https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/frontpage
COMMITMENT 2050 OBJECTIVES
1. Equal prospects for well-being
2. A participatory society for citizens
3. Sustainable work
4. Sustainable local communities
5. A carbon-neutral society
6. An economy that is resource-wise
7. Lifestyles that respect the carrying capacity of nature
8. Decision-making that respects nature
8 National objectives for SDG in Finland

1. Equal prospects for wellbeing
2. A participatory society for all
3. Work in a sustainable way
4. Sustainable society and local communities
5. A carbon-neutral society
6. A resource-wise economy
7. Lifestyles respectful of the carrying capacity of nature
8. Decision-making respectful of nature
The 10 monitoring baskets for 8 objectives entailing 17 SDGs:

- State of nature and the environment
- Resource-wise economy and carbon-neutral society
- Public procurement and consumption
- Housing and communities
- Prerequisites for health
- Social inequality
- Social exclusion and inclusivity
- Working life, quality and change
- Education and development of competence
- Global responsibility and policy coherence
Results: both positive as intended and negative as not achieved: citizens view
In conclusion

• An administrational body with leadership
• Governability for SDG work by connections across society
• Administrations, experts, businesses, NGOs, mixing top-down and bottom up approaches
• Translation from generic SDGs to country-based relevant objectives with capability for metrics > turn to topics / issues / baskets with societal data and information
• Creating scenarios, paths, mechanisms, policies, convergencies enabling progress towards objectives
• Monitoring performance and disseminating the results for decision-making
• Raising the better world of Idealpolitik with safe assumptions of Realpolitik
Thank you for thinking and discussion!