

## SDG project

### *Objectives*

The overall objective of the SDG project is for students to engage in a learning-by-doing process designed to simulate a typical challenge you may face in your professional careers: working efficiently and effectively with people you may not know, analyzing a problem of which you may not know all the details; presenting a set of policy options to address the problem and defending the options vis-à-vis diverse stakeholders; and summarizing your position in writing.

### *Overall approach*

The approach to the SDG Project is as follows.

In groups of 3-4:

- Identify a sustainable development challenge encountered during this course, either during a field visit or as an example in a presentation; a realistic SD challenge is one that (i) clearly has multiple environmental, economic and social dimensions, (ii) has an inter-generational aspect, and (iii) is neither trivial (inviting a yes/no response) nor formulated as a definition or hypothesis.
- Select 5-6 SDGs or targets of relevance to the selected challenge. You can find them here and in many other places:  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.
- Analyze the interactions between the selected SDGs or targets. We will look at some ways to analyze interactions in the corresponding tool shed.
- Identify the actors and resources linked to the selected SDGs or targets. We will look at ways to identify and analyze the actors and resources in the corresponding tool shed.
- Propose a set of recommendations for dealing with the challenge. These should be addressed to particular actors and at particular scales.
- Present your analysis and debate your recommendations with key stakeholders. See more on this below.

### *Roles*

Each group plays two roles.

The *first* and most important role is that of an expert commission that receives the mandate to identify and analyze a sustainable development challenge. This is the role you assume when you make the presentation on October 1-2 or 8-9.

The *second* role is that of a stakeholder group that will react to the presentations of your colleagues and negotiate with the other stakeholder groups. Each group will adopt one of the following stakeholder group roles:

- *Environmental NGOs* (e.g. WWF, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace; they can be international, regional, national, or local)
- *Private sector actors in polluting sectors*, e.g. petroleum or coal producers
- *Citizen groups* (this can include groups that defend the civil rights of citizens, worldwide or in specific locations, or for particular groups such as indigenous people)
- *Municipalities / local governments* (e.g. an individual mayor's office, or an association of mayors)
- *Scientists* (this can include scientific organizations such as the International Social Science Council or the International Association of Universities, or individual scientists from different disciplines)
- *United Nations Agencies and Programs* (such as the ones we have visited during this course)

Your task is to impersonate as closely as possible the stakeholder group. As in real life and negotiations, one of the challenges is to deal with the diversity of interests among the individuals and organizations you represent. A good start to learn how your stakeholder group acts in international fora is to take a look at the press statements they issue on the occasion of large events, e.g. a Conference of Parties to an international convention.

During the visits you may want to consult with your group on possible positions observed among the respective actors we meet.

The stakeholder group you adopt will not be represented when you make your own presentation.

### ***Presentation & debate***

Each group is responsible for a 65-minute slot, organized as follows:

Presentation:	15'
Consultation among stakeholder delegations:	5'
Statements by delegations:	15' (3' per delegation)
Response from presenters:	5'
Negotiation:	20'
Conclusion by presenters:	5'

### ***Policy brief***

Each group is responsible for a written policy brief of 1300-1500 words that identifies the selected sustainable development challenge, as well as the relevant SDGs or targets; summarizes the analysis of interactions between SDGs/targets; provides an overview of the actors and resources; outlines the proposed solutions; and includes an overview of the stakeholder group positions during the debate. The policy brief can include illustrations such as maps, as well as sources where these refer to

opinions that are not your own or to facts that are not commonly known and easily verified.

The policy brief is due on **November 1**.

### ***Evaluation***

The grade your group receives for the SDG Project is the individual grade you receive for the course. It is made up of the following components:

- Group presentation: 40%
  - Evaluation criteria:
    - content
    - organization/structure
    - use of communication tools
- Debate: 20%
  - Evaluation criteria:
    - soundness of arguments
    - authenticity of role play
    - respect of others' opinions
- Policy brief: 40%
  - Evaluation criteria:
    - problem identification
    - contextualization of the problem in the 2030 Agenda (SDGs and Targets)
    - analysis of SDG/Target interactions
    - analysis of actors & resources
    - analysis of scalar dimensions
    - soundness of solutions
    - quality of the debate summary