

IGES¹ 2022 Messages on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Living within Planetary Boundaries to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All –

Eric Zusman, Matthew Hengesbaugh, Erin Kawazu, Mark Elder, André Mader, Takashi Otsuka, Yasuhiko Hotta, Premakumara Jagath Dickella Gamaralalage, Atsushi Watabe, Simon Olsen, Xin Zhou, Kentaro Tamura, Shinji Onoda, Bijon Kumer Mitra, Yasuo Takahashi

With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set to end in 2030, the world has entered a “decisive decade”—a quickly closing window that could determine whether a sustainable future is within reach. The following messages outline steps that IGES, policymakers, businesses, civil society, and other stakeholders can take to implement the five SDGs (SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15, and 17) scheduled for in-depth review at the 2022 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), and related forums to “Live within Planetary Boundaries to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All.”

The Overarching Objective: Living within Planetary Boundaries to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All

- 1. Governments should feature “Living within Planetary Boundaries” as an overarching objective in voluntary national reviews (VNRs), voluntary local reviews (VLRs), and other SDG plans to achieve a sustainable future for all.** Achieving this objective is a precondition for a healthy planet and people.²
- 2. National governments should adopt a “One Health” approach to address zoonotic and other systemic risks.** “One Health” involves integrating human, animal, and environmental health policies through, for instance, improving the safety of wildlife trade to better track pandemic outbreaks. The approach could also help build cross-sectoral support for the planetary boundary objective.
- 3. Local governments are recommended to adopt a “Circulating and Ecological Sphere” (CES) approach.** CES is a decentralised, integrated approach to complex systemic challenges that aims to optimise urban and rural resource flows and foster communities that live in harmony with nature.^{3,4} This approach can also help to grow bottom-up support for the planetary boundaries objective, for example, by creating jobs.
- 4. Governments at all levels should reorient pandemic stimulus and other public funding to the redesign of socioeconomic systems to help achieve living within planetary boundaries.** The transformation of resource-intensive energy systems, consumption and production patterns, and urban infrastructure is needed to make them more sustainable.

Quality Education and Gender Equality (SDGs 4/5)

- 1. Governments, businesses, and civil society should invest in collaborative learning platforms and living laboratories to co-generate knowledge for sustainable living.**⁵ Techniques employed in collaborative learning platforms such as social experimentation can contribute to policies that transform not only lifestyles but also consumption and production patterns.⁶
- 2. Governments should expand youth participation in decision-making to accelerate just transitions.** Through continued leadership in climate and other movements and emerging fora such as climate assemblies, young people can voice their unique perspective on intergenerational justice, advocate for the future they want, and push forward transition processes.⁷
- 3. Governments should empower women in climate and other environmental policy processes to broaden just transitions.** Taking account of the environmental inequities that women and girls

experience in many contexts as well as their experiences with environmental crises can help to enrich relevant policy decisions and build powerful coalitions for change.⁸

Life Below Water and Life on Land (SDGs 14/15)

- 1. Governments should commit to achieving a 30% target of land and sea conservation by 2030 to preserve the integrity of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.** “Other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs) can support this objective and create socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS) that generate multiple benefits for people and nature.^{9,10}
- 2. Researchers should improve lifecycle assessments across plastics value chains to ensure that science underpins relevant regulatory responses and contributes to the forthcoming international plastics agreement.**^{11, 12} Better data on the distribution and severity of ecological impacts of marine plastic pollution, including microplastics, is needed but should not delay regulation to curb already evident harmful effects.¹³
- 3. Governments should encourage businesses to factor the risks of biodiversity loss into financing decisions, for example, by establishing supporting regulations or setting financial targets for biodiversity conservation.**¹⁴ This could encourage investors and financial institutions to bring more private funding to biodiversity and interrelated concerns.
- 4. Researchers and funding agencies should support blending scientific expertise with indigenous knowledge to revitalise ecosystems.**¹⁵ Investing in technologies that support citizen science can make indigenous knowledge and traditional sustainable practices accessible while building an experiential evidence base for action.

Partnership for the Goals (SDG 17)

- 1. The research community should more effectively demonstrate synergies between SDGs 14 and 15 and other SDGs (particularly SDGs 2, 6, 12 and 13).**¹⁶ Demonstrating these synergies can build coalitions to support the pursuit of multiple goals, for example, between SDGs 14 and 15 and targets 8.4 (decoupling growth from environmental degradation) and 9.4 (upgrading of industry).¹⁷
- 2. Governments should encourage businesses to establish procedures that enable workers and other stakeholders to report on environmental risk and human rights concerns across value and supply chains.** Actively listening to and taking steps to address stakeholder concerns are defining features of sustainable enterprises.^{18, 19}
- 3. Governments, businesses, and international organisations should work toward co-innovation to supplement conventional technology transfer models.** Co-innovation features a dynamic iterative learning process that addresses concerns over technology affordability and adaptability while increasing incentives for technological cooperation.²⁰
- 4. Governments should adopt regulatory and fiscal instruments alongside market-driven and voluntary actions to drive transformative change.**²¹ Market-based tools and voluntary actions can address select concerns (e.g. food waste) but have the greatest potential for enduring changes when reinforced by government-led interventions.²²
- 5. International organisations should support SDG follow-up and review processes that focus more on policy implementation.** Assessing budgets, staffing levels, operational mandates, and the legal status of policies listed in VNRs is essential to boosting accountability for SDG performance.²³

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¹ The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) is an international policy research institute that aims to achieve a sustainable future for Asia-Pacific and beyond. The messages in this paper draw on IGES research.

² Raworth 2012; Rockstrom et al. 2009; Steffen et al. 2015; UNEP 2019

³ Kumar, 2021

⁴ Ortiz-Moya, et al., 2021

⁵ Appleby, et al., 2021

⁶ Hotta, et al., 2021

⁷ Gasparri, et al., 2021

⁸ Huyer, et al., 2020

⁹ Matsumoto, et al. 2020

¹⁰ Area-based management tools (ABMT) such as OECM are a key point of discussion for ongoing international negotiations concerning biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

¹¹ UNEP, 2022

¹² Pham, et al., 2021

¹³ One important outcome of UNEA 5.2 was the adoption of the resolution “End Plastic Pollution: Towards an internationally legally binding instrument” that created process for establishing an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) tasked with drafting a legally binding plastics agreement by 2024.

¹⁴ Mori and Mader 2021

¹⁵ Kelsch et al., 2020

¹⁶ Elder and Olsen, 2019

¹⁷ Zhou, et al., 2021

¹⁸ Hengesbaugh, et al., 2021

¹⁹ Onoda, et al., 2022

²⁰ Janardhanan, et al., 2021

²¹ Elder and King 2018

²² Mao, et al., 2021

²³ Elder, 2020

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