

SDG ACTION WEEKEND
16 & 17 SEPTEMBER 2023

Catalyzing Transformative Change: Science, Academia and the Journey to 2030



Organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), International Science Council (ISC), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Background

Academia plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of sustainable development. As centers of knowledge, research, and learning, universities and higher education institutions harbor a wealth of expertise across diverse disciplines. These institutions act as incubators for cutting-edge research, innovations, and breakthroughs that can be directly applied to the SDGs. Additionally, academia serves as a hub for nurturing future leaders, researchers, and problem solvers. By equipping students in all regions with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to tackle global challenges, higher education institutions play a critical role in cultivating a new generation of changemakers committed to the SDGs.

Key Issues

- How can the scientific community support global policymakers in anticipating, adapting to and leveraging the latest scientific advancements for sustainable development?
- How can science and academia facilitate the equitable transfer of technology and knowledge to developing countries?
- How can scientific knowledge and data be translated into policymaking and public knowledge?
- What strategies can be implemented to create trust for the scientific and academic community among the public?
- What must be done to secure the necessary funding for science, academia and research to make the biggest impact?



- In what ways can non-traditional knowledge be incorporated into science, technology and innovation?

Key Recommendations for Action

- Ensure that scientific data, research findings and open education resources are openly accessible to the public, policymakers and stakeholders, to build trust and promote informed decision-making.
- Build institutional capacity and skills among decision-makers while fostering collaborative efforts across sectors to address sustainability challenges.
- Promote ethical knowledge production and inclusivity in research and innovation to create solutions that benefit everyone, irrespective of their background or location.
- Integrate traditional knowledge and actively engage local communities for a holistic approach to addressing global challenges.
- Allocate resources to science, technology, and innovation (STI) areas and improve the ways in which research is communicated. Universities should further use the SDGs for their strategic guidance to ensure policy-relevant research.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/SDGSummit2023/SDG-Action-Weekend/catalyzing-transformative-change>.