

Sustainable Development Goals: Background Note

What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) – also referred to as the 2030 Agenda or Global Goals – lay out a roadmap over the next 15 years to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice and protect the planet.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) define global sustainable development priorities and aspirations for 2030 and seek to mobilise global efforts around a common set of goals and targets. The SDGs call for worldwide action among governments and other actors including business, civil society and academia to end poverty and create a life of dignity and opportunity for all, within the boundaries of the planet. The SDGs apply to all countries at all stages of development, including Australia.

The SDGs were agreed by all 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015, and came into effect on 1 January 2016. While non-binding, the SDGs have unprecedented buy-in as a result of extensive and inclusive consultation and negotiations involving governments, the private sector, civil society and academia.

What do the SDGs cover?

The 17 SDGs cover a significant range of issues including economic growth, poverty and inequality, infrastructure, peace and effective governance, climate change and oceans.



How are the SDGs relevant to Australia?

Australia is expected to work towards achievement of the SDGs and will need to report publicly against them.

The SDGs are relevant to Australia (and other developed countries) in various ways:

- They can help make Australia more sustainable, prosperous and fair.
- They promote economic growth, development, good governance and stability including in developing countries in our region and around the world, supporting Australia's security and economic/trade interests.
- They encourage Australia to play its part in achieving global sustainability (e.g. through reduced carbon emissions and responsible consumption and production, and through supporting implementation of the SDGs in developing countries).

Key SDG Resources

- [Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) *The official Agenda*
- [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016](#) *The inaugural report looking at collective global action on the 17 SDGs*
- [SDG Index and Dashboard](#) *The inaugural report looking at country-level action on the 17 SDGs*
- [A Global Compact for Sustainable Development: Business and the SDGs](#) *A guide for business on the SDGs*