**Executive summary**

The Coalition was an active participant in the consultation process leading toward the Sustainable Development Goals[1] and in Feb 2016 planned to hold a webinar around how the Sustainable Development Goals  (SDGs) might impact on future regional sustainability learning;  starting from examples of regional  work already impacting on the Goals see thinkpiece at:  www.swlfsc.org.uk

This submission moves that think-piece forward.

- Firstly, in unpacking the Goal for Education, Goal 4, the education community face a new context for ESD. Will '2030' style ESD sit alongside educational approaches like sustainable lifestyles or incorporate them?

- A further question for our learning community are the linkages between education and the other 16 SDGs;  evidenced in all cultures and climates but most apparent in climate-challenged and war stricken areas where the ability to provide any  education  is threatened.  Sustainable Development is an integrated and coherent outcome, protecting social, economic and natural capitals and sectors are asked to consider their impacts across the board. The SWLFSC submission  extrapolates from linkages between goal 3 and goal 4 i.e. between good health/ well being and quality education, citing some local, regional and national examples, before moving to a table (Appendix 1) which quantifies potential  convergence and divergence between Goal 4 and the other Goals.


1   The UK and regional context

From the outset, the potential conflict between the need to ensure people's development while also safeguarding the planet has been a concern for many organisations; environmentalists may regret the lighter touch around the planet's natural resources in these planetary objectives.  However the agenda can be considered as transformational in that the planetary boundaries now frame our international development agenda.  The alleviation of poverty can only happen within the framework of sustainable development.


While the UK arguably has a shorter distance to travel than many other countries in preventing absolute poverty, deprivation is an increasing factor in the lives of many within the South West.  The UK is also ahead by having a strong agency for sustainability change across local authorities, the business community and civil society. The South West Learning for Sustainability Coalition itself  is a legacy of the top down sustainable development of previous governments. We are already well placed to make the private sector a primary vehicle for change

In considering the EAC question, '**which Goals are the most relevant to the UK, and where the UK domestic performance is believed to be strongest and weakest'** we should be mindful of the integrated and strategic approach needed. Education will impact most effectively on the Goals by addressing specific areas which overlap positively with other targets.  In fact the International Council for Science suggests[2] 'strong trade offs and goals that may cancel each other out'   as being an issue for governments to consider, and this submission trials their 7 point plan, minimising negative and enhancing positive interactions with education (appendix 1).

The new Chief Executive of UNEP has just declared that *the SDGs are only understood by a few people* and that *governments must deliver on environmental elements which are easily understood and close to people's hearts*, citing pollution as an example. The argument for 'people-friendly' language is persuasive, set in the context of the mass global participation invoked during the inception of the Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals should not be separated from the global community who forged them. Rather like the Earth Charter in representing the voices of disparate communities from across the globe; the SDG come with a mandate from the people.


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Whether we recognise it or not our efforts to promote learning for sustainability across the South West contribute to such global commitments while the reverse is also true in that our actions at the local level are framed by bigger plans. Regardless of scale, the aim to end poverty, promote prosperity and people's well being while protecting the environment by 2030 emphasises five P's: **people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.**

## 2    What is the role of education?

The focus of Goal 4 is: "To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" while 4.7 goes on to list ESD alongside other strands of learning, namely:

*4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development[1]*

In this 'incarnation' Education for Sustainable Development is semantically joined with sustainable lifestyles. This is the existing rationale behind local groups like Transition Towns and the wealth of groups driving forward community resilience: local food networks and farm shops, local transport groups, cultural or faith groups, to name but a few. The juxtaposition of ESD with sustainable lifestyles also endorses a diverse range of approaches to learning including eco-schools, forest schools, the Tidy Britain network and others; with that explicit aim. The formal sector has spearheaded a mass of curriculum development in all education sectors and across a wide range of disciplines including the science, humanities, Art and Design and psychology and engineering; again endorsed through the linking of ESD and sustainable lifestyles.   The second part of the Education  Goal (4.7) lists other  adjectival educations like human rights, peace education and global citizenship, and could indicate either their separateness from or their accommodation within ESD. Such explicit language around aspects like global citizenship  is close to the sustainability learning first envisioned after Rio (1992) when the UK government took an early leadership role by establishing a government Education for Sustainability (EfS) panel to define inputs and outcomes across formal, informal and non-formal sectors. Global Citizenship may, in fact, act as a pilot in that it exists alongside ESD, incorporates sustainability learning and was identified as one of the strands within the UK Sustainable Schools programme. Regardless, intrinsically or extrinsically, the wording of the Sustainable Development Goals gives equal weighting to  'development style education' and sustainability learning. With this in mind is it time to realise the aspiration that 'the next reworking of the Education Act will give power to Sustainable Development'? The UK manifesto for EfS[3] is clear as to the actions needed to achieve this:

*"Better coordination of efforts and collaboration between governments and across government departments on formal and informal learning for sustainable development as well as improvement of dialogue between the education sector, civil society and government departments[3]".*

## 3    Cross linking key Education targets with the other SDGs[2]

Knowing the origin of the SDGs it would be regressive to consider Goal 4 in isolation from the other Goals, as not only is learning central to all human development but there are also well documented policy overlaps between education and the other outcomes; this submission identifies Goal 3 'Well being and Health', and Goals 11 and 12 as linkages with salient regional exemplars. Such areas, already close to people's hearts, might be aspects for immediate focus.

Education (Goal 4) and health (Goal 3) combine to affect levels of wellbeing, while an absence of education mitigates against a person achieving good health and this generic overlapping of targets is reflected in much strategic planning for health and well being, not least the Common Assessment

Framework for practitioners where the health and well being of children is linked to their environment. Quality health care and decent environments combine to improve children's life chances.

More specifically some of the SDG health targets, such as **educating people on prevention and abuse of drugs as well as mental health issues**[4] are education- driven. Civil society has long addressed these aspects across the region through a diverse range of actions including community herb and healing gardens; 'grow your own' projects providing work experience for recovering addicts and people with mental health issues; the community arms of the Wildlife Trusts; conservation charities and other sectors, many of which participate in the SWLFSC. The provision is, however, not universal and a snap shot of regional opportunities might be useful. Anther health target, the **provision of information about family planning, sex education and reproductive health**[4] is of concern to both health and education systems. Here is an area where, given the high numbers of teenage pregnancies in SW coastal towns, there is possible room for improvement. This submission from the SWLFSC does not deign to tell the EAC what their priorities should be, but rather strongly suggests that all Goals, including education, are considered both singly and with respect to how they impact other Goals and targets, for that is what happens at the regional level in practice.

As a further example of interlinkage ; goals 11 and 12, namely ' safer cities' and 'responsible consumption' resonate strongly with the existing form of ESD in the region. **Safe, environmentally friendly transport designed to serve children women and vulnerable people** [4]**(Goal 11)** has long been the concern of the 'Safer routes to schools' programme administered by the Local Authorities as well an objective for many locally funded cycling projects, including those specifically aimed at vulnerable groups and single mothers. Similarly, **A reduction in the generation of waste** [4] **(Goal 12)** is a flagship area for many organisations in the SWLFSC. So what's new? It is perhaps the urgency of timescale and cohesive nature of the vision which might inspire and challenge those involved in implementation. Phrases like **'keep the public informed and educated, and provide the tools to live in harmony with nature**[4] will only be satisfied by leadership of Education targets at the national and regional level.

In summary, the SWLFSC calls for continued and co-ordinated action toward the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level combined with a national framework for Goal 4, Education, which considers the impacts on the other Goals and can begin to prioritise the next steps for ESD in the UK.

**4 Conclusion and recommendations**
The submission concludes that domestic implementation is performed with due respect to the precautionary principal and that to retain the coherence of the Goals a full interlinking exercise be carried out, by education, to identify positive and negative interactions. Let's not take actions for the achievement of one Goal without considering divergence or convergence with others.

A key question for UK implementation will be a clarification of the key sectors charged with raising awareness and then implementing SDG targets. Education will surely put forward a strong case to no longer remain *'the forgotten priority of Rio'* as happened at Agenda 21. With this in mind, the Committee is asked to refer to the recommendations of the **UK Manifesto** [3] and to fulfil its commitment to enshrine Sustainable Development within education legislation. Quoting from that document, we need:

**"Better coordination of efforts and collaboration between governments and across government departments on formal and informal learning for sustainable development as well as improvement of dialogue between the education sector, civil society and government departments**[3]**'.**

In conclusion, domestic delivery of the SDGs will necessitate a re-strengthening of the UK stance relating to Education for Sustainable Development with a move toward renewed UK-wide leadership.

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At the regional level, skills are considered to be a crunch issue in the South West. The complexities of learning skills for sustainable living should be addressed at the regional level as well as nationwide. It is not surprising that the rudimentary analysis of interactions between education and other targets from a SWSLC perspective identified the skills- related targets (4.3-4.5) as having a high strongly positive impact across all the other Goals.

The Sustainable Development Goals were the most tangible outcome of the Rio+20 Earth Summit and are the new roadmap for global development, superseding the Millennium Development Goals. Millions of people were involved in their inception and millions more should be engaged in their implementation; for everyone will be affected by the outcomes.

**Appendix 1: Linking Education (Goal 4) with the other Sustainable Development Goals.**

The appendix attempts to cross link the 13 most pertinent education based **targets** with their impacts on the non-education based **Goals**.

The scoring system below (Table 1) is one way of facilitating 'knowledge and policy learning' across governments. It might also stop us from making the mistakes made with Agenda 21, namely that of separating out the environmental, social, and economic elements of the plan for our ease of implementation. Coherence across sectors as well as between the pillars of sustainable development is the new paradigm, and the interactions framework outlined and used below, may help to implement it.

| TABLE 1<br><br>GOAL SCORING[2]<br>Interaction | Name | Explanation |
|---|---|---|
| +3 | indivisible | Inextricably linked to the achievement of another Goal |
| +2 | reinforcing | Aids the achievement of another Goal |
| +1 | enabling | Creates conditions that further another Goal |
| 0 | consistent | No significant positive or negative interactions |
| -1 | constraining | Limits options on another Goal |
| -2 | counteracting | Clashes with another Goal |
| -3 | cancelling | Makes it impossible to reach another Goal |

Testing the process. The interaction framework is applied to all of the targets specifically relating to education, in the next grid (Table 2) which gives targets a total score as a measure of how successful any education target might be in further the SDGs as a whole. A more nuanced and possibly different score could well be achieved through expert working-groups convened across the sectors. It is, however, an example of how such analysis might help in prioritisation of the SDGs according to their overall impact.

| TABLE 2<br><br>Targets with an education component / impact on other goals<br><br>(SDG 1-17) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education<br><br>TOTAL +21 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 |
| **Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes<br><br>TOTAL +22 | +3 | +1 | +2 | +3 | 0 | 0 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | 0 | 0 | +2 | +1 |
| 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education<br><br>TOTAL +19 | +2 | +1 | +3 | +2 | 0 | 0 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | +1 | +1 |
| 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university<br><br>TOTAL+30 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| Target | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship  TOTAL +31 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +3 |
| 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations  TOTAL +32 | +1 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +3 |
| 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy  TOTAL +25 | +2 | +1 | +2 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +3 | +2 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +0 | +0 | +2 | +2 |
| 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development  TOTAL +31 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +1 | +2 | +3 |
| 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all  TOTAL +24 | +2 | +2 | +3 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 |
| 4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +3 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +3 |

| | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 | C5 | C6 | C7 | C8 | C9 | C10 | C11 | C12 | C13 | C14 | C15 | C16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries TOTAL +24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States TOTAL + 24 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +3 | +3 | +1 | +1 | +3 |
| **Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training +18 | +3 | 0 | +3 | +2 | 0 | 0 | +3 | +1 | +3 | +3 | -1 | -1 | 0 | 0 | +2 | 0 |
| **Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| §13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning TOTAL +26 | +1 | +1 | +1 | 0 | +1 | +3 | +3 | +1 | 0 | +1 | +3 | +3 | +2 | +2 | +1 | +3 |

References:

1.  02/08/2015, UN. *'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'*. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015

2.  16/06/2016, Nilsson M et al. ' *Map the interactions between Sustainable development Goals'*. NATURE Vol. 534. pp 320-322

3.  Dec. 2013, EAUC: '*A Manifesto for Dialogue, collaboration and action Post Rio+20'*.

4.  Oct 2014, Bardales D. and Arenas P. '*SDG Child friendly version.*' Pub. Global movement for children of Latin America and the Caribbean.

5.  Nov 18 2015. Kershaw M. '*Will the Sustainable Development Goals shape a new course for ESD in the South West'*? Edit. SWLFSC. www.SWLFSC.org.uk