

Indicators of Sustainable Development





What is an indicator?

Statistical result obtained from data analysis

They are aggregated and transformed, not real results

Why do we use them?

Help incorporate physical and social science knowledge into decision-making

Lead to better and more effective decisions

Policy making

Early warning for prevention

Communicate ideas, thoughts and values



What are indicators of sustainable development?

- ☐ Collectively measure the capacity to meet present and future needs
- ☐ Help understand changes and implementation of sustainable development
- ☐ Developed in economical, social and environmental aspects
- ☐ Focused on achieving Agenda 21 goals for 2030



What are environment indicators?

- ☐ Show the existing link with natural environment, our dependency on physical world
- ☐ Provide knowledge of physical and ecological world
- ☐ Introduce and support strong sustainability



Characteristics:

- Scientific validation
- Relevant in the sustainable development framework
- Easy to understand
- Give answers to observed changes
- Are comparable
- Capable of aggregate big amounts of information
- Relevant for policies development



Classification of indicators

Driving force – state – Response

First framework developed (1996)

- ☐ **Driving force:** processes or activities that have a positive/negative impact
- ☐ **State:** Describe the current situation
- ☐ **Response:** societal actions aimed at moving towards sustainable development

Grouped according to the dimensions of sustainable development and matched to the relevant chapters of Agenda 21

System revised and changed in 2001



Classification of indicators

Issue-based or theme-based frameworks

Most widely used

Indicators are grouped into different issues relating to sustainable development

Issues determined on policy relevance



Classification of indicators

Capital frameworks

Attempts to calculate national wealth as a function of the sum of different kinds of capital (financial, produced goods, natural, human, social and institutional)

All capitals are expressed in monetary terms

Concept of substitutability between different types of capital

- Machines for human labour
- Renewable for non-renewable sources

There are fundamental assets that cannot be substituted (e.g. biodiversity)



Classification of indicators

Accounting frameworks

All indicators are drawn from a single database allowing for sectorial aggregation and using consistent classifications and definitions

System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA)

- Environmental aspects accounting through a satellite system
- Includes monetary and physical accounts (no considerations for social and institutional at the moment)
- Proposed as an international statistical standard



Classification of indicators

Aggregated indicators

Mainly used for raising public awareness

Specially focused on environment and resource management

- Ecological footprint
- Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI)
- Environmental Performance Index (EPI)



Indicators of Sustainable Development

1992

UN Conference. Recognition of important role that indicators can play

1995

Approval of Work Programme on Indicators of Sustainable Development (Commission on Sustainable Development - CSD).

1994-2001

Development of first two sets of indicators

2002

UN Conference. Recommendation of further work with indicators



Indicators of Sustainable Development

2007

Publication of third set of indicators

2015

2030 Agenda. Indicators and goals

Creation of Inter-agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators

2016

Proposal Global Indicator Framework

6th July 2017

RES/71/313

Approval of RES/71/313 Sustainable Development Goals and Indicators



Implementation

Voluntary and country-led

Statistical Commission:

- Development of international statistical standards, methods and guidelines
- Refine and improve the global indicator framework

Secretary-General:

- Maintain the SDG global indicator database – yearly progress report
- Facilitate collaboration and harmonization between national and international statistical systems



Implementation

Voluntary and country-led

Encourage all parties to support and strengthen this common framework

Statistical Commission:

- Development of international statistical standards, methods and guidelines
- Refine and improve the global indicator framework

Secretary-General:

- Maintain the SDG global indicator database – yearly progress report
- Facilitate collaboration and harmonization between national and international statistical systems



AGENDA 2030



Sustainable Development Goals. Progress and possibilities (UK, Nov 2017)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/sustainabledevelopmentgoalstakingstockprogressandpossibilities/november2017>



How is the UK progressing?

What problems are identified to prevent from progressing further?

What solutions are proposed?