



University of Natural Resources
and Life Sciences, Vienna

Global Challenges University Alliance (GCUA) Workshop:
“Life Science Universities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”
16 - 18 April 2018, BOKU - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
Venue: **Exnerhaus, Peter Jordan Strasse 82, 1190 Vienna Austria**

Life Science Universities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The world is facing numerous and severe challenges. More than 800 million people globally live in extreme poverty and are facing hunger. More than half of the land used for agriculture is degraded thereby affecting 1.5 billion people globally. Climate change affects livelihoods all over the world and puts severe threats to survival in many areas. Inequity increases and causes losses of social coherence leading to an increase in conflicts and contributing to multiple crisis of democracy and governance. In order to address these multiple challenges, the resolution “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2015. **The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** presented in this agenda break new ground in several ways: probably the strongest paradigm shift is that they are valid for all countries. This reflects a diffusion of “old” boundaries between the Global South which is to be developed and the global North which sets the model for development. It acknowledges new but often prominent boundaries between both, rich and poor countries but also and increasingly between rich and poor fractions of society within countries. The SDGs are also highly encompassing in their 17 goals and 169 targets which are structured along the broad topics of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

The preamble to the UN resolution states that “**all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership**, will implement this plan.” In this context, universities are increasingly called upon to contribute to reaching the ambitious goals. **Universities can take up this responsibility** through activities in three interdependent fields of action: (a) drive and support political and societal transformation by direct interventions in the policy process (b) realise their mission “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” (SDG target 4.7) and (c) promote coherence of the SDGs and support their implementation through research. Universities need to conceptualize this role beyond slight and cosmetic adjustments of their missions, their research proposals, their teaching activities and their evaluation criteria for achieving relevance in the crucial transformations required. In preparing for the workshop, a draft position paper on “The role of Universities in achieving the SDGs” will be developed by a GCUA-SDG task force. It is the final aim of the workshop to finalise the position paper and set the stage for GCUA spearheading this process for Life Science Universities.

Workshop objectives

The workshop offers opportunities for sharing best practice examples in addressing the SDGs in political and societal action, in teaching and in research, for discussing the specific role of life science Universities for contributing to reaching the SDGs by their integration of socio-economic, ecological and technical aspects of land use and food chains and for sketching a way forward in fulfilling the claims of society. With the workshop, we aim at (1) adopting a position paper of GCUA towards fulfilling the SDGs, (2) developing an agenda for research, teaching and management.

Workshop topics

- a) SDGs as societal and political mission for Universities
 - b) SDGs as mission for Universities in education for sustainable development in the future
 - c) SDGs as mission in research – address contradictions, identify knowledge gaps and pathways to sustainability.
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Final Programme

Host BOKU: M. Calderon Peter, G. Gratzer, T. Lindenthal, A. Melcher, A. Muhar, M. Scherb

16.4.2018 EH 05	17.4.2018 EH 05	18.4.2018 EH 03
	9:00 Keynote 3 "Sustainable Development and Health – the potential role of the SDGs" – Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo - Founder of the African Institute for Health and Development (AIHD)	8:30 GCUA Member meeting
	10:00 Keynote 4 "The SDGs and the role of learning for transformation" – Prof. Arjen Wals (UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development, Wageningen University)	9:30 Feedback from Parallel Sessions 11:00 Coffee Break
	Invited Part - Working Sessions 11:00 Coffee Break	11:30 Way Forward Session Transformation University Summary of Lessons Learnt
Public Part - Discussion	11:30 Position Paper: The SDGs as challenge to Life Sciences Universities. Prof. Georg Gratzer - Introduction Sessions	Dissemination and Outreach Final Conclusion
15:00 Opening Prof. Ylva Hilbur (GCUA, SLU) and Dr. Andreas Melcher (BOKU)	12:00 Students Session: Presentations about their SDGs ideas and perspectives	13:00 Lunch
15:15 Keynote 1 – Video message from H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammed , Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) of the United Nations	12:30 Lunch	14:30 Excursion: Biosphere reserve Viennese Woods Wiener Wald
15:30 Keynote 2 – "The SDGs and the role of interactions of goals and targets for implementing the Agenda" – Prof. Måns Nilsson , Deputy Director and Research director at the Stockholm Environment Institute; Adjunct Professor in Environmental Strategies Research at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology	13:30 Session 1 "The SDGs as challenge to Life Sciences Universities - Teaching " 14:30 Session 2 "The SDGs as challenge to Life Sciences Universities - Science "	15:00 Walk, View over Vienna Core zone biosphere reserve Baumkreis "Am Himmel"
16:30 Coffee Break (Aula Schwackhoeferbuilding)	15:30 Coffee Break	17:00 Presentation by Herbert Veit, Landgut Cobenzl City Farm management Landgut Cobenzl Presentation BPWW Model region for sustainability discussion with Bernhard Haas on SDG's - community development
17:15 Welcome Address – BOKU Rector Prof. Hubert Hasenauer Panel + Public Discussion *: "Life Science Universities and the SDGs"	16:00 – 17:30 Session 3 "The SDGs as challenge to Life Sciences Universities - 3rd Mission "	
19:00 Buffet	18:30 Dinner (Heuriger Friseurmüller, Neustift, Hameustraße 30)	

15:00 Walk, View over Vienna Core zone biosphere reserve Parkplatz Cobenzl Baumkreis "Am Himmel"

17:00 Presentation Herbert Veit, Landgut Cobenzl City Farm management (translation needed) Landgut Cobenzl

Presentation BPWW Model region for sustainability discussion with Bernhard Haas SDG's - community development

19:00 Müllers Heuriger & Weingut



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* **Panel participants:** Prof. Ylva Hillbur (GCUA Chair and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences); Dr. Franz Fischler (former EU commissioner and President of the European Forum Alpbach); Prof. Måns Nilsson; Dr. Mary Amuyunzu-Nyamongo; Prof. Georg Gratzer (BOKU).

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Registration: <https://www.slu.se/en/collaboration/international/slu-global/global-challenges-university-alliance/workshops>
