

Sustainable Development Goals

The future of international development



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In 2015 the Millennium Development Goals will expire and will be replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the 8 Millennium Development Goals, established at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, were focused on developing countries and on core themes such as poverty alleviation, education and gender equality. In such process, the environmental issues were not given the right consideration.

The new SDGs offer major improvements on the Millennium Development Goals, addressing some of the systemic barriers to sustainable development and offering better coverage of, and balance between, the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental, together with institutional/governance aspects. Differently from those, the SDGs cannot be achieved without far-reaching change in national policy and action.

After a long series of intergovernmental negotiations on various themes, which saw a broad participation from major groups and civil society stakeholders under the guidance of the United Nations State Members, the Goals have been adopted on September 25th at the New York United Nations Summit by 193 Member States. In the same occasion, the UN launched their post-2015 development agenda, in which the Goals are integrated. UN Member States, the civil society and private sector contributors will use this new, universal set of goals, targets and indicators to guide development global efforts over the next 15 years in a concerted international action within the broadest, most ambitious development agenda ever agreed at the global level.

Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*
Goal 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development



The 17 Goals and 169 Targets are meant to be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries, while taking into account the different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

Some of the Targets are very specific, while others are more idealistic and vague in terms of the expected outcome, even in a global perspective.

The Goals' process is closely linked with other ongoing processes, such as **COP21**, the conference on climate change to be held in Paris in December which should result in an agreement on global climate action. The themes of climate and development are connected mainly for what concerns poverty, gender equality and energy, thus successful results in one of those areas within a process imply improvements for the other one.



Development and environment are interlinked in various aspects; for instance, the proportion of total water resources used or a broader understanding of biodiversity conservation are connected with the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, by the contribution to food security, more sustainable and resilient agriculture and fisheries, and the reduction of land degradation. The deterioration of ecosystems' resilience has also a direct impact on epidemic, infectious and water related diseases, while on a social basis, the proportion of population using an improved drinking water source helps to promote gender equality and to empower women.

The Goal's process is furthermore connected with the **Global Action Programme**, which is meant "to generate and scale-up action in all levels and areas of education and learning in order to accelerate progress towards sustainable development", because education is a means to achieving a broad global development agenda. Education is therefore among the strategies to achieve all the Goals, helping to reduce poverty by empowering people, improving their nutrition through an appropriate knowledge on health and hygiene practices, generating health gains, raising environmental awareness for a more sustainable world and promoting peaceful societies through the enhancement of tolerance to diversity.

The Goals already started influencing the trend of many business: for example, for what concerns increasing the share of the renewable energy mix (as part of the Goal 7), *Apple* decided that its new European data centre will run solely on renewable energy; *Google*, instead, is investing USD 300mln in a *SolarCity* fund to finance residential solar projects, while *H&M* is buying Guarantees of Origin in Europe to document their renewable electricity use and is furthermore top-financing a hydroelectric power plant in Norway, *Kroka 2*. The *International Chamber of Commerce* has just launched a [Charter](#) with an holistic approach to sustainability, setting a strategy framework to enable companies to place sustainability at the heart of their operations (e.g. staff recruitment, development of new products and services, etc.), stating that companies with high ratings for environmental, social and governance factors have a lower cost of debt and equity, frequently outperforming the market in the medium and long term. One of the companies who followed this approach is *Novozymes*, who created a new management tool to help themselves aligning to the SDGs. The *UN Global Compact* launched in September the *SDG Compass*: a guide for businesses on how to align and integrate sustainability practices with the SDGs.

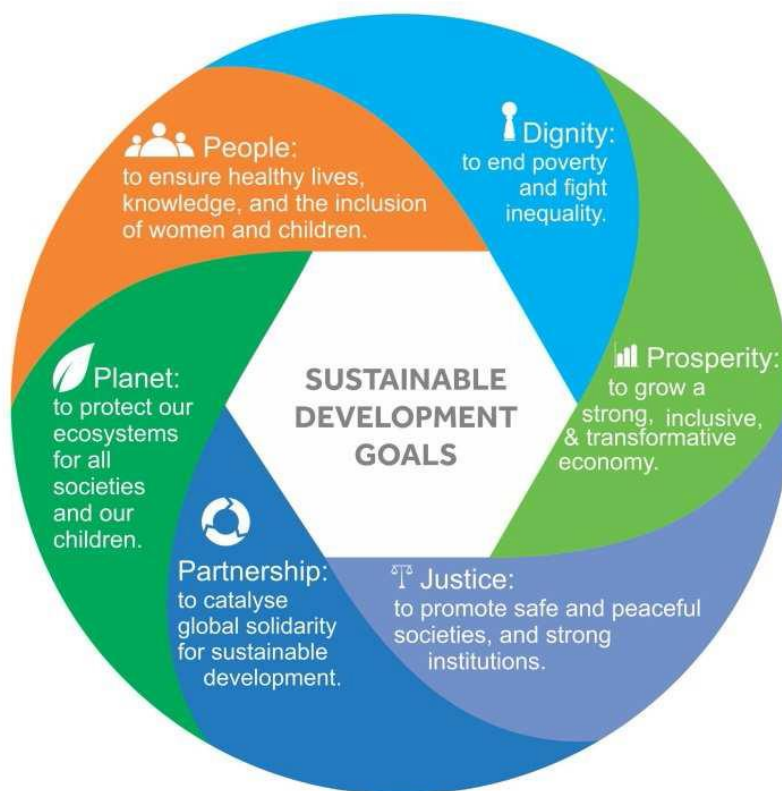
Countries are expected to set their own goals, targets and priorities in the view of implementing the SDGs according to their domestic capabilities and condition. We need policies, regulations, monitoring tools, measurable goals and targets and participatory mechanisms to review the **implementation** of the agenda at the national, regional and global levels. Making the implementation of the Goals possible furthermore requires enhancing capacity-building, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and a range of other supportive measures. The funds from **financing** sources to sustainable development will flow through a domestic, as well as an international, enabling environment and policy framework (national and international public and private sources, fair trading system etc.): the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, which was agreed on July 15th, outlined a roadmap for the implementation of the Goals which moves towards development finance, investing also in children as agents of future growth.



The UN defined a set of essential elements that will aim to arrive at the aspirational agenda mandated by the *Rio +20 Conference* when implementing it:

- Commit to a universal approach – solutions that address all countries and all groups
- Integrate sustainability into all activities, mindful of economic, environmental and social impacts
- Address inequalities in all social and economic groups
- Ensure that all actions respect and advance human rights
- Address the drivers of climate change and its consequences
- Base the analysis on credible data and evidence, enhancing data capacity, availability, disaggregation, literacy and sharing
- Expand the global partnership for means of implementation to maximum effect, and full participation, including multi-stakeholder, issue-based coalitions
- Anchor the new compact in a renewed commitment to international solidarity, commensurate with the ability of each country to contribute.

Sustainable development must be an integrated agenda for economic, environmental, and social solutions



Sustainable development – “Development that meets the needs of the present while safeguarding Earth’s life support system, on which the welfare of current and future generations depends.”

Griggs et al. (2013)

The UN emphasized the importance of **engaging all relevant stakeholders** in putting the new Agenda in practice: governments and public institutions will work closely with national parliaments, local authorities, international institutions, business and the private sector, civil society, academia, philanthropic organisations, voluntary groups and others.



The **Foundation for Environmental Education** with its global network thus needs to frame and highlight its role as a stakeholder and trendsetter in the Sustainable Development process, particularly for environmental, educational and eco-tourism matters. The SDGs will define a relevant part of the context within which FEE operates, thus we are driven to reflect our work in the Goals.

FEE through its mission of fostering awareness, knowledge, participation, commitment, skills, actions and creativity on the environment and on sustainable development, shares the core values behind the set of SDGs.

Programmes' overview:

- a) **YRE: Young Reporters for the Environment** is a network of international youth engaged in environmental journalism and *Education for Sustainable Development*, where the students investigate an environmental problem and report it to the local community, while, at the international level, they may cooperate with young reporters from other countries for sharing information or data, with the aim of proposing a solution and disseminating it.
- b) **ECO-SCHOOLS:** A global student-led change process in *Education for Sustainable Development* which involves also teachers' training, integration in the school curriculum, environmental reviews, action plans, monitoring and evaluation, informing and involving the local community, setting an eco-code focusing on the various environmental themes (water, energy, waste, global citizenship..).
- c) **LEAF: Learning About Forests** wants to encourage environmental education through awareness raising among students, teachers and the wider school community, to increase knowledge about the key role forests play for sustainable life on our planet, reflecting their cultural, ecological, economic and social functions, with themes as biodiversity, climate, products or services, codes and myths.
- d) **BLUE FLAG:** The world's biggest voluntary eco-label for beaches, marinas and eco-tourism boats works towards sustainable development through compliance with criteria dealing with environmental education and information, environmental management, water quality, safety and other services.
- e) **GREEN KEY:** This eco-label for tourism facilities (hotels, campsites, small accommodations, tourist attractions and restaurants) is a voluntary award that aims at contributing to prevent climate change and reach sustainable tourism by awarding and promoting best practice, with the goal of changing the environmental practices at the awarded establishments but also the behaviour of tourism actors, including guests, staff, suppliers, authorities, local communities so to involve them in increasingly safeguarding their own environment. The focus is on themes such as environmental management,

water, waste and energy saving, involvement and awareness of guests and staff, management of food and beverage and open spaces.



The programmes based on *Education for Sustainable Development*, such as **YRE**, **Eco-Schools** and **LEAF** show a strong link with the educational Goal (SDG 4) and the Goal on global partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17). FEE's tourism eco-labels, **Green Key** and **Blue Flag**, on the other hand, have a focus on making human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11) and on implementing tools for monitoring sustainable development impacts for tourism (SDG 12.b).

The voluntary international programmes need to respect the following environmental educational principles:

- 1) Ensure that participants are engaged in the learning/teaching process
- 2) Empower participants to take informed decisions and actions on real life sustainability issues
- 3) Encourage participants to work actively together and involve their communities in collaborative solutions
- 4) Support participants to examine their assumptions, knowledge and experiences in order to develop critical thinking, and be open to change
- 5) Encourage participants to be aware of cultural practices as an integral part of sustainability issues
- 6) Encourage participants to share inspirational stories of their achievements, failures and values in order to learn from them, and to support each other
- 7) Continuously explore, test and share innovative approaches, methodologies and techniques
- 8) Ensure that continuous improvements through monitoring and evaluation are central to the programmes.

Thus, **FEE** as an umbrella organisation aims at reaching objectives as indicated in the SDGs:

- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (SDG 3).
- “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all” (SDG 4).
- “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water..” (SDG 6), “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all” (SDG 7), “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” (14), as well as to “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems..” (SDG 15).
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth..” (SDG 8), particularly to “..implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products” (SDG 8.9).

- “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (SDG 11).
- “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” (SDG 12).
- “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” (SDG 13).
- “..Promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems..” (SDG 15).
- “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development..” (SDG 16), particularly to build transparent institutions and promote non-discriminatory policies for sustainable development (SDGs 16.6, 16.b) with a positive, proactive, democratic *modus operandi* and a strong synergic support to civil society and third sector.
- “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (SDG 17) through a geographically spread, multi-stakeholder approach.

Young Reporters for the Environment

The most evident link between the Young Reporters for the Environment programme and the SDGs is found in the Goal 4:

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality **education** and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” and its subparagraphs “..increase ... the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship” (SDG 4.4) with the aim of learning to think critically, “ensure all learners acquire 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 cultures contribution to sustainable development” (SDG 4.7) for being able to connect with concrete issues.

The *environmental educational* programme thus also wish for taking “action to combat climate change and its impacts” (SDG 13), specifically for what concerns to “**improve education, awareness raising** and human and institutional capacity **on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning**” (SDG 13.3) through active solution-oriented learning. The programme can also help to “promote mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change related planning and management, in LDCs, including focusing on women, youth, local and marginalized communities” (SDG 13.b).

YRE is a network of young people educating for sustainable development and environmental issues in general, thus it also supports the aim of many other SDGs, such as:

- “Promote sustainable agriculture” (SDG 2).
- “Promote well-being for all at all ages” (SDG 3).
- “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (SDG 5).
- “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, supporting and strengthening the participation of local communities (SDG 6)

The journalistic piece can influence the local communities to take action on various environmental matters

- “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all” (SDG 7)
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, developing measures that support creativity and innovation (SDG 8)
- “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation” enhancing scientific research (SDG 9)
- “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable ... Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality, municipal and other waste management” (SDG 11)
- “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns”, raising awareness on sustainable development and lifestyles which are in harmony with nature (SDG 12)
- “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, aiming to prevent marine pollution and protect marine and coastal ecosystems (SDG 14)
- “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”, promoting the implementation of sustainable management of the forests (SDG 15)
- YRE helps to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development..” (SDG 16)
- YRE can encourage to “..Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (SDG 17)

Learning About Forests

The key Goals linked to the Learning About Forests programme are:

- “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”, increasing the number of youths and adults who have relevant skills and ensuring that all learners (referring to the whole school community) acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature (SDG 4)
- “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water..”, protecting water-related ecosystems and supporting the participation of local communities for improving water management (SDG 6)
- “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”, ensuring a sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, including their biodiversity, in particular forests, wetlands mountains and drylands, preventing the extinction of threatened species (SDG 15)



The principles behind LEAF are compatible with the aim of more SDGs:

- “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”, implementing agricultural practices, such as the tree-planting events, which help maintain ecosystems and progressively improve land and soil quality (SDG 2)
- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (SDG 3)
- “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all” (SDG 7)
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment..”, endeavouring to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and devising policies that encourage sustainable tourism which promotes local culture and products, such as jobs related to the forest, while learning to respect the forest community as well as its myths, laws and codes (SDG8)
- “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage while supporting positive links between the urban and the rural areas as to widen the access to inclusive green and public spaces (SDG 11)
- “Ensure sustainable consumption patterns” through relevant information and awareness for achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources (SDG 12)
- “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” improving education and awareness raising on climate change and the role of forests (SDG 13)
- “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (SDG 17).

Eco-Schools

The programme is fully in line with the Goals:

- “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” increasing the number of youth and adults with relevant skills and ensuring that all learners acquire knowledge for promoting sustainable development, developing a culture of peace and global citizenship while upgrading education facilities to child, disability and gender sensitive ones as to provide a safe, inclusive and effective learning environment for all (SDG 4)
- “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, strengthening efforts to safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage with a focus on schools’ waste management, resource efficiency and climate change mitigation (e.g. Litter Less Campaign) (SDG 11)
- “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (SDG 17).

The implementation of the Eco-Schools programme also works towards the achievement of the aim of more SDGs, such as:

- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (SDG 3)
- “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, improving water quality and water-use efficiency with pollution reduction, minimizing the release of hazardous chemicals, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater, increasing recycling or safe reuse and ensuring sustainable withdrawals together with the strengthening of the participation of local communities for such purposes (SDG 6)
- “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all” increasing the share of renewable energy and energy efficiency, with the result of creating also savings (SDG 7)
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” with the improvement of resource efficiency in consumption and production as to endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation (SDG 8)
- “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation” (SDG 9)
- “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns”, using the natural resources efficiently, reducing the waste generation (including the food waste) and managing sustainably the chemical products (SDG 12)
- “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” specially improving education, awareness raising and capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning (SDG 13)
- “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems..” (SDG 15)
- “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development ... and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels” highlighting the theme of social justice (SDG 16).



Tourism contributes to nearly 10% of the world's GDP, one in eleven of all jobs on the planet and is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, making it highly significant in the progress towards the Goals. Sustainable tourism has the potential to contribute directly or indirectly to all of the Goals; in particular, it has been included as a target in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption, production and the use of oceans and marine resources¹.



Blue Flag

The principles and rules of the programme comply with the content of many Goals:

- “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, improving water quality with pollution reduction and minimization of hazardous chemicals release, increasing recycling, safe reuse and water-use efficiency through the usage of sustainable withdrawals as to protect water-related ecosystems also with the support and participation of local communities (SDG 6)
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” improving the resource efficiency in consumption while devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates job, promotes local culture and products. Blue Flag focuses as well on the protection of labour rights together with the promotion of a safe and secure working environment and the prohibition of child labour (SDG 8)
- “Build resilient infrastructure..” upgrading it as to be sustainable and equipped with clean technologies (SDG 9)
- “by 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status” with the aim of reducing inequalities and discriminatory practices for wages as social protection policies (SDG 10.2)
- “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” enhancing capacities for participatory and sustainable human settlements as to strengthen the efforts for safeguarding the world's cultural and natural heritage while providing universal access to the public spaces particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (SDG 11)
- “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” for the efficient use of natural resources, through a sound management and reduction of chemicals and wastes and the promotion of sustainable public procurement practices (SDG 12)
- “Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development” preventing and reducing marine pollution also from land-based activities, addressing the impacts of ocean acidification and conserving coastal and marine areas. Blue Flags also contributes in

¹ World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) – *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2015
http://d1xtq4w60xapw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/tourism_and_the_sustainable_development_goals.pdf

- increasing the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs with the sustainable use of marine resources through tourism (SDG 14)
- “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems ... halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” for halting the loss of biodiversity and preventing the extinction of threatened species, also through the integration of ecosystem values into local planning policies (SDG 15).



The implementation of the Blue Flag programme also work towards the aim of several more SDGs:

- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (SDG 3)
- “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” as education has a central role in the programme and reaches out for all the persons involved in it as well as for the users (SDG 4)
- “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (SDG 5)
- “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all” to help increasing the share of renewable energy and energy efficiency (SDG 7)
- “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” (SDG 13)
- “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development..” enforcing non-discriminatory policies for sustainable development (SDG 16)
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” through a multi-stakeholder partnership, which involves also public partners and local authorities, where knowledge and expertise are shared (SDG 17)

Green Key

For what concerns the part of the programme related to **environmental management**, the Goals mainly involved are:

- “Ensure ... sustainable management of water..” improving its quality, having the proportion of untreated wastewater, increasing recycling, safe reuse and sustainable withdrawals of freshwater (SDG 6)
- “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation” setting rules for developing or upgrading quality infrastructures to support economic development and human well-being for an increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean technologies (SDG 9)
- “Make ... human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” paying attention to air quality, indoor environment and waste management as to tackle climate change (SDG 11)
- “Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” with rules for achieving sustainable management of natural resources, respecting eco-criteria for food and beverages, reducing waste generation and achieving environmentally sound management of chemicals (SDG 12).

- This way the programme “develops and implements tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products” (12.b).



As an eco-tourism programme focused on the **environmental awareness** of staff and guests, the Goals principally involved are:

- “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being..” where the programme has to encourage the users to take part in green activities (SDG 3)
- “..ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights..” as part of the “educational Goal” (number 4), whereby the learners are the recipients of the environmental information expected in the implementation of the programme (SDG 4.7)
- “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, as the Green Key programme sets Corporate Social Responsibility and safety rules for the workers (SDG 8)
- “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” through a reduced environmental impact but also through the improvement of education and awareness raising for both the facilities’ staff and users (SDG 13)
- “..revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” (SDG 17).

