

Statement of Intent

Towards a Sustainable Earth: Environment-human systems and the UN Global Goals

June 2016

The nature of our 21st Century development challenges requires a shift in thinking and action that will better prepare us for the future, while enabling more effective development interventions today.

The **UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**, **The Rockefeller Foundation** and the **UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)** are committed to seeing the [UN Global Goals](#) become a reality. The first step towards this requires quickly identifying a research agenda that will pinpoint what we still need to understand in order to chart a sound transition to sustainable development. The nature of the challenges we face requires a paradigm shift in our global approach, indeed, the inspiration for our collaboration is the core premise that the environment-human relationship must be central to our sustainable development solutions. The resilience of our ecosystems, the security of natural resources, and the stability of earth's life-support systems are necessary for humans to thrive.

The Goal:

Our goal is to prioritise research and innovation for sustainable, resilient human development, and mobilize resources and actions to support it with the overall outcome that responsible management of the planet is recognised as a core requirement for advancing the global economy and improving the well-being of humanity.

The Initiative:

The distinguishing feature of this initiative is its core premise that the environment-human relationship must be central to all development. The resilience of our ecosystems, the security of natural resources, and the stability of earth's life-support systems are essential for human resilience to the global changes that we face, and for any prospect of sustainable development. Moreover, a holistic approach to the UN Global Goals will be required in order to implement them successfully, thus we must understand interdependencies, co-benefits and trade-offs across environment-human dimensions of the goals.

With these common ambitions, we recognise an urgent need to identify a collective global Agenda for scientific research and innovation that funding organisations should undertake in order to support integrated, systemic implementation and fulfilment of the Goals.

This work will begin at The Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Centre, which convenes informed and influential international leaders and which has a storied history as a place where great ideas are born.

Through a series of convenings hosted at the Bellagio Centre, NERC and ESRC will work in partnership with The Rockefeller Foundation to:

1. Identify a research, innovation and research translation Agenda in support of the Global Goals;
2. Develop a process and metrics for tracking progress of the Agenda towards this initiative's high level goal;
3. Mobilise commitments to funding and action to enable execution of the Agenda;
4. Initiate collaboration between and among international actors.

The contribution of global actors is essential to the success of this activity and it is the ambition that additional partners including from RCUK and funding organisations in the U.S, Asia, Africa, Latin America and other interested countries and international organisations will be able to be fully involved in the process. We are committed to leading a coalition of like-minded leaders in science and innovation to establish the evidence, advance scientific understanding and translate research to effective action in support of our common future and fulfilment of the Global Goals. We eagerly invite broad and diverse community of partners from public, private, civil society and academia to join us in this ambitious endeavour



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