

Concept SDG^{nexus} Network Phase II

Project Overview

The SDG^{nexus} Network, established in 2020 during the first phase of the exceed program, is dedicated to investigating the complex interactions between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their implications for sustainable development pathways. Its research is based on the mutual interaction – the nexus – between SDGs, leading to synergies but also trade-offs.

In the second phase 2025-2029, the network will continue its long-term, equally important and interconnected objectives: to (1) develop a joint research framework, (2) establish collaborative networking activities, and (3) train and promote young professionals, i.e., the Agents of Change.

The SDG^{nexus} Network cooperates with a diverse network of core partners from Latin America, Central Asia, and Germany. Collaborating partners, including universities and non-academic organizations contribute expertise and support to enhance the impact of the research.

Research Concept and Nexus Topics 2025-2029

The SDG^{nexus} Network focuses on addressing the SDGs. In the second project phase 2025-2029, we are particularly focusing on the nexus topics Land Use and Water. Recognizing the interconnectedness of these two critical topics, the network aims to foster interdisciplinary research and promote innovative solutions.

Cross-cutting themes of climate change, biodiversity, governance, and gender will be integrated into all research efforts. These themes will be explicitly incorporated into research activities, from project design to policy recommendations and guidelines, to develop comprehensive and resilient solutions.

By involving different societal actors in research, networking, and capacity building activities, the network promotes diversity and builds multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable development. Streamlining research efforts into the two key nexus topics aims to foster deeper collaboration, stronger research teams, and more impactful outcomes.

Future Project Structure

To realize this research concept, the SDG^{nexus} Network will establish thematic research groups led by research associates (postdocs), focusing on one of the key nexus topics Land Use or Water. SDG^{nexus} Network Research groups will be established at each partner institution and will work closely together. This will enhance knowledge sharing, team cohesion, and empowerment of the project staff.

At JLU, we call for two SDG^{nexus} Network Research Groups, each working on one of the nexus topics. Two PhD candidates will complement the research groups. One PhD candidate in each group is supposed to come from Central Asia and one from Latin America. Through a dedicated staff exchange program, we offer exchange visits between core partner institutions to facilitate research collaborations and generate ideas for joint third-party funding proposals between our research groups.

By including external actors in the research process and promoting data sharing and open access publication, the network actively stimulates open and transparent science processes. We encourage researchers to co-design their projects from the beginning with experts from NGOs and Think Thanks, but also local communities, administrations, private companies or citizens