**FROM ASPIRATIONS TO ACHIEVEMENTS?**

**THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

A symposium on recent work by researchers at the International Institute of Social Studies (Erasmus University Rotterdam), The Hague

**Thursday 9 May, 2019 – ISS, Kortenaerkade 12, The Hague – 14.30-18.00**

**Aula A (ground floor), followed by drinks**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), centrepiece of the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, were negotiated through the United Nations system in 2012-2015 and agreed by all member countries. They are notable in several ways: (1) by linking economic, social and environmental dimensions of development they move beyond the narrower focus on poverty and human development in the Millennium Development Goals, (2) they apply to and in all countries, and (3) they articulate both a set of aspirational goals for inclusive sustainable global progress that is complementary to and often more specific than human rights, and an agenda for cooperative action towards these goals, partly focused via targets and indicators. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld/publication>

In this event, chaired by Professor Wil Hout, ISS researchers present ideas from a series of research projects that have looked at the nature and potentials/limitations of the SDGs, and the processes and politics behind the setting and use of the goals, targets, and indicators. We invite comments, questions and sharing of experience from everyone interested in the SDGs.

14.30. INTRODUCTION

14.35. **EMERGENCE**: ‘**The road to the SDGs - Building global alliances’** (Des Gasper, Professor of Human Development, Development Ethics and Public Policy)

The detailed contents of the SDGs have been criticised in many respects. However, the process through which they emerged is equally important—a process carried by member nations of the UN, especially from the South, and with extensive public outreach, not dominated by rich countries and international bureaucracies—and it has implications for their long-run potential. This paper (forthcoming in *J. of Global Ethics*) looks at formation of the SDGs as an attempt to stimulate and coordinate progressive action and cooperation worldwide for the ‘post-aid’ era, and at the systems of alliances that emerged to articulate, negotiate, and promulgate the goals. Webs of personal relations played a role, but within systems of institutionalized relationships. The future influence of the SDGs should be considered within this context of evolving global power systems.

**THE CHARACTER, CONTENT AND POTENTIALS OF THE SDGS**

15.05. ***Sustainable Development Goals and Income Inequality***, edited by Peter van Bergeijk (Professor of International Economics and Macroeconomics) and Rolph van der Hoeven (Professor of Employment and Development Economics (retired)) Cheltenham: Edward Elgar (2017). This book edited by two ISS professors documents and analyses the seriousness of growing national inequality in different regions around the world and argues that the treatment of inequality in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is wholly insufficient, including due to their failure to recognise the growing difference between the income of work and the income of capital and the super rich, and the strain this places on a country’s social fabric. ( <https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/sustainable-development-goals-and-income-inequality>).

15.45. Open Access Special Issue (January 2019, vol. 10, S1) of the journal *Global Policy* – ‘**Knowledge and Politics in Setting and Measuring SDGs**’ – a series of case-studies and commentaries, edited by Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (New School University, New York) and Desmond McNeill (University of Oslo). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/17585899/2019/10/S1> The targets and indicators established for the SDGs can be very important in steering attention, activity and expenditure. They are often open to critical discussion as perhaps too general / too specific / too weak / too ambitious / too restrictive /… The special issue looks at those questions and the associated politics, for many of the SDGs, Introduction of the special issue by Sunil Tankha (Assistant Professor of Public Policy) and Des Gasper, participants in the project.

16.10.Coffee / tea

**CASE STUDIES**

16.30. **‘The Framing of Sustainable Consumption and Production in SDG 12’**, by Des Gasper, Amod Shah (PhD researcher, ISS) and Sunil Tankha. *Global Policy*, vol. 10, S1, pp. 83-95, open access at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1758-5899.12592> Presented by ST.

17.00. **‘Children’s Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals’**, by Karin Arts, Professor of International Law and Development: in Ursula Kilkelly and Ton Liefaard (eds.), *International Human Rights: International Children’s Rights Law*, Springer, Singapore, 2019, pp. 537-561.

17.30. **‘Undermining the SDGs: informality, patronage and the politics of inclusion in Mumbai’**, by Joop de Wit, retired Senior Lecturer in Public Policy & Development Management.Forthcoming in *Politics of Social Exclusion*, edited by Gabrielle Koehler, Paris: UNESCO.

18.00. Drinks, at the ISS bar.

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