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## SDGs and the commons: From a central missing topic towards recognition via national implementations?

**Tobias Haller and Ilkhom Soliev**

### Abstract

The commons, as a term, has been central in the development of the concept 'sustainable development' in the 1980s. Yet, despite the powerful research advancing the commons scholarship since then, the term has disappeared from the formulations of the millennium and later sustainable development goals (MDGs and SDGs) that have been shaping policies and action on the ground. Applying an institutional-discursive analysis we first establish the trends in the SDGs discourse and bring forward the potential explanations for these trends. Then we provide an example of how in fact the commons discourse nevertheless enters the policy arena via national implementation of the SDGs. For this we uncover the latest iterations in the science-policy developments in Switzerland as an empirical illustration. We reflect on what our findings and conceptualizations mean for the broader commons scholarship and practice.

### Reading material

- Larsen, P. B., Haller, T., & Kothari, A. (2022). Sanctioning Disciplined Grabs (SDGs): From SDGs as Green Anti-Politics Machine to Radical Alternatives? *Geoforum*, 131, 20-26. [DOI](#)
- Spangenberg, J. H. (2017). Hot air or comprehensive progress? A critical assessment of the SDGs. *Sustainable Development*, 25(4), 311-321. [DOI](#)
- WCED, S. W. S. (1987). World commission on environment and development. Our common future, 17(1), 1-91. Available via [URL](#).



Tobias Haller is Extraordinary Professor in Social Anthropology at the University of Bern with focus on sustainable local resource management and commons, as well as nature conservation areas and major investment in agricultural regions or "land grabbing", and co-initiator of the IASC Europe & CIS Colloquium Series on Commons and Policy.



Ilkhom Soliev is senior researcher/lecturer at the University of Halle, he is an institutional economist and interdisciplinary social-environmental scholar with focus on governance of common pool resources, and co-initiator of the IASC Europe & CIS Colloquium Series on Commons and Policy.

**About the Colloquium Series:** IASC Europe & CIS is organizing this colloquium series to support the communication among the IASC members in the region and beyond to facilitate content-based exchange and cross-disciplinary networking on bringing together the commons scholarship and practice with policy.