

## New Sustainable Development Initiative Launches at the UA

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The University of Arizona's College of Social & Behavioral Sciences is excited to announce that it has established a new programmatic initiative on sustainable development & environment, focused on the role of the social sciences in solving the grand challenges of sustainable development. The initiative will be led by Diana Liverman, a Regents' Professor in the School of Geography and Development.

Liverman, who will be stepping down as co-director of the UA's Institute of the Environment in order to lead the new initiative, has already made significant contributions to international research agendas that seek to link global environmental change with social development through her leadership roles for the International Council for Science (ICSU) including the design of the Future Earth research platform designed to mobilize the knowledge and support to accelerate transformations to a sustainable world.

"I am so pleased that Liverman has accepted this key leadership role in the college," said **John Paul Jones III**, dean of SBS. "This new initiative is so timely and will focus on the opportunities, barriers, trade-offs, and synergies in connecting environmental and social development."

In 2015, the United Nations agreed on a set of seventeen **sustainable development goals** <sup>[1]</sup>, or SDGs, to guide nations towards a better world for all by 2030. The goals include eliminating poverty, inequality, and hunger, increasing innovation and economic and social wellbeing, providing for quality education, work and gender equity, ensuring access to clean water, clean energy and good health, promoting sustainable cities and industries ? all while reducing the serious environmental risks of climate change and the degradation of ocean, land, biodiversity and ecosystems.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to focus on an area that I care so deeply about and to work with colleagues in SBS to bring social science perspectives to questions of environment and sustainable development," said Liverman, who helped the Institute of the Environment grow to more than 250 affiliated faculty, millions of dollars in research grants, and a national profile.

The new initiative is a part of the UA's broader institutional research strategy to expand its externally-funded collaborative efforts across the globe, under the leadership of associate vice president Randy Burd.

"The UA is known worldwide for its research strength in the environment, writ large. This new initiative capitalizes our university strengths, leverage Liverman's unparalleled academic credentials and experiences, and will bring visibility and distinction to our campus," said Kimberly Andrews Espy, senior vice president for research.

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**Links**

[1] <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>