



Moderation Team

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SDG 15: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems

Event Description

On **June 21, 2021**, Queen's University hosted its first [17 Rooms](#) event, which brought together Queen's faculty, students, and staff to identify next steps for advancing the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) at the university.

Participants were divided into 17 virtual rooms, one per SDG, and asked to identify actions **that Queen's University could take in the following 12 to 18 months to advance their specific goal.**

Rooms participants were also asked to identify:

- The most important issues related to their SDG that Queen's should address,
- Connections and common themes amongst these issues,
- How their SDG connects with reconciliation/conciliation, decolonization, and Indigenization,
- How their SDG connects with other SDGs.

Each room had two hours to brainstorm ideas before presenting their recommended actions to all participants. Following the event, each room's moderation team authored a summary report.

All room reports can be found on the [17 Rooms event page](#).

Room Participants

Kelly Blair-Matuk (Staff Facilitator)	Nell Libera (Student Facilitator)	Karin Samis
David Carruthers	Steve Lougheed	John Steele
Kyle Cummings-Bentley	Guy Lucas	Scott Yam
Ryan Danby	Efkan Oguz	
Kyle Johannsen	Sharon Regan (Moderator)	

Section 1: Discussion

Queen's has a wealth of land; the institution should model sustainable land use. The group identified the following themes in discussion on how Queen's can advance SDG 15:

- Build opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to reconnect with nature.
- Promote connections between researchers and policymakers.
- Integrate non-western and Indigenous ways of knowing into research and the curriculum.
- Enhance engagement with [Queen's University Biological Station \(QUBS\)](#).
- Dedicate funding for sustainability and SDG initiatives.

Section 2: Proposed Actions

Room 15 brought together 13 individuals from across Queen's University to discuss approaches to addressing SDG 15.

They identified twelve areas of action in their discussions:

Action (12-18 Months)	Problem Statement	People, Partnerships, and Resources Required
<p>Action 1: Make connections with local farmers and use scientific and traditional ecological knowledge to start consultations for the creation of a local food source co-operative or community gardens.</p> <p>Program should be subsidized for students.</p>	<p>Unsustainable food sourcing (ex. monocultures and reliance on fossil fuels) is one of the main causes of land degradation and loss of biodiversity.</p> <p>Locally sourced food for ~20,000 on-campus students would contribute to offsetting reliance.</p>	<p>The National Farmers Union of Ontario expressed interest in partnering on this initiative.</p> <p>Use of St. Mary's space for distribution.</p>

<p>Action 2: Incorporate more vegan and vegetarian food options on campus.</p>	<p>Meat production is a major cause of land degradation and habitat loss.</p>	<p>Queen's Food</p>
<p>Action 3: Create more native gardens and naturalized spaces on campus</p> <p>(Ex. reducing lawn space)</p> <p>Use native garden outside Biosciences Complex as a model.</p>	<p>Native plants will support pollinator populations and will model the use of local rather than exotic plants.</p>	<p>Queen's Facilities</p>
<p>Action 4: Introduce and expand free cooking classes for students and community members.</p> <p>Opportunity to promote healthy eating and local/sustainable food sources.</p>	<p>Students rely on heavily processed, unsustainable non-local foods.</p>	<p>Partner with St. Lawrence College (ex. SLC Culinary Skills students could share their skills.)</p>
<p>Action 5: Queen's events use local food sources with clear designation and advertisement.</p>	<p>Increases use of local food sources and is a concrete way to model sustainability.</p>	<p>Queen's Event Planning</p>
<p>Action 6: Prioritize sustainable and restorative land-uses on existing and newly acquired landholdings using scientific evidence.</p>	<p>Queen's owns a large amount of land that should be conserved. New landholdings present an opportunity to protect biodiversity and engage the community with nature.</p>	

<p>Action 7: The live wall in Biosciences could be part of sustainable food sourcing and function as biodiversity exhibit, while providing clean air.</p>	<p>A live wall presents an opportunity to connect with nature on-campus, educate viewers, be a food source, and would be aesthetically pleasing.</p>	<p>Group of engineering students have proposed to do this before COVID, Queen's should follow up.</p>
<p>Action 8: Consult with experts to determine appropriate amount of deicing salt to be used on campus.</p>	<p>Although deicing salt is necessary for safety, it is extremely toxic for aquatic life and should only be used as necessary.</p>	<p>Facilities and other subject experts on campus.</p>
<p>Action 9: Create more outdoor experiential learning opportunities (e.g. field courses, retreats).</p> <p>Expand access and reduce barriers to these experiences for all students in all programs.</p>	<p>Experiential learning is a method to engage students with nature and to bring conservation strategies back to their home communities. More students should have access to these opportunities</p>	
<p>Action 10: Assign Queen's Research Chairs (5-year term) to each SDG.</p> <p>Prioritize middle to late-stage faculty who are already settled in their teaching and research and have a knowledge of the Queen's community.</p> <p>Supply teaching relief and research funding (ex: \$40,000/year) to strategically advance the SDG.</p>	<p>To effectively advance the SDGs, provide time and resources for a faculty member to focus on leading advances in each SDG.</p>	<p>Alumni donations to support the program.</p> <p>The research stipends would cost \$3M, but this could quickly advance the SDGs.</p>

<p>Action 11: Augmented reality (AR) applications could be used to engage and educate viewers of on-campus native gardens.</p>	<p>AR providing information for viewers of on-campus biodiversity exhibits (ex. green wall, native gardens, etc.).</p> <p>We could educate users about invasive species and individual-level actions that can be taken to prevent their spread.</p>	
<p>Action 12: Hold research-policy workshops and showcase events that are SDG-related.</p> <p>Designed so Queen’s researchers, graduate students, and policymakers interact and share ideas (1-2 times per year).</p> <p>Graduate students should be centered in organization and participation.</p>	<p>There is a widespread need to connect policymakers with researchers and vice-versa.</p> <p>A showcase event with both researchers and policymakers would be an opportunity to make connections, highlight Queen’s research, and for students to gain experience communicating their research to a wider non-academic audience.</p>	<p>School of Policy Studies.</p> <p>Government and NGO policy makers.</p>