

CAETS SDG Working Group

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Purpose: To build capacity of academies to take more leadership roles in sustainability policies by sharing knowledge and best practice on how the engineering profession is influencing, driving and leading progress towards sustainability targets at a national level.

We intend to run four quarterly Zoom meetings this year.

Initial meeting on 29 September focused on academies' engagement in national sustainability plans, and looked for examples of good engineering leadership.

Key learnings

- It is much easier to help governments meet targets they have already set than to influence the setting of targets.
- Trust and buy in is essential: academies who have taken a leading role have either strong historic links to government, or invested strongly in building political relationships.
- There was a strong feeling that promoting an engineering systems approach to meeting ambitious sustainability targets was a natural space for engineers to operate in, and met a key government need.

Next Steps

- Sharing of policies and approaches across countries will continue and we will create a library of resources on systems approaches to sustainability within the CAETS network.
- The focus will be on national sustainability policies, particularly decarbonisation, with particular focus on the opportunity for CAETS to develop a declaration or resource on engineering's role in decarbonisation to feed into COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.
- Three further steering group meetings will take place, going into more depth on specific fields of decarbonisation, with an emphasis on how academies can help governments plan and manage systemic transformation.