

ERSA 2025

SO2: Localizing Sustainable Development Goals: Actions, Assessments, and Interlinkages at the Regional Level

Exploring interlinkages and fostering synergies between the Just Transition and the SDGs: Insights from the former mining region of León, Spain

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Abstract

Multi-level governance processes and structures can hinder or enable the achievement of policy goals. In this study we explore the interlinkages and scope for synergies at the regional and local level between two related but different policy agendas and processes, namely the internationally-agreed SDGs and the EU-led Just Transition (JT) process. We do so by juxtaposing the SDG and JT goals and targets and exploring how they relate to the needs and priorities of local level stakeholders and groups in line with calls for localizing the SDGs but also to those of communities on the margins in line with the JT objective of leaving no person behind in the process of decarbonization and change. The study draws on the results of a cross-regional study on the topic undertaken in the framework of the EU-funded BOLSTER project but focuses on the insights from action-research undertaken with communities on the margins of the just transition in the former mining region of León, Spain. Specifically, it demonstrates how enabling communities on the margins to achieve their needs in line with the JT objective of leaving no one behind can contribute to the achievement of critical SDGs, such as gender equity (SDG 5), reduced inequality (SDGs 10), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), and strengthen institutions and participatory decision-making processes (SDG 16), among a range of other ones. The results point towards the benefits of linking policy agendas at the higher scales as a means of enabling local action and transformative change.