



ASECU FOR THE FUTURE | ROUNDTABLE CONCEPT NOTE

The Post-2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

November 4, 2026

Boğaziçi University, Institute of Environmental Sciences, Istanbul

Background and rationale

The discussion on sustainable development beyond 2030 offers an opportunity to assess what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have achieved and how their implementation can be strengthened. The Istanbul Roundtable will connect this international debate with Black Sea and Türkiye's experience, while maintaining the urgency of delivering the existing 2030 commitments. It will examine how long-term planning, institutional capacity, financing and accountability can support economic prosperity, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Convened within the ASECU for the *Future initiative*, the session will bring together academic and stakeholder perspectives on national priorities and regional cooperation. Türkiye's experience will provide a practical basis for discussing how global goals influence policies, budgets and investment decisions. Ahead of COP31, the exchange will also consider the relationship between climate action and wider development priorities. Its findings are intended to contribute to ASECU's collection of national perspectives for the post-2030 debate.

Discussion focus

- **Continuity and change.** Identify which principles and achievements of the SDGs should be preserved and which implementation arrangements need to change, including responses to digital transformation and emerging inequalities.
- **Implementation and finance.** Connect national and local priorities with budgets, long-term investment, clear institutional responsibilities and accessible finance, drawing on concrete lessons from Türkiye.
- **Participation and accountability.** Strengthen the role of local authorities, civil society, women and young people in setting priorities and reviewing delivery; use evidence and indicators to inform decisions and reveal who is being left behind.
- **Regional cooperation.** Identify a feasible joint activity among universities and partners in South and Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region, such as comparative research, shared monitoring or a local implementation partnership.

Expected outcome

A concise post-session note will record three priorities emerging from current experience, two proposals to strengthen implementation and one possible joint activity. The one- to two-page note, entitled "Istanbul Roundtable: Key Messages for the Post-2030 Agenda", will be circulated to participants for review and considered for ASECU's wider compilation. It will reflect the discussion and identify follow-up responsibilities and a timetable.

Contribution to the post-2030 debate

The roundtable will connect global aspirations with national and local experience and examine how regional academic networks can support delivery. It will consider climate resilience, a just transition, social inclusion and public trust as connected development priorities. The discussion will explore how universities can support policy learning and accountable implementation through independent research, comparable evidence and sustained engagement with other stakeholders.

Proposed participants

Online participants

Assoc. Prof. İzzet Arı – Graduate School of Social Sciences, Social Sciences University of Ankara

Dr. Rıza Fikret Yılmaz – Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Republic of Türkiye

Ülfet Öztürk – Founding President, TÜMKAD (Tüm Mühendis Kadınlar Derneği- All Engineer Women's Association), Türkiye

Boğaziçi University faculty to be invited

Invitations will be extended to faculty members from the Institute of Environmental Sciences, the Department of Economics and related academic units, including Prof. Begüm Özkaynak, Prof. Sevil Acar Aytekin, Dr. Cem İskender Aydın, Prof. Burak Demirel, Prof. Turgut Tüzün Onay, Prof. Sevil Akaygün, and other relevant colleagues. A proposed group of 12–15 participants will include invited academics and representatives of local government, business, civil society and young researchers. Participation and roles are subject to confirmation.

Proposed programme

Time	Session and speaker
09:30-10:00	Coffee & Tea
10:00–10:20	Welcome and purpose Prof. Tamer Atabarut, SDSN Türkiye Director; Bogazici University Institute of Environmental Sciences, Prof. Grigoris Zarotiadis, President of the Association of Economic Universities in South Eastern Europe and the Black Sea (ASECU), School of Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
10:20-10:35	SDGs in the Black Sea – Current Status Prof. Nikos Theodosiou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Chair of SDSN Black Sea, President of the Association of European Civil Engineering Faculties
10:35–10:50	Lessons from Türkiye Dr. Bahar Özay presents key findings from SDSN’s Sustainable Development Report 2026 to frame the discussion on the post-2030 agenda.
10:50–11:50	Moderated roundtable Moderated by Prof. Tamer Atabarut and/or Prof. Grigoris Zarotiadis, with contributions from online participants and invited faculty on implementation priorities and regional cooperation.
11:50–12:00	Key messages and next steps Prof. Tamer Atabarut and Prof. Grigoris Zarotiadis summarise priorities and agree follow-up responsibilities and a timetable.

Guiding questions*

1. What should be preserved or changed in the post-2030 framework, based on Black Sea and Türkiye’s experience?
2. How can planning, budgets, finance and accountability be connected, with indicators that reveal inequalities and environmental outcomes?
3. Which joint research, monitoring or local implementation activity should universities and regional partners prioritise?

**Guiding questions will be circulated in advance. Online and in-person participants will be invited to keep roundtable interventions to approximately five minutes.*