Environmental science

SDG assignment

**15 Life on land**

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| **Target** | **Indicators** |
| By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world | **15.3.1**  Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area |
| By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development | **15.4.1**  Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity  **15.4.2**  Mountain Green Cover Index (is green coverage measured) |

Figure 1

**SDG 15: Life on land**

As you are able to see in the table above: figure 1, this report will be on the Sustainable development goal 15, this goal is characterized as “Life on land.” The report will focus on 2 targets and their indicators. In order to understand the targets one shall need to understand sustainable development goal 15. This goal focuses on “protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and stop and reverse land degradation and stop biodiversity loss” (SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTKNOWLEDGE PLATFORM , 2015)

The loss of forest is currently decreasing and the biomass stock per hecta re is stable. There is 15% of land that is currently being protected and areas under long-term management plans; however this does not cover all the important areas of biodiversity. As of 2017, some form of green vegetation, including forests, shrubs, grasses and crops, covers 76 % of the world’s mountain areas. (SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENTKNOWLEDGE PLATFORM , 2015)

**The importance of Life on land to Aruba**

Because of the limited economy of Aruba, sustainable development is a big challenge by which developments have to continue to take place Furthermore, a balance has to be acquired between the limited carrying capacity of the environment of Aruba, the need for economic growth and social coherence whereby it is guaranteed that the future generation can achieve their goals as well. (Drucker, 2010)

This is why SDG is important globally; forests cover nearly 31 per cent of our land area. Forest supports human life in so many ways, by the oxygen that we receive from the trees, and the whole ecosystem linked with it. That makes it about 1.6 billion people that is in need of the forests for their source of living. Around 75% of the world’s poor are affected directly by land degradation. Forests make a home to more than 80% of all terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects. And of the 8,300 animal breeds known, 8% of that amount is extinct and 22% of that amount is at risk of extinction.

“Biodiversity and the ecosystem services it underpins can also be the basis for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies as they can deliver bene­fits that will increase the resilience of people to the impacts of climate change. Forests and nature are also important for recre­ation and mental well-being. In many cultures, natural landscapes are closely linked to spiritual values, religious beliefs and traditional teachings.” (LIFE ON LAND: WHY IT MATTERS, 2017) Furthermore SDG 15 has its importantance for food safety and lodging, forests are also important for fighting climate change, protecting biodiversity and indigenous peoples habituate them. (Sustainable development goals pa un dushi tera! , 2017)

In conclusion to Aruba, it is hard to find data regarding the importance of goal 15 in Aruba. Because Aruba does not have forests nor do we have mountains. This does not mean that it is not important for Aruba, sustainable development in Aruba is developing the economy and making sure that everyone is benefiting from it. It is also about the society, culture and the environment. The connection between quality of life and housing, open space, transport, education, crime-prevention, health; now and in the future. (Aruba Island of Sustainable Solutions, 2016)

**SDG 15 related to waste management in Aruba**

Waste management is a powerful driver to sustainable development. SDG 15, Life on land can only be healthy when Aruba manages waste properly. Chemicals seep from immense quantities of dumped waste, poisoning groundwater and the ocean. Making it a threat to life on land. (Lenkiewicz, 2016) The Aruba Dump is an example of a mismanaged of waste, wasted land.

**SDG 15 Monitoring in Aruba**

SDG 15 is being monitored in Aruba but to a limit, because it is not relatable towards Aruba, in the sense that Aruba does not have forests or mountains. (Indicator 15.4.1 and 15.4.2) But we do have biodiversity loss. Invasive plant and animal species threaten our endemic animals and plant, change our ecosystem and place an increasing pressure on our biodiversity. This means that we need partners to help protect our biodiversity. These partnerships should include everyone from the Aruba community and should strive to find the balance between the needs of our people and the health of our natural environment.

Habitat and Species Protection: Aruba protects three of its natural preservatives, these are; National Park Arikok, This park covers approximately 18% of the island, the Spanish Lagoon, the lagoon is listed as protective wetland site, and the last protected natural preservative are several important bird habitats designated by the Birdlife International organization. The status of endemic flora and fauna is little by little being monitored and studied on the island, in order for us to guarantee the preservation of our rich natural habitat. (Drucker, 2010) I came to the conclusion that indicator 15.3.1 is being monitored by Arikok. “The natural environment of Arikok is highly degraded due to a history of clear-cutting of trees and free roaming goats. It is thought that the vegetation was originally a dry tropical forest, but now it is mainly thorny woodland and shrubland, the thorny tree Hubada dominating the vegetation” (Oosterhuis, 2016). Arikok is currently doing Cascabel monitoring and Boa monitoring. They are also working on a deforestation pilot project and national bird count. (Aruba National Park, 2017)

# References

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