



One Planet Living[®] for local governments and stakeholders

Guidance on outcomes and
indicators

September 2019

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Introduction

Bioregional has written a set of [Goals and Guidance](#) documents for all projects wishing to use the One Planet Living® framework, including one for cities and regions. Those documents form the basis of One Planet Living, laying out what a city should aim for to be truly sustainable, and the high-level actions and strategies that can be used to achieve this vision.

There are two further documents available for local governments and city stakeholders, which can be used to support the high-level Goals and Guidance: (1) Guidance on outcomes and indicators; and (2) Guidance on best practice actions. This document draws on the existing literature to propose specific outcomes and indicators for each One Planet Living Principle, to act as a reference for municipal officers or members of the community who are developing a One Planet Living vision or action plan for their city or region. This is not meant to be a definitive list but aims to provide inspiration and guidance – what are the types of outcomes a project should aim for and what are the indicators that can be used to track progress and monitor performance?

Terminology and suggestions for use

Basic terminology

This document is structured around the ten Principles of the One Planet Living Framework. It has been written to be compatible with the online platform: oneplanet.com. This section introduces some of the terminology used on the platform.

'Outcomes', 'actions' and 'indicators'

Plans in the digital platform are composed of 'outcomes' and 'actions', together with ways of monitoring these – indicators, images or stories. The 'graph view' is one online tool to help you create your action plan and it displays outcomes, actions and indicators. Examples of these are provided below. The digital platform is innovative in allowing the user to draw links across outcomes, actions and indicators, helping them to appreciate the relationships between these. For example, the 'action' of creating green space may impact positively on a range of outcomes across health, community, biodiversity, climate regulation and flood risk management, and it may also have some drawbacks. Indicators may attempt to track these outcomes and actions, such as the proportion of green space per resident or the improvements in biodiversity. Examples of outcomes, actions and indicators are provided below.

Outcome:

- Improved biodiversity

Action:

- Incorporate biodiversity and conservation principles into all relevant local plans, including the local planning policy, economic plan, transport policy and water management plans

Indicators:

- Change in species of plants / birds / butterflies
- Number of teams and departments cooperating on biodiversity

'Organisation' and 'area-wide' plans

For cities and local governments, there are two plans types that are especially relevant:

1. *Organisation plans*: applicable to the local government itself, as well as any other local organisations which are developing their own action

plans. These contain outcomes, actions and indicators. The guidance in this document is particularly directed at local government organisations, but many actions are also relevant to other organisations in the local area.

2. *The area-wide plan*: applicable to the whole area. Organisation plans can link up to this plan, and can adopt the collective, area-wide outcomes. The area-wide plan only contains outcomes and indicators, not actions (actions are 'owned' by specific organisations and therefore only included in organisation plans). This plan specifies possible outcomes and indicators which may be included in area-wide plans.

Indicators and targets: suggestions for use

Indicators and targets should not be confused with outcomes

Avoid relying on indicators and targets as the sole source of desirable outcomes for a plan. An indicator may miss out important information – just because something can be measured, does not mean it should necessarily be prioritised. There may be multiple outcomes to consider, or something that is not measured by a particular indicator.

Indicators and targets are not the only measures of success

As indicators are not the sole basis of desirable outcomes of a plan, they should not be the only measures of success or failure. Indicators can provide useful feedback, but so can other more qualitative forms of information, such as surveys, conversations, or images.

Indicators should be appropriate to local contexts

There may be a whole range of reasons to select indicators specific to a particular local context. They may be more relevant to local plans and policies; based on locally available data; chosen with the input of local stakeholders; or have a special symbolic value to a local community. The indicators provided here should not be thought of as necessarily being the correct option. However, many of them are based on established indicator sets and methods of monitoring, and so can help provide additional comparability and link to accepted ways of doing things.

It may be better to think of targets as aspirations rather than fixed commitments

Sometimes targets are thought of as fixed commitments, against which organisations can be held accountable. Targets often attempt to balance what is necessary, i.e. what is 'sustainable', 'healthy', etc. – with what is achievable.

This can be a difficult compromise to strike, either resulting in targets which downplay what is necessary or truly sustainable, or in targets which are unlikely to be achieved. Fixed commitments must also be based on predictions of likely achievements, which can be difficult to make accurately. Over-focusing on particular numerical targets can also detract from a more holistic approach to decision-making based on information about broader outcomes. It may be more helpful to think about and communicate targets as flexible aspirations. This way they can be ambitious and drive change without limiting future decision-making or becoming a source of criticism at a later stage. If circumstances are very challenging, organisations may wish to distinguish between what is desirable, or necessary, and what they are likely to achieve – for example a local authority may acknowledge the necessity of decarbonising within the next decade, but communicate the fact that this will be difficult to achieve changes in national policy.

Some indicators may link more strongly to organisation-level actions and outcomes

Some indicators are more within the control or influence of a single organisation than others. For example, indicators relating to an organisation's land and buildings, employees, procurement; or a those relating to a local government's spatial planning policies. It may be helpful to consider the extent of this control and influence, if indicators are being used to provide feedback on actions, and are being used together with targets. Nevertheless, an organisation may also wish to include other indicators to provide more 'contextual' information, giving a better overall picture of sustainability, even if indicators are not directly within its control or influence. It may be better to put these in an 'area-wide' plan, however (see above).

Some indicators may be more suitable for an area-wide plan

Some indicators may not be within the control or influence of a local government, or a single organisation, but they may still be important for providing a better overall picture of sustainability. These may be more relevant at the area-wide or collective level, such as those relating to citizen behaviours or citizen health outcomes.

Consider what data is available

When selecting an indicator it is important to ensure that data is easy enough to obtain. Easier data sources may include existing public data, information from local plans, or information from staff within an organisation. It may, for example, be more difficult to obtain data that requires additional surveys of the community. However, when selecting indicators based on existing data availability it is important to consider other factors such as how well they are

linked to outcomes and actions, how relevant they are, and whether they help to provide a good overall sense of sustainability.

Do not use too many indicators

From previous experience, it seems that a medium-sized local government team may wish to avoid using more than approximately 30 or 40 indicators. Too much time spent collecting information may detract from the time spent actually implementing the action plan.

References and further information

Indicator sets which are referenced in brackets are mainly based on the sources below. Many of these sources come with more detailed definitions and guidance on monitoring.

- Singapore City Biodiversity Index ('Singapore') – see [definitions](#)
- Data for Cities - World Council for City Data ('WCCD') – see [interactive site](#) and [ISO 37120 definitions \(paywall\)](#)
- SDG indicators ('SDGs') – see [definitions](#)
- Global Reporting Initiative ('GRI') – see [definitions](#)
- OECD Better Life Index ('OECD') – see [interactive site](#) and [data](#)
- Sustain's Good Food for London ('Sustain') – see [definitions](#)
- PAS 2070 – see [definitions](#) and [case study](#)

Outcomes and indicators¹

Health and happiness

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High satisfaction with work • Better health and safety • More flexible working 	Staff, operations and fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee turnover (GRI) • Employee satisfaction (1 – 10)

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced air pollution • Climate change adaptation • Buildings are comfortable • Access to healthy food • More opportunities for recreation • Healthier lifestyles • Bullying is prevented • Better abuse prevention and support • Better mental health and addiction support • Heat islands are avoided • Natural hazards are managed effectively 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air pollution (WCCD / SDGs) • % dwellings within (a) 400m and (b) 1km of a shop selling fresh ingredients
	Initiatives (e.g. sports, fitness and leisure / schools / retail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake of health classes or gym memberships • Number and % of schools participating in initiative, e.g. health / sports / anti-bullying • % and number of shops participating, e.g. reducing alcohol strength

¹ Indicator sources (e.g. GRI or WCCD) are given in brackets. For definitions and benchmarking data see 'references and further information', above.

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier lifestyles • Access to healthcare and care • Better healthcare services • Better social care • Better mental health and addiction support • Better domestic abuse prevention and support • Better emergency care • Better coordination and partnership working • Bullying is prevented 	Health and social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage of essential health services (SDGs) • Number of physicians / nurses / mental health practitioners per 100,000 (WCCD) • Emergency response time (WCCD) • Child mortality under five per 1,000 births (WCCD / SDGs / OECD) • Life expectancy at birth (WCCD / SDGs / OECD)
	Fire services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire emergency response time (WCCD) • Deaths due to fire per 100,000 (WCCD)
	Citizens and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of population which is physically active (75 mins intensive / 150 mins moderate activity per week) • % of population which is obese

Equity and local economy

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People receive a living wage • Better training and development • More support for local businesses • Ethical supply chains • Accessible buildings • Gender equality • No discrimination 	Staff, operations and fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of apprenticeships created • Hours of training per employee (GRI) • % employees receiving living wage • % of managers who are women (GRI)
	Catering and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of purchases from SMEs • % of purchases from within 100km • % of suppliers undergoing human rights screening (GRI)

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More affordable housing • Land rights are secure • Slums are upgraded • More training and good jobs • More support for local businesses • More people receiving a living wage • Accessible buildings and spaces • Gender equality • No discrimination • Better access to finance • Better digital connectivity • More innovation • A resilient economy • Sound public finances • Reduced poverty • A robust safety net 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % living in slums (WCCD) • Affordable housing waiting lists
	Initiatives (e.g. training / apprenticeships / incubators / loan schemes / smart city / living wage / university collaborations / homelessness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business growth in target industries • The number of incubators, co-working spaces or maker spaces in the locality • Enrolment in innovation or business support programmes • Homeless per 100,000 (WCCD)
	Politics and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax collected as a % of tax billed (WCCD) • Debt service as a % of government revenue (WCCD) • % covered by safety net (SDGs)

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better business support • More people receiving a living wage • More training and jobs • Better access to finance • Digital connectivity • More innovation • A resilient economy 	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell phone connections per 100,000 (WCCD) • Internet connections per 100,000 (WCCD)
	Other area-wide indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % living in poverty (WCCD / SDGs) • Number of businesses per 100,000 (WCCD) • Median house price to income ratio (UN Habitat)

Culture and community

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More social activities • More knowledge sharing • Better dispute resolution 	Staff, operations and fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of social events held

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good public space • More public art • Better arts and culture • Better community and youth services • Heritage is conserved • Planning is participatory • Safer communities • More volunteering • Better educational access • Better educational outcomes • Increased political engagement and freedom • Low corruption • Good management of migration 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor recreation space per capita (WCCD) • Indoor recreation space per capita (WCCD)
	Initiatives (e.g. arts, culture, heritage, festivals / schools / universities / libraries, community and youth services / volunteering)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer hours committed • Number of events held and people attending • Number of visits per pupil per year
	Politics and governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convictions for corruption per 100,000 (WCCD) • % local government seats held by women (WCCD)

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better arts and culture • Better community and youth services • Better crime prevention • Safer communities 	Crime and police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police per 100,000 (WCCD) • Violent crime per 100,000 (WCCD) • Homicides per 100,000 (WCCD)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased volunteering• Better educational access• Better educational outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police emergency response time (WCCD)
	Citizens and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voter turnout for local elections (WCCD)• Primary and secondary education participation and completion rates (WCCD)• Higher education degrees per 100,000 (WCCD)

Land and nature

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved biodiversity 	Land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See biodiversity management below

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More public green space • Improved biodiversity • Enhanced climate regulation (cooling, sequestration, purification) • Better connectivity • Drought resilient plants • More nature activities and education • Good biodiversity management and partnership working • Lower flood risk 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green space, hectares per 100,000 (WCCD / Singapore) • % of development on greenfield sites
	Biodiversity governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of teams and departments cooperating on biodiversity (Singapore)
	Biodiversity management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in species of plant / birds / butterflies / other groups (Singapore) • Connectivity mesh size (see Singapore indicators for a definition) • Trees planted per annum (WCCD) • Condition of specified habitat, e.g. poor / average / good
	Initiatives (e.g. public engagement / schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events per year (Singapore) • % of schools participating in biodiversity programme • Biodiversity visits per child per year (Singapore)

Sustainable water

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water is conserved • Flood resilient buildings 	Land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water consumption per employee, l/day

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to clean water and sanitation • Water is conserved • Sustainable fresh water supplies • Healthy water habitats • Robust flood risk management • Climate change adaptation • Less water pollution 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % permeable surface area (Singapore) • % homes built on land at risk of a 1-in-100-year flood
	Flood risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of teams and departments cooperating on flood risk
	Initiatives (e.g. retrofit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and % of homes retrofitted as part of water saving initiative • Number of water saving measures installed as part of initiative

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to clean water and sanitation • Water is conserved • Sustainable fresh water supplies • Healthy water habitats • Adaptation to climate change • Drought resilient agriculture • Sustainable fishing • Better coordination and partnership working on water issues 	Freshwater resources and utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sanitation (WCCD) • Access to drinking water (WCCD) • % wastewater receiving primary / secondary / tertiary treatment (WCCD) • % metered homes • Domestic and total water consumption per capita, l/day (WCCD) • Water withdrawal as a % of available resource (SDGs) • % of bodies with good ambient water quality (SDGs)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of days specified body of water runs dry
	Coastlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average marine acidity (SDGs)• % fish caught sustainably

Local and sustainable food

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower impact food • More humane and plant-based foods in catering • More products purchased are Fairtrade • Healthy and safe catering 	Catering and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % fruit and veg (by value) which is seasonal, local or organic • % of food purchased (by value) which is plant-based • % of eggs (by value) which are free-range • % of meat and dairy (by value) which is outdoor-reared or organic • Whether buying Fairtrade products of two or more significant types, e.g. tea, coffee, fruit juice (Sustain) • % of fish (by value) which is sustainably sourced

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More community food growing • Improved access to healthy food • Lower impact food • More humane and plant-based foods in catering • More products purchased or sold are Fairtrade • Healthy and safe catering • Fish purchased or sold is sustainable • Adequate nutrition • Food security and resilience 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % residents 400m from a healthy food outlet (STAR) • Support for food growing in planning policy (Sustain) • Number of community gardens, city farms or allotment sites
	Initiatives (e.g. public sector and schools catering / local food partnerships / retail and catering)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of schools / care homes / public organisations always offering plant-based options • % of schools / care homes / public organisations buying free-range eggs (Sustain) • % of schools / care homes / public organisations buying outdoor-reared or organic meat or dairy (Sustain) • % of schools / care homes / public organisations buying

		<p>seasonal, local or organic fruit and vegetables (Sustain)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•% of schools / care homes / public organisations buying sustainable fish (Sustain)•% of schools / care homes / public organisations buying Fairtrade products of two or more significant types, e.g. tea, coffee, fruit juice (Sustain)•Existence of local food partnership (Sustain)•Number and percentage of relevant food businesses engaged in a healthy catering initiative•% malnutrition among under-5-year-olds – either wasting or overweight (SDGs)
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Travel and transport

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More walking and cycling • More sustainable transport • Low-emission vehicles • More car sharing 	Staff, operations and fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % staff travelling by sustainable transport • % of fleet which are low-emission • Organisation's transport emissions

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better air quality • Safer roads • More walking, cycling and active transport • Compact, walkable communities • More car sharing • Low-emission vehicles • More freight consolidation 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Km bike paths per 100,000 (WCCD)
	Initiatives (e.g. EVs / car clubs / fleets and deliveries / schools / freight consolidation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electric car charging points per 100,000 people • % schools participating in sustainable transport initiative • % students travelling via active transport • Number of freight consolidation centres

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better air quality • Reduced emissions • Improved public transport access, use and quality 	Public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport trips per capita (WCCD) • % of people within 0.5 km of public transport which runs at least every 20 mins (SDGs)
	Citizens and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road deaths per 100,000 (WCCD)

Materials and products

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact products • Goods are stored and reused 	Catering and procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of purchases meeting published sustainability policy • % of suppliers with sustainability policies • % of suppliers without sustainability policies engaged in developing them

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low impact construction materials • Low impact products • More reuse and sharing • A more circular economy 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of local materials and building guidelines for developers • % of developers adopting guidelines
	Initiatives (e.g. public sector procurement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of specified public institutions, such as schools or care homes, adopting published policy

Zero waste

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recycling and composting • Less waste produced 	Staff and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % waste recycled or composted
	Procurement and catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste produced per employee, kg/year

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less waste produced • Increased recycling and composting • Safe disposal of waste • More reuse of products and waste materials • A more circular economy 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of developments using guidelines
	Waste collection and disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tonnes of waste produced per capita • % waste disposed of via recycling / incinerator / open dump / sanitary landfill / other means / (both WCCD)
	Initiatives (e.g. circular economy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations participating

Zero carbon energy

Suggested plan type: organisation

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient buildings and appliances • More energy from renewables • Low GHG emissions 	Land and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy consumption due to buildings, total and per employee, kWh/year • % renewable energy
	General emissions (organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope 1 and 2 emissions, total and per employee / year (GRI) • Scope 3 emissions, total and per employee / year (GRI)

Suggested plan type: organisation (local government) or area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient buildings and appliances • More energy from renewables • Reduced fuel poverty • Low GHG emissions • Clean fuels in homes • Access to energy 	Planning and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of buildings meeting benchmark
	Initiatives (e.g. retrofit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of suitable roof space with solar photovoltaic panels installed • % of homes surveyed as part of initiatives • % of homes with retrofit measures as part of initiative
	General emissions (city-wide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct plus supply chain and consumption-based emissions (PAS 2070)

Suggested plan type: area-wide

Outcomes to consider	Who / what?	Suggested indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to energy • More energy from renewables • Reduced fuel poverty 	Energy utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % population with access to electricity (WCCD) • Total and domestic electricity consumption per capita, kWh/year (WCCD) • % of electricity from renewables (WCCD)