Classification–coordination–collaboration: A system approach for advancing sustainable development goals

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The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a blueprint for the world’s sustainable development plan throughout 2016 and 2030. It is regrettable that recent reports have shown that it will not be possible to achieve all the goals by 2030 under our current pace. To accelerate SDG implementation, scientists have conducted studies under a variety of perspectives, such as relationships among SDGs, their specific priorities, and necessary transformations. However, there still lacks a systematic approach to promote joint action by countries that can advance SDGs on regional, national, and global scales. To fill this gap, we summarize the relevant articles, reports, and practices in recent years on the ways to promote the implementation of the SDGs. Following this, we propose a systematic approach to combat this issue, namely, “classification–coordination–collaboration”. This approach not only considers relationships among the 17 SDGs and the links among the different management agencies, but it also contains the necessary means to accelerate SDGs. Overall, this approach is expected to promote the participation of countries within the process of global governance, and it will help to ensure that SDGs will realize key breakthroughs over the short-term while achieving sweeping progress over the long run.