

Business Research for *Sustainable Impact*

- Using the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) to Drive Our Research Programs**

ANZAM Institutional Members Meeting – June 20, 2019

Griffith University, Southbank Campus

Ross Chapman

(Anneke Fitzgerald)

(Frank Gertsen)



Objectives of this presentation

- To consider the flaws and fallacies in our current measures of research quality and impact
- To consider what “real” research impact might be, and examine some possible ways to measure this
- To understand why “Transforming our world: 2030 Agenda for sustainable development” is one of the most important global agreements in recent history
- To consider why and how to engage with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), relevant to Business disciplines, as a research community
- To consider how ANZAM IMs might assist in progressing this agenda

Current systems of measurement for quality and “impact” in research



Current ways to measure research “quality”

- Journal paper numbers approach (preferred by journal publishers)
- Rate of publication approach (N/T) (preferred by ECRs)
- Weighted publication approach - rankings (preferred by the large publishers and business schools)
- Money distributions approach (preferred by gov'ts, granting agencies, Uni Depts, etc)
- Bottom line approach (preferred by industry labs – measures profits from research/patents, etc.)
- **Assessment of impact approach (I/R) (preferred by those who actually achieve something)**

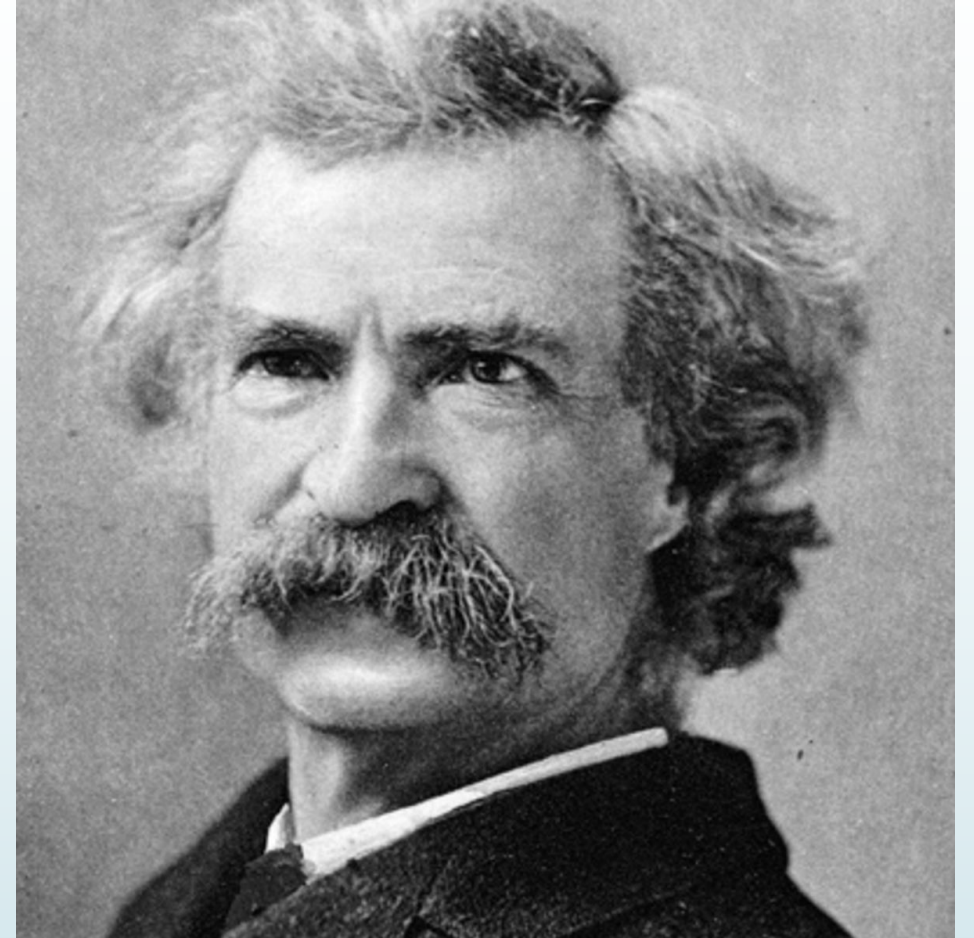
Why do we currently use bibliometrics?

- Objective(?) measure of the “Impact” of your research
 - Your publishing activity
 - Your cv, promotion, grants
 - Showcase your research
- Identify areas of research strength/weaknesses
 - Inform your research priorities
- Identify highest “impact” or most highly cited journals in a subject area
 - Where to publish your work
- Identify top(?) researchers
 - Collaborators/competitors



Sometimes we must allow
ourselves to doubt the
importance of numbers

“There are three kinds of lies:
lies, damned lies and
statistics”



Mark Twain 1835 - 1910



“maintaining scientific integrity in a climate of perverse incentives and hyper-competition”

“While quantitative metrics provide an objective means of evaluating research productivity now that they have become a target, they cease to be useful and may even be counterproductive...”

Edwards Marc A. and Roy Siddhartha. *Environmental Engineering Science*.
Jan 2017

Principles in data driven thinking

GOODHART'S LAW

WHEN A MEASURE BECOMES A TARGET,
IT CEASES TO BE A GOOD MEASURE

IF YOU
MEASURE
PEOPLE ON...

NUMBER OF
NAILS MADE

WEIGHT OF
NAILS MADE

THEN YOU
MIGHT GET

1000'S OF
TINY NAILS

A FEW GIANT,
HEAVY NAILS



sketchplanations

Why should we, as researchers, be bothered with measuring research quality/impact?

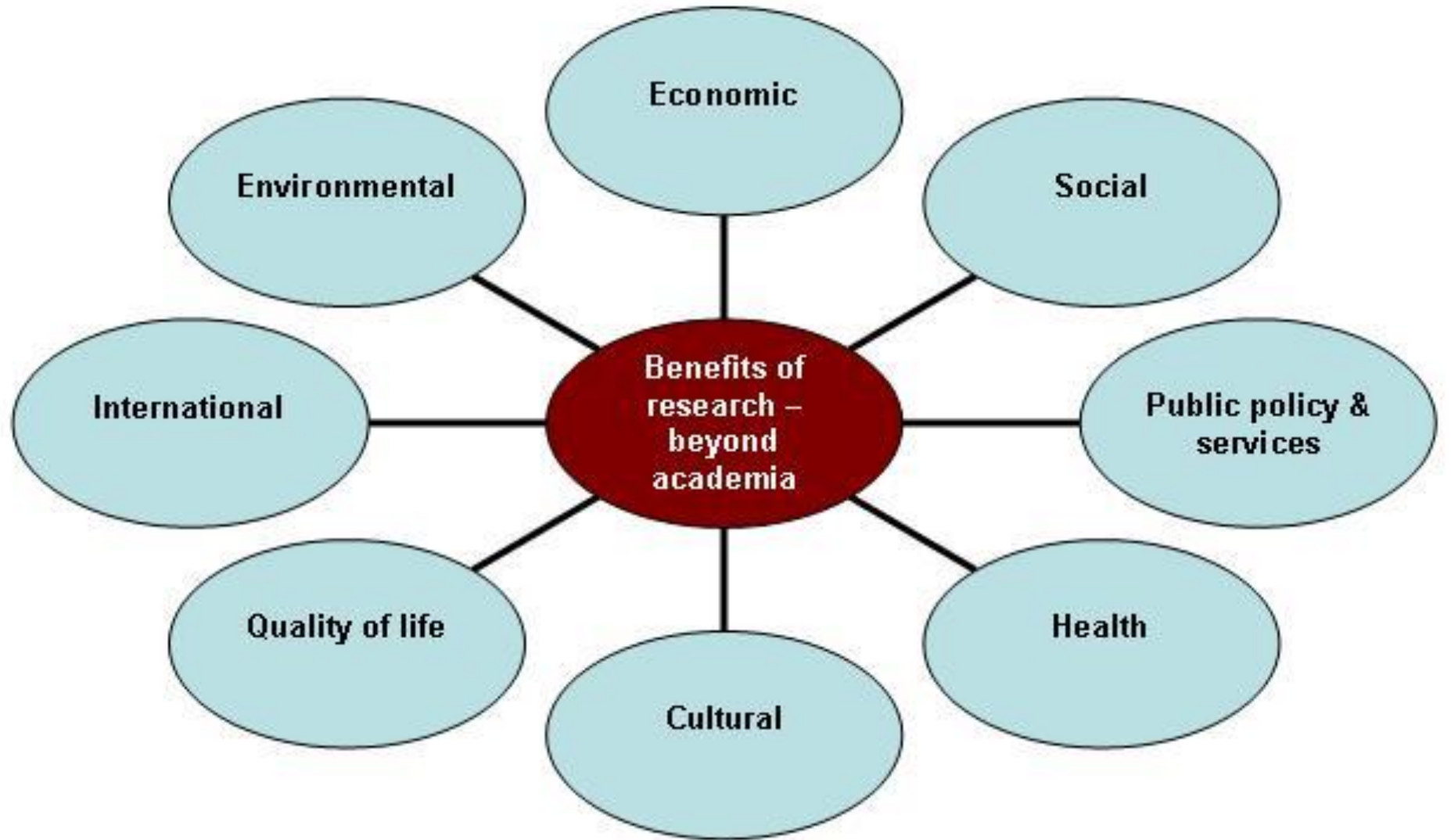
- The Australian government (along with several other governments) has announced it will be introducing a new Engagement and Impact Assessment to run alongside the existing ERA assessment from 2018 onwards.
 - Determines research funding to universities
 - Determines promotions and rewards
 - We (are made to) believe it says something about the quality of our research

Researching for *real* impact

- ➡ “Research impact is the **demonstrable contribution** that research makes to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, **beyond contributions to academia**”

(Australian Research Council)

Impact Beyond Academia?

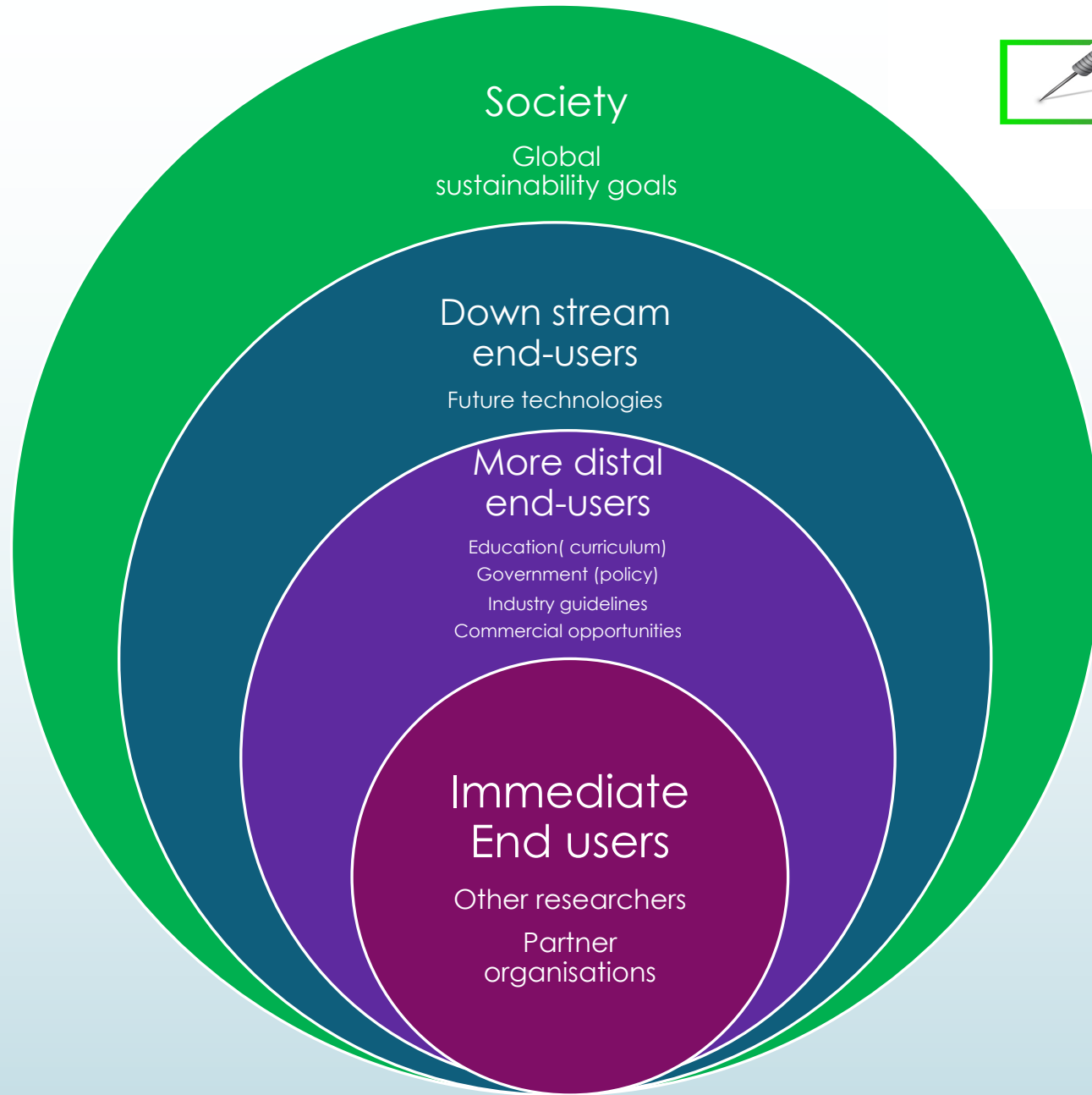


How to demonstrate research impact

- Methodological frameworks
 - End-user Uptake
- Impact portfolio's
 - Narratives – tell the story
 - Case studies
- Research interfaces
 - Social media
- Hard part: capture and reporting



Who is the end-user?



The messages:



- Beyond academia: we need to consider multi-perspectives (academic *and* end-users), when measuring research quality and impact
- Beyond the current metrics game: we need to consider research quality by adding diverse impact measures, such as narratives
- Beyond local impacts: we need to consider our influence and reach on a global level
- Then, we need to consider our potential for real impact through teaching.....

Research Impact, what level?

- Individual/Organisational
- National
- Global

Our business and management research tends to focus on these levels – but what if we were start at Level 8 and re-focus our research toward global issues? (perhaps at local implementation levels)



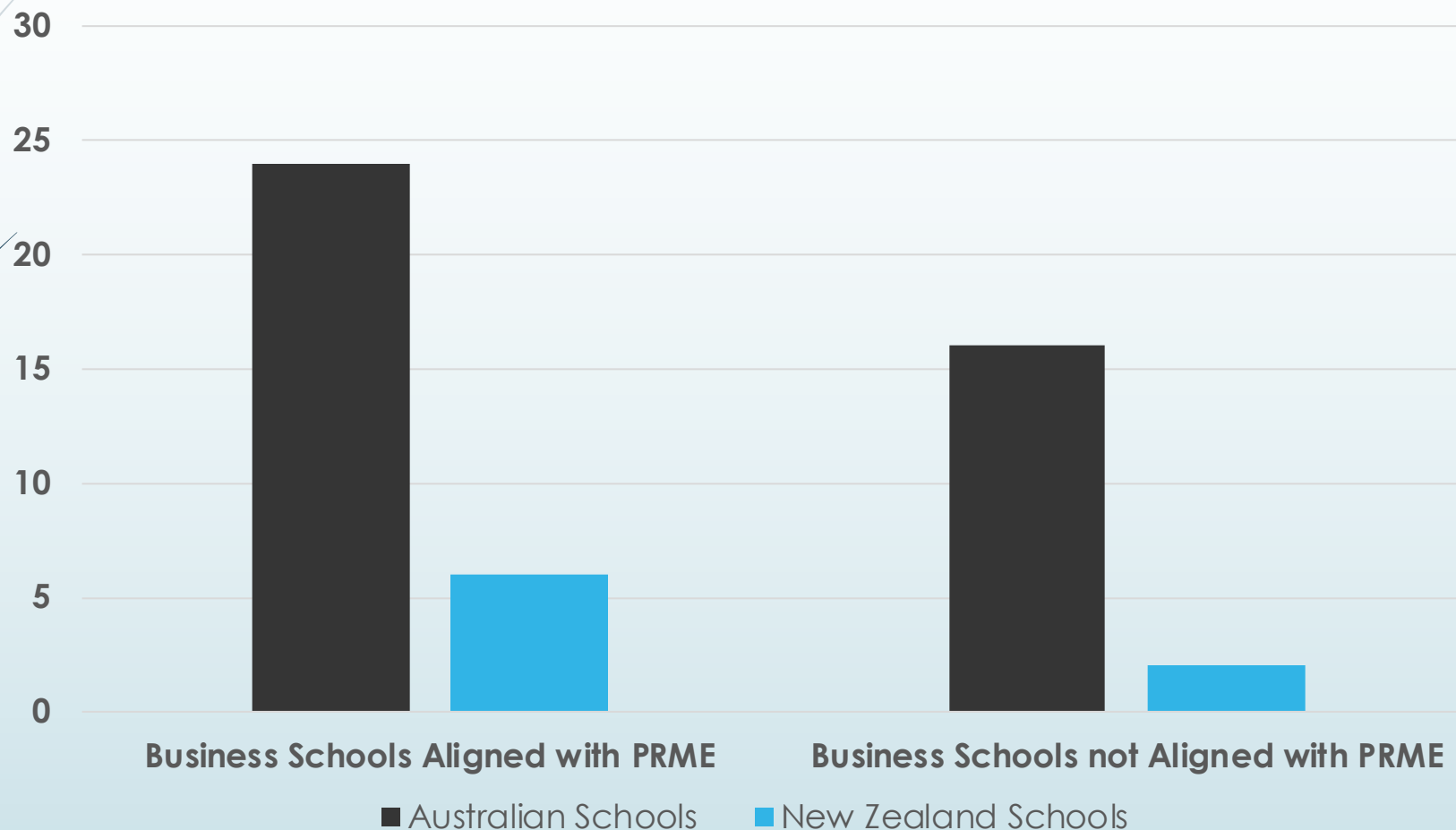
Some mechanisms to drive our research agendas....

Thinking about critical global measures and indicators.....

- International Business School Accreditations (AACSB, EFMD, AMBA)
- PRME (UN *Principles of Responsible Management Education*)
- AoM “Grand challenges”
- RRBM – *Responsible Research in Business and Management*
- Using the *United Nations’ Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – 17 Sustainable Development Goals*

Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME)

Business Schools Aligned with PRME



Wicked Problems, AoM “Grand Challenges” and the UN SDGs

- **AoM GCs** - solving important societal problems with a high likelihood of global impact through widespread implementation.
- GCs were linked to the **UN SDGs** and a Special Issue of AMJ (Vol 59, No 6) that showcased research focused on GCs and SDGs (Ed – Gerard George).
- The Editorial Intro for this Special Issue provided a Framework to assist management academics address Grand Challenges arising from the SDGs.
- **Wicked Problems** – complex problems dependent on so many interlinked factors that it is often hard to grasp what exactly the problem is, or to understand how to tackle them.

A Growing Movement Towards Real Impact

- Community for Responsible Research in Business Management (RRBM)
 - initially developed by a group of [24 leading scholars](#) in 5 disciplines at 23 university-based business schools in 10 countries and now joined by a much larger community.

- Principles:

1. Service to Society
2. Stakeholder Involvement
3. Impact on Stakeholders
4. Valuing Both Basic and Applied Contributions
5. Valuing Plurality and Multidisciplinary Collaboration
6. Sound Methodology
7. Broad Dissemination

- See <https://rrbm.network/>

- Video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=132&v=9W1pRwPUVT8

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030

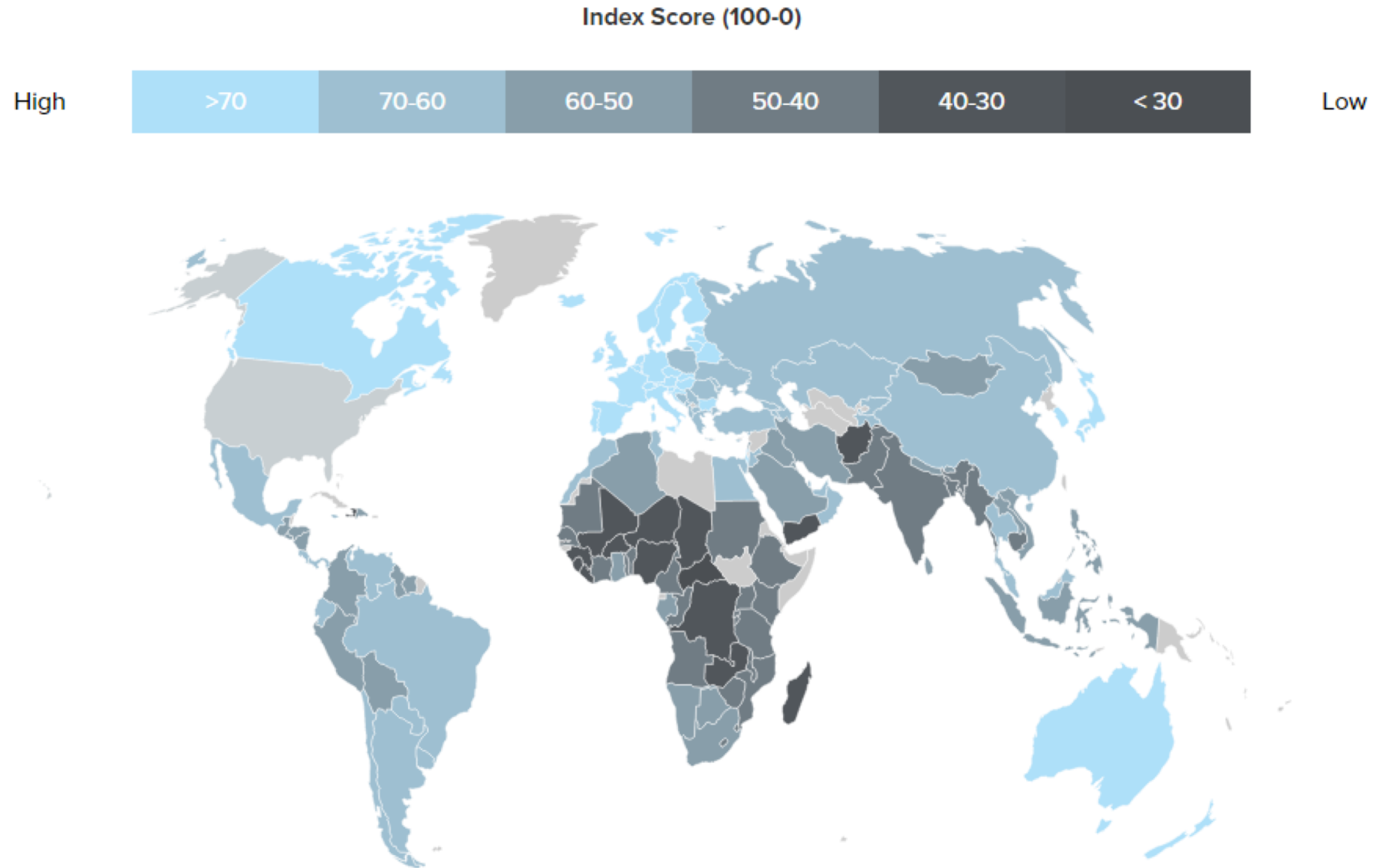
-Aiming for Global impact



National Priorities and Progress Reports have been Prepared



International Comparisons on SDGs



National Performances

AUSTRALIA

OECD Countries

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Index score

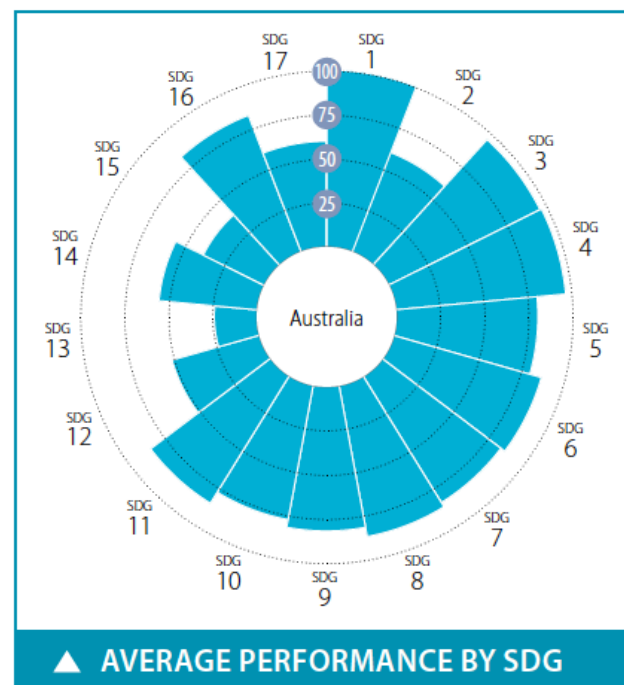


Regional average score



SDG Global rank

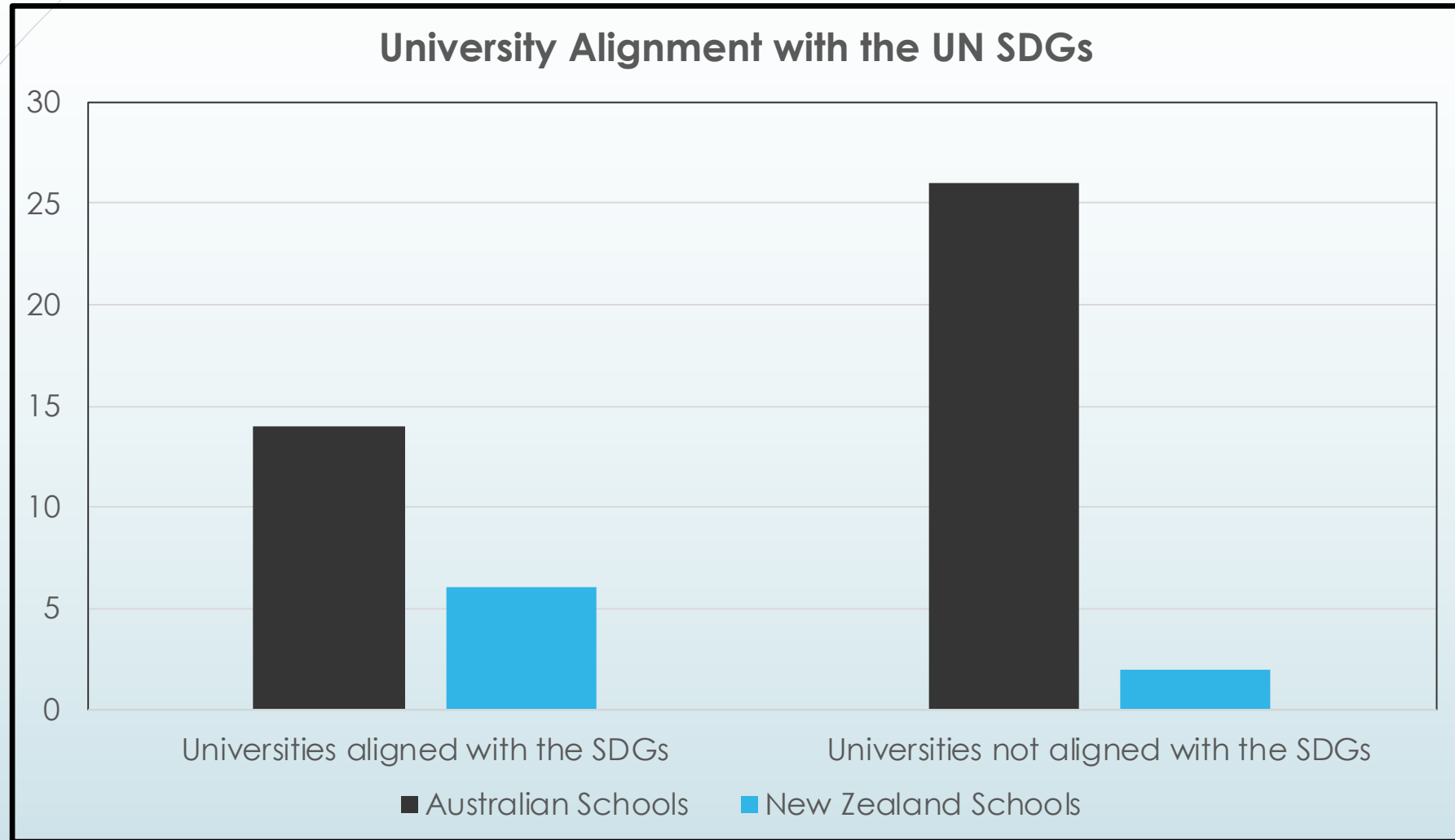
37 (OF 156)



Rank	Country	Score
1	Sweden	85.0
2	Denmark	84.6
3	Finland	83.0
4	Germany	82.3
5	France	81.2
6	Norway	81.2
7	Switzerland	80.1
8	Slovenia	80.0
9	Austria	80.0
10	Iceland	79.7
11	Netherlands	79.5
12	Belgium	79.0
13	Czech Republic	78.7
14	United Kingdom	78.7
15	Japan	78.5
16	Estonia	78.3
17	New Zealand	77.9
18	Ireland	77.5
19	Korea, Rep.	77.4
20	Canada	76.8
21	Croatia	76.5
22	Luxembourg	76.1
23	Belarus	76.0
24	Slovak Republic	75.6
25	Spain	75.4
26	Hungary	75.0
27	Latvia	74.7
28	Moldova	74.5
29	Italy	74.2
30	Malta	74.2
31	Portugal	74.0
32	Poland	73.7
33	Costa Rica	73.2
34	Bulgaria	73.1
35	United States	73.0
36	Lithuania	72.9
37	Australia	72.9
38	Chile	72.8
39	Ukraine	72.3
40	Serbia	72.1

From "SDG Index and Dashboards report 2018 – Global Responsibilities – Implementing the Goals"

Australian and New Zealand University alignment with the UN SDG's



Where can we find information on our progress?

.... As a nation?



.... As Australian and New Zealand Universities?



Workshop – SDG's for research impact



Workshop on Using the SDGs for Research Impact

This workshop hopes to explore your thoughts on how we, as individuals and as members of the ANZAM IM group can engage with the SDGs.

- We will discuss certain questions in a group setting and collect your thoughts on paper (we need one person per group to coordinate and one to act as scribe).
- We are collecting the thoughts, suggestions, possibilities and critiques from several workshops on this topic and will report on these at the this year's ANZAM conference and/or in a publication.

Workshop Questions

2 questions will be allocated to each table for discussion and suggested action points

1. How can we better align our current **individual** research agendas to particular SDGs?
2. What are the steps required to begin using the SDGs to help drive our **institutional** research agenda?
3. What **role** can **network organisations** such as ANZAM play in focusing attention on the application of the SDGs in our research activities?
4. How can we **measure *real* research quality/impact**, keeping our end-users in mind?

Engaging with SDG's

1. Map what you are already researching that is of relevance to the SDGs.
2. Build internal knowledge, capacity and ownership of the SDGs
3. Identify priorities, opportunities and gaps – use the SDG Targets and Indicators information to identify research possibilities.
4. Work with School and University policy makers and managers to integrate, implement and embed the SDGs within school and university strategies, policies and plans
5. Monitor, evaluate and communicate your research actions on the SDGs

(Adapted from Kestin et. al., 2017)

Where to from here....

- Consider ways of building the SDGs into our individual teaching and research agendas.
- Some research streams and SIGs within ANZAM are already contributing to the SDGs 8, 9, 11 and 17.
- ANZAM can continue making a contribution in the broad areas of learning and teaching and strengthening public engagement.
- ANZAM has already started the process through the 2019 Conference Theme and associated JMO SI.
- Should ANZAM really be contributing to the flawed journal ranking processes?
- We should support those who are outward looking in our structure and member institutions (and largely ignore those who are inward looking)



33RD ANZAM CONFERENCE

**CAIRNS, QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA**



**WICKED SOLUTIONS
TO WICKED PROBLEMS:
THE CHALLENGES FACING
MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
AND PRACTICE**

3 – 6 DECEMBER 2019



**Paper submission EXTENDED
to 1 July 2019**

**Papers submitted to the
Conference Theme Stream
(Stream 1), which have a clear
relevance to SDGs, will be
considered for a Special Issue
of the Journal of Management
& Organization**

www.anzamconference.org

References

<http://www.arc.gov.au/research-impact-principles-and-framework>

http://cssip.org/docs/meeting/RAND_Full.pdf

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/media/newsletters/ceo/2014/measuring-impact-research-not-just-simple-list-publications>

<https://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=887119891552972;res=IELHSS>

<https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/OIR-09-2015-0314>

http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/35758/1/Handbook_PDF_for_the_LSE_impact_blog_April_2011.pdf

<http://theconversation.com/quality-not-quantity-measuring-the-impact-of-published-research-18270>

http://cssip.org/docs/meeting/RAND_Full.pdf

<http://ap-unsdsn.org/regional-initiatives/universities-sdgs/university-sdg-guide/>

<http://sdgindex.org/reports/2018/>

Edwards Marc A. and Roy Siddhartha (2017) *Environmental Engineering Science*, Jan 2017

Greenalgh et al. (2016). Research impact: a narrative review. *BMC Medicine*. 14:78

Jacobsen, S.H. (2018) Viewpoint: Push Versus Pull - Flipping the publishing business model. *Communications of the ACM*, April, 2018, Vol. 61, No. 4, pp. 25-27.

George, G., Howard-Grenville, J., Joshi, A. and Tihanyi, L. (2016) Understanding and Tackling Societal Grand Challenges Through Management Research, *Academy of Management Journal*, 2016, Vol. 59, No. 6, 1880–1895.

SDSN Australia/Pacific (2017): Getting started with the SDGs in universities: A guide for universities, higher education institutions, and the academic sector. Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Edition. Sustainable Development Solutions Network – Australia/Pacific, Melbourne.