



## University Wide Module: Sustainability - 2019

**A TRADITION OF  
INDEPENDENT  
THINKING**



**UCC**

**University College Cork, Ireland**  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



# Panel Discussion

- **Chair**
- Rosemary MacSweeney, International Energy Research Centre IERC/  
*She Is Sustainable, Cork*
- **Panel**
- Dr Alexandra Revez, Senior Post Doctoral Researcher *Imagining 2050*
- Dr Clodagh Harris, Government UCC, Co-PI *Imagining 2050*
- Liz Creed Transitions Kinsale/ Sociology UCC







# Participation: applications and challenges

By: Alexandra Revez

**A TRADITION OF  
INDEPENDENT  
THINKING**



**University College Cork, Ireland**  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

# The role of community engagement in achieving sustainability

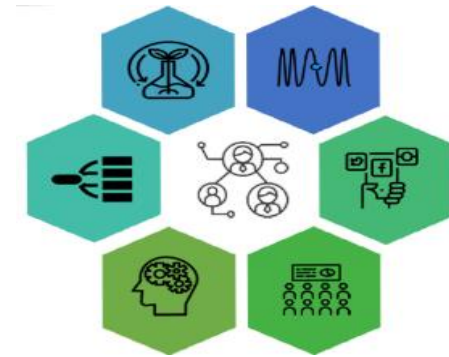
- Past efforts to promote sustainability focused on designing energy-efficient technologies, developing renewable sources of energy and new markets for these;
- Increased calls for greater community engagement, public participation and transdisciplinarity in policy and research;
- Drivers for participation include:
  - Promoting awareness and engagement
  - Social acceptance of new energy systems
  - Translating knowledge into action
  - Social and Environmental Justice
  - Self-determination
  - Innovation



*(Chilvers and Longhurst (2016), Maréchal, 2009, Cargo and Mercer, 2008)*

# Issues in defining and implementing participation strategies

- Growing contestation on how best to pursue and channel processes of participation, include:
  - Problematic/fixed terminologies
  - Excluding practices
  - Extractive practices
  - Manipulating practices
- Participation as ‘real’ or ‘socially constructed’?
  - Fixed or evolving
  - Measurable or fluid
  - Externally identifiable or subjective
  - Objectively observed or reflexively interpreted

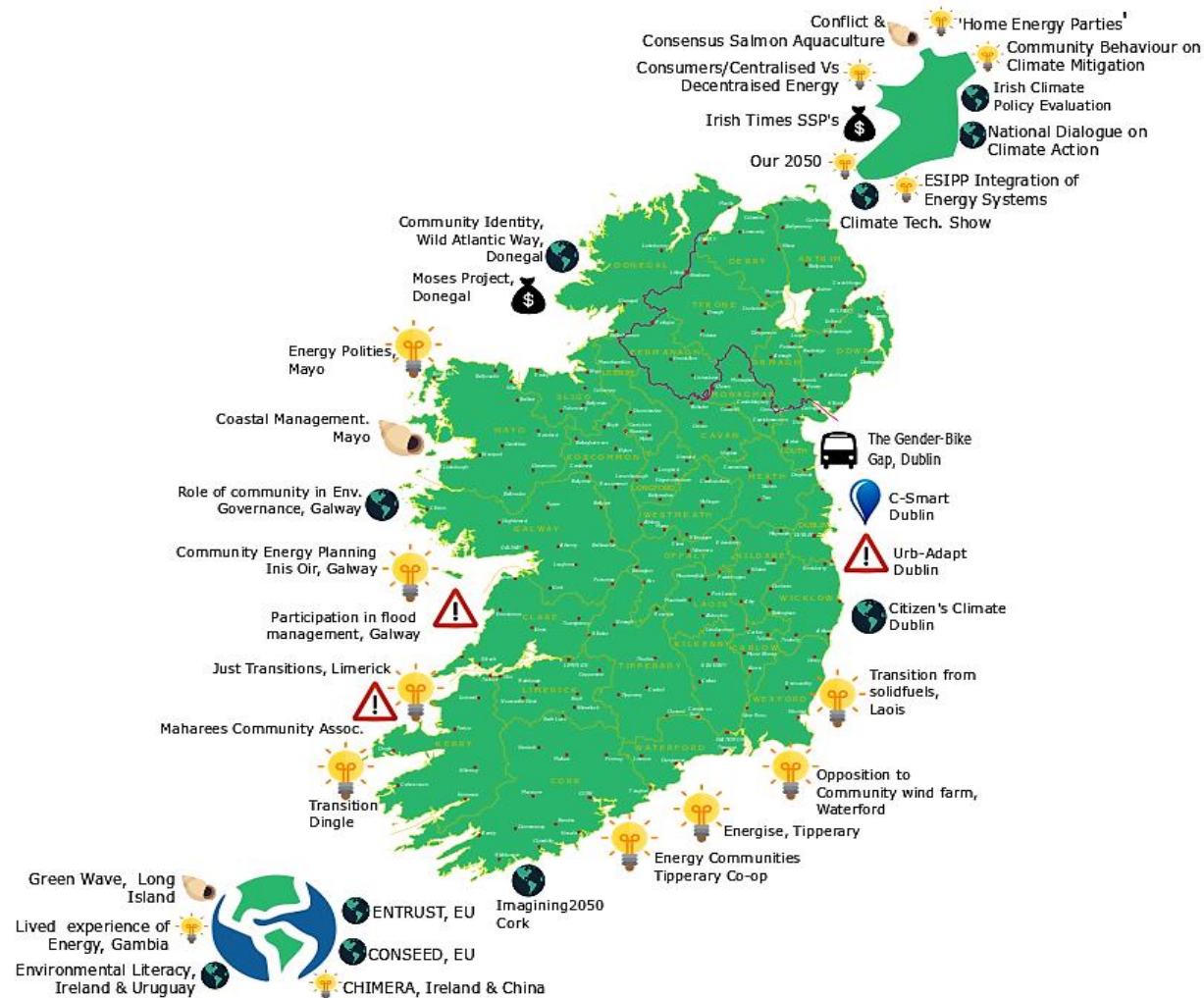


‘Ecologies of participation’ or  
‘systems of practice’ a way to  
contextualize and situate  
participation practices

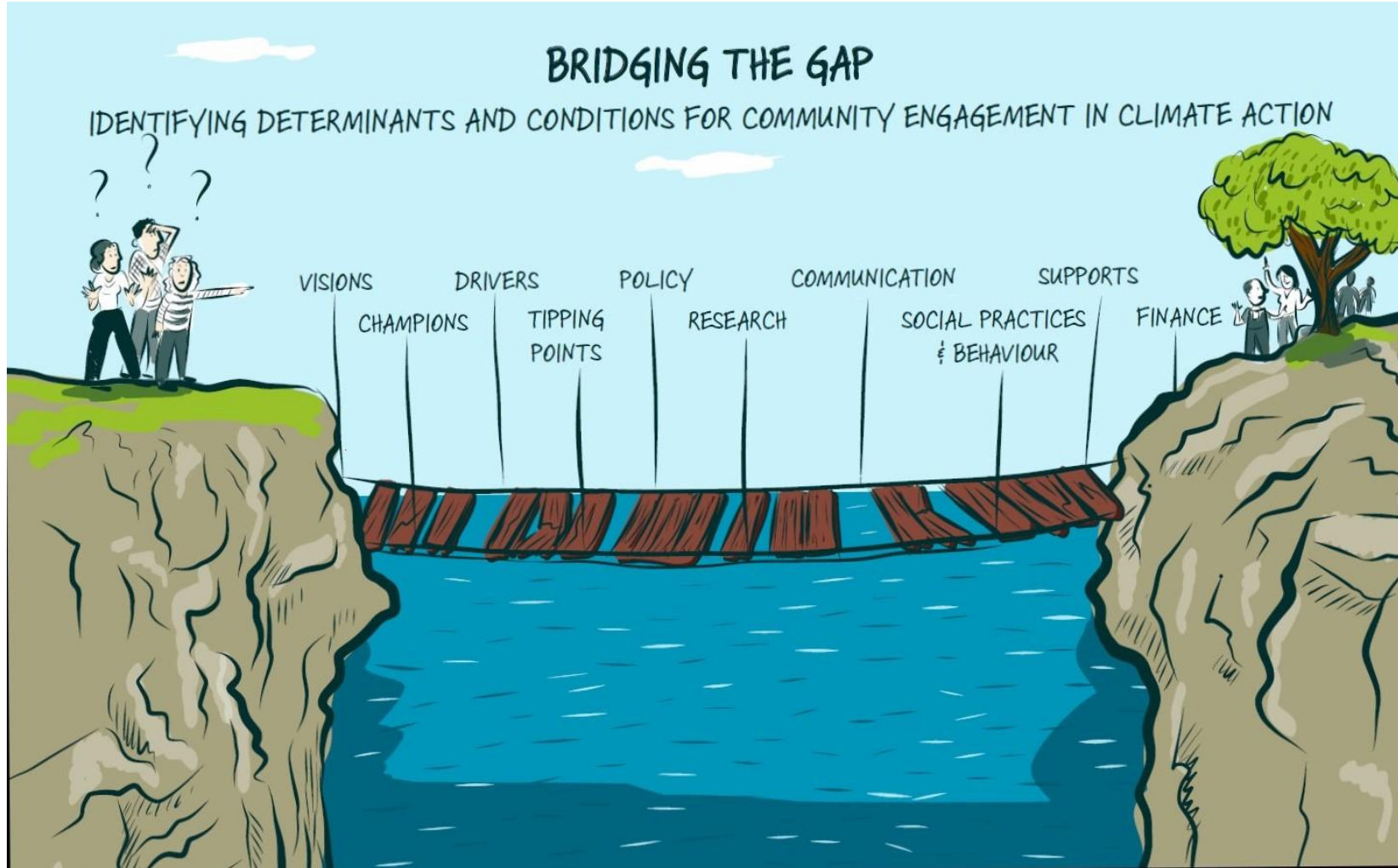
*(Chilvers and Pallet (2018), Birkholz et al., 2014).*



# Local, national and international research with a focus on community engagement in climate action



# “Bridging the gap”: Identifying the determinants and conditions for community engagement in Climate Action



# Imagining2050: a framework for deliberative engagement





# Selected references






Chilvers J, Pallett H. Energy democracies and publics in the making: a relational agenda for research and practice. *Frontiers in Communication*. 2018;3:14.

Chilvers J, Longhurst N. Participation in Transition(s): Reconceiving Public Engagements in Energy Transitions as Co-Produced, Emergent and Diverse. *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*. 2016;7200(February):1-23.

Maréchal K. An evolutionary perspective on the economics of energy consumption: the crucial role of habits. *Journal of Economic Issues*. 2009;43(1):69-88.

Watson M. How theories of practice can inform transition to a decarbonised transport system. *Journal of Transport Geography*. 2012;24:488-96.



Contact Details	
	+ 353 21 490 3503
	<a href="mailto:alexandra.revez@ucc.ie">alexandra.revez@ucc.ie</a>
	Imagining2050.ucc.ie
	@imagining2050
	@imagining2050



# **[Re-imagining democracy? Ireland's Citizens' Assembly]**

## **[Dr Clodagh Harris]**

**A TRADITION OF  
INDEPENDENT  
THINKING**



**UCC**

**University College Cork, Ireland**  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh



# Citizens' Assembly – 2016-2018

- 99 citizens
- 5 topics (abortion, aging, climate change, fixed term parliaments & Ireland's referendum process)
- 11 weekends
- 1 Referendum (to date).
- Oireachtas Joint Committee on Climate Action – set up to discuss the Assembly's report.



**Table 1. The Irish Citizens' Assembly: topics, public interest, meetings, output**

Topic	Numbers of days of meetings <sup>a</sup>	Public submissions <sup>b</sup>	Output	Date report sent to Parliament	Government reaction
The Eighth Amendment of the Constitution (abortion)	9.5 days	12,200	1 key recommendation (in various parts)	29 June 2017	Considered by a special parliamentary committee. Government accepted proposal for a referendum. Referendum passed in May 2018
How we best respond to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population	4 days	122	15 recommendations plus 6 ancillary ones	8 December 2017	No reaction to date
How the state can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change	4 days	1,185	13 recommendations	18 April 2018	A special parliamentary committee has been established to consider the report
The manner in which referenda are held	1.5 days	206	8 recommendations	21 June 2018	No reaction to date
Fixed term parliaments	1 day	8	7 recommendations	21 June 2018	No reaction to date

**Source:** Farrell, D.M., Suiter, J. & Harris, C. (2019) 'The Systemization of deliberation in Ireland? The Irish Citizens' Assembly 2016- 2018' *Irish Political Studies*

# Recommendations

- 1) A new or existing independent body should be resourced appropriately and given a broad range of new functions and powers in legislation to address climate change.
- 2) The State should take a leadership role in addressing climate change - mitigation & adaptation measures
- 3) Members said they would be willing to pay higher taxes on carbon intensive activities
- 4) The State should undertake a comprehensive assessment of the vulnerability of all critical infrastructure with a view to building resilience to ongoing climate change.
- 5) The State should enable, through legislation, the selling back into the grid of electricity from micro-generation by private citizens.
- 6) The State should act to ensure the greatest possible levels of community ownership in all future renewable energy projects
- 7) The State should end all subsidies for peat extraction
- 8) The number of bus lanes, cycling lanes and park and ride facilities should be greatly increased
- 9) The State should immediately take many steps to support the transition to electric vehicles.
- 10) The State should prioritise the expansion of public transport spending over new roads
- 11) There should be a tax on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from agriculture.
- 12) The State should introduce a standard form of mandatory measurement & reporting of food waste
- 13) The State should review, and revise supports for land use diversification.



# Challenges

- Recruitment and attendance
- Government responsiveness.
- Ad hoc process
- Agenda Control

# Success

- Contribution to the wider deliberative system of democracy.
- Input & throughput legitimacy
- Wider public knowledge and acceptance

# Conclusion

- Do citizens' assemblies re-imagine Democracy?





# Participation & Local Democracy

Elizabeth Creed

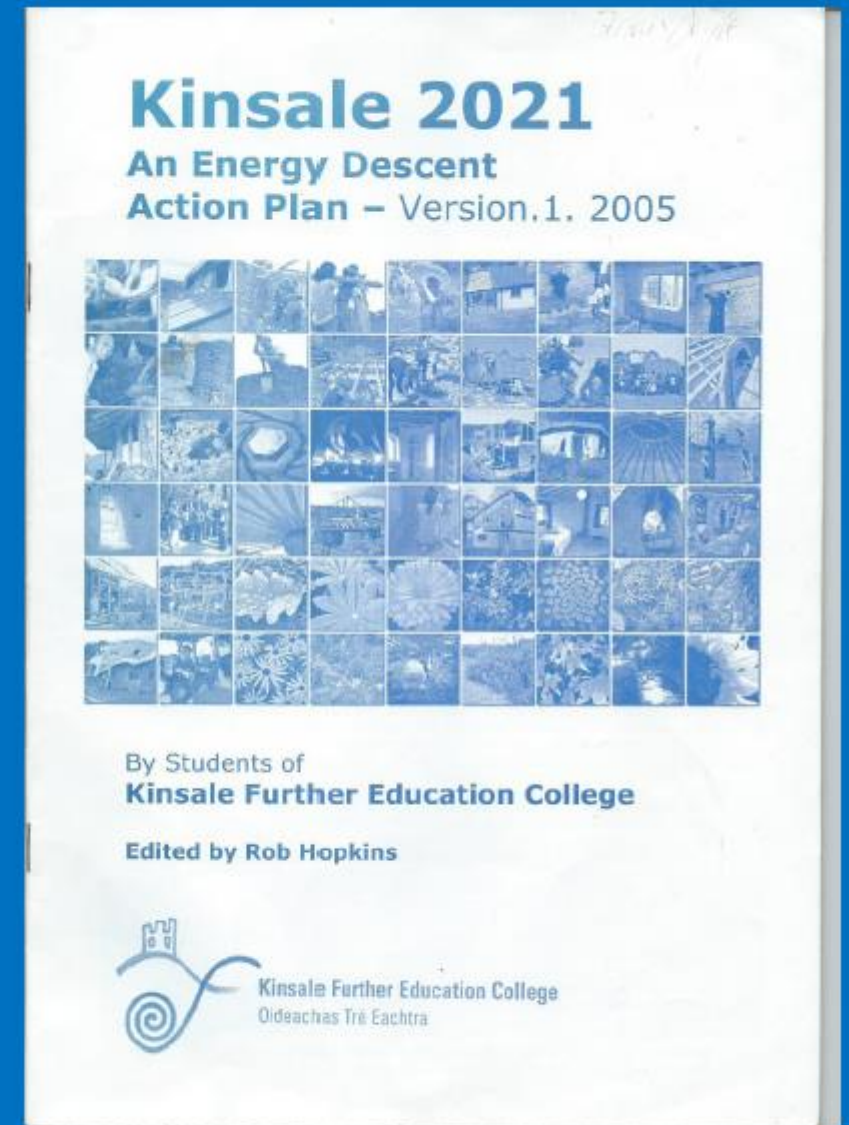


*Personal reflection about processes & challenges of democratic participation at a local level*

- Kinsale -birthplace of the Global Transition movement (1000+ initiatives world wide)
- *Started out as a student project in Kinsale College in 2005.*
- Grant from Kinsale Town Council to newly fledged Transition Town Kinsale

Funding:

Kinsale Town Council, Cork County Council,  
Local Agenda 21, Leargás, WCDP, RX3,  
AIB Better Ireland Awards, Vicky Heslop





# Open Space Events







**KINSALE**  
YOUR TASTE OF IRELAND



**Saile**  
KINSALE  
SPORTS & COMMUNITY  
CENTRE



**Ringrone  
Allotments**



**Kinsale  
Farmers'  
Market**



Transition Town Kinsale



**KINSALE**  
IRISH  
MEN'S  
**SHEDS**  
ASSOCIATION



**Kinsale  
Environmental  
Watch**



**Kinsale  
Flower &  
Garden Club**



**Kinsale College**  
Coláiste Chionn tSaile









# Transition Town Kinsale Vision 2005 for 2020!

## Food

Kinsale is almost self-reliant for food with a thriving local food co-op.

## Energy

Kinsale is a carbon-neutral town with energy supplied by a number of renewable sources.

## Housing

Houses in Kinsale are built sustainably, with high levels of energy efficiency.

## Transport

Kinsale has adopted eco and people friendly transport systems.

## Waste

Kinsale deals with all its own waste.

## Economy

Kinsale has a sustainable local economy ensuring a thriving community.

## Sustainability Centre

Information hub; eco shop; training, workshop, exhibition and meeting space; advice on all things sustainable.



## Municipal District Local Area Plans 2017



## Submission to the Local Area Plan Review (Bandon-Kinsale Municipal District)

*The Draft Plan supports the implementation of the Kinsale Transportation Study. Other matters raised are outside the scope of the Local Area Plan process. No change proposed.*



## How the State can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change.

98% of the Members recommended that to ensure climate change is at the centre of policy-making in Ireland  
80% of the Members said they would be willing to pay higher taxes on carbon intensive activities



## WORKSHOP TO ASSIST IN PREPARATION OF A REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTHERN REGION

### Theme: How can the RSES achieve the transition to a low carbon, climate, resilient society.

*Investment in sourcing Irish fossil fuel reserves was suggested as a solution at one of the round table discussions I sat at.*

This is **the elephant in the room** ...we don't really get the urgency of this transition; we don't really grasp the consequences.

Greenhouse gas emission reduction has to underpin our policy decisions; in how we envisage our economic future, in our communities and as a country, but more importantly as a global citizens....

### How will we transition?



Tionól Réigiúnach an Deiscirt  
Southern Regional Assembly



**Met with our political representatives:**

... not a door step issue

... person before you spoke on the same theme

... how can we bring people along

**Attended Cork Climate Action Political Forums**

... who turns up

# Future Kinsale Survey

We may not talk in 'zero or low carbon' terms,  
but **76%** of respondents (600) believe that  
**Kinsale should be at the  
forefront of climate action.**

*Climate Case Ireland – 17,000+ signatures*





## Events in Kinsale



Transition Town Kinsale







# Our climate. Our future. Your voice.

**#climatedialogueIRL**

Join Ireland's second Regional Gathering as part of the National Dialogue on Climate Action. On November 10th in Tralee, explore how we can work together for change. Register your interest at [www.dccae.gov.ie/climatedialogue](http://www.dccae.gov.ie/climatedialogue)



Cork County  
**Public  
Participation  
Network**

---

Líonra Rannpháirtíochta Poiblí  
Contae Chorcaí

**K-CORD**

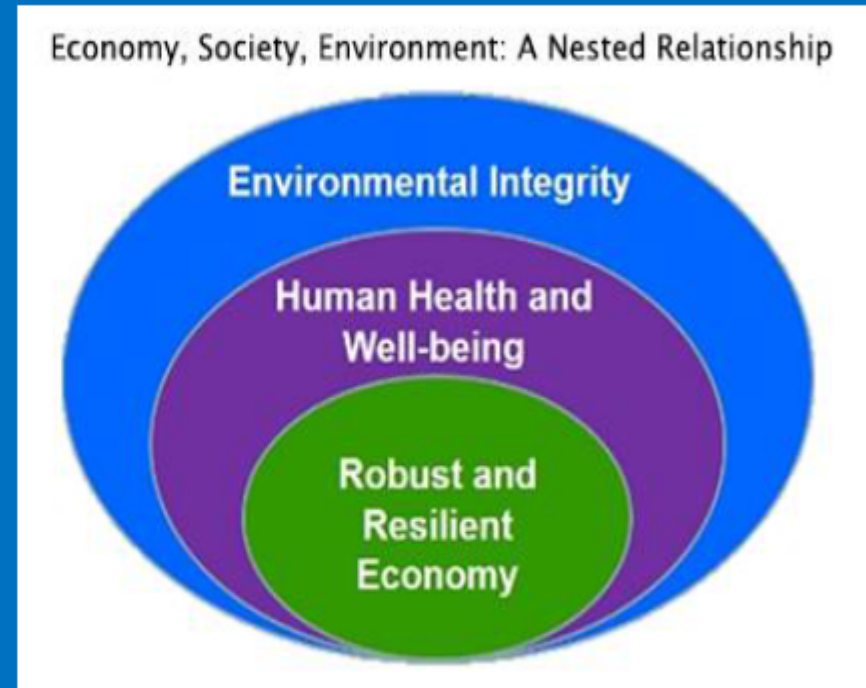
KINSALE COMMUNITY  
RESPONSE TO DEMENTIA

## A new approach.....

A vibrant and resilient economy is based on societal well-being; and can only exist in an healthy environment.

## Economical and Societal Transformational change as described by the EPA and the Climate Advisory Council - from aspiration to action:

- through *effective* public participation;
- *Facilitated* integrated planning and collaborative work between many stakeholders in different sectors;
- with '**Future Proofing Auditors**' sitting at the decision-making tables across all sectors;
- and *the state* putting the processes and resources in place to facilitate this.



Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency



# We support the **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**





# Panel Discussion

- 1. Why is participation important?
- 2. What are the key challenges?
- 3. What are the dangers (e.g. populism and Brexit)?



**ROSEMARIE MACSWEENEY**  
**INTERNATIONAL ENERGY  
RESEARCH CENTRE**

Rosemarie began her career in architecture in the 1990s, but has more recently been working in academia and in research at CIT, UCC, CRNI, and now the IERC, International Energy Research Centre at Tyndall National Institute.