



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Advancing transformative and coordinated sustainability education

SULITEST 2026 REPORT



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Advancing sustainability in Higher Education: Sulitest impact and contribution



Since the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sulitest movement has presented its annual report to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum. And each year, we feel that the past year has been special, and that the year to come will be even more so. And indeed, this is true once again.

A strained global context

On the international stage, geopolitical disorders, the visible acceleration of climate change impacts, the erosion of biodiversity, and growing tensions between nations all show that the world is navigating through turbulence of rare intensity.

Without being able to predict the future, current events strongly remind us of one necessity: training graduates – those who make decisions affecting all of society – in a systemic understanding of our major contemporary challenges.

This is why higher education institutions worldwide must ensure they provide their students, beyond the technical skills essential for their professions, a genuine ability to understand and act sustainably in a constantly changing world. Such is the promise and urgency of measuring sustainability knowledge.

A singular year for Sulitest

Our movement has also experienced an exceptional year: nearly a doubling of TASK™ users, expansion into the Middle East and Asia, and the launch of TASK™ in Spanish. With 100,000 TASK™ assessments completed, the academic community now has access to the largest database ever assembled on sustainability knowledge.

The data analysis we present in this report gives us an initial glimpse into emerging trends and sheds light on the work ahead. The increasingly structured use of TASK™ by universities, along with the collection of ever more detailed information, will in the coming years improve our understanding of learning.

While there is no secret recipe for helping students embrace sustainability, we will soon be able to collectively share a workable “cookbook” by compiling and analyzing granular data.

International rankings such as the THE Impact Ranking or QS, as well as assessment tools like STARS, or accreditation like EFMD already consider TASK™ a reliable instrument. This year,

the first national rankings (such as *Le Point* in France) and specialized rankings (such as Corporate Knights) have begun recommending our tools for better managing sustainability in higher education. Thanks to the robustness of its instruments, Sulitest has become a true trusted third party in the world of assessment.

EXPANDIA: Supporting faculty

Two years ago, Sulitest conducted an international survey on faculty engagement that corroborated the feedback from many of our partner universities.

While sustainability issues have gradually been integrated into higher education curricula under the impetus of various actors (United Nations, ministries, accreditation bodies, institutions), support and training for teacher-researchers remain insufficient: despite their motivation, many lack the legitimacy, training, and pedagogical tools needed to effectively integrate ecological transition and sustainable development into their disciplines. Moreover, as the academic community is very heterogeneous in its perception of these issues, it has become essential to design support and train-the-trainer strategies adapted to different profiles, levels of engagement, and understanding.



Aurélien Decamps,
Co-founder of the Sulitest Movement

EXPANDIA, which Sulitest is honored to lead, is a four-year initiative aimed at mobilizing 6,000 educators in the cause of improving sustainability teaching and learning in higher education. The project was selected under the “Skills and Future Professions” call for expressions of interest (AMI CMA) of the France 2030 program, funded by the French government. Although its primary goal is to support French faculty, we wish to progressively expand this initiative into an international movement, notably through HESI (Higher Education for Sustainability Initiative).

Alongside supporting program directors in better understanding, managing, and deploying their sustainability actions through TASK™ data analysis, we at Sulitest will now also be supporting teachers with EXPANDIA – and this brings us great joy.

In a complex and constantly evolving world, we are proud to make this modest contribution to building a fairer and more sustainable world by working with all stakeholders in our expanding ecosystem.

Next year will therefore be, once again, a decisive year. This is proof that, even in a complex and non-linear world, some things repeat themselves... and this time, thankfully.



Jean-Christophe Carteron,
Co-founder of the Sulitest Movement

Sulitest: a feature initiative of HESI



The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) is an open partnership among several United Nations entities* and the higher education community that was launched in the lead-up to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio. HESI accounted for more than one-third of all voluntary commitments launched at Rio+20 and each year in the margins of the HLPF, a global HESI event is organized to showcase how the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is progressing.

Through its strong association with the United Nations, HESI aims to provide higher education with an interface between higher education, science, and policy-making by raising the profile of higher education's sector in supporting sustainable development, convening multi-stakeholder discussions and action, and sharing good practice.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) joining HESI commit to:

1. Teach sustainability across all disciplines of study;
2. Encourage research and dissemination of sustainable development knowledge;
3. Create green campuses and support local sustainability efforts; and
4. Engage and share information and good practice with international networks.

HEIs can register at: <https://sdgs.un.org/HESI>

Recognized as one of the first 17 featured initiatives of the United Nations Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals, Sulitest has, since its launch, been considered a flagship project of HESI. Today, Sulitest co-chairs HESI, alongside UNDESA, UNU and UNESCO.

**UNDESA, UNESCO, UN Environment Programme, UN University, UN-HABITAT, UNCTAD, UNITAR, UN Office for Partnerships, UN Academic Impact, and UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education initiative.*

Introduction to the Sulitest movement

The mission of higher education

With its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, the 2030 Agenda provides a coherent framework and roadmap to coordinate stakeholder initiatives and to accelerate the transition towards a sustainable future. It is a “plan of action for people, planet and prosperity,” leaving no one behind.

To realize this agenda, it is critical that **all individuals—irrespective of discipline, profession, or location—share an understanding of the challenges we face, and most importantly, how to address them.** Under SDG-4, Goal 4.7 states that by 2030 “all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

In addition, the 2030 Agenda states that **we measure our success in this endeavor by the “extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education**

policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment.” (See SDG Goal 4, Target 4.7, Indicator 4.7.1)

Here lies the mission of higher education in the 21st century—to ensure sustainability literacy constitutes a core learning outcome for everyone; to ensure such learning is embedded within both national and institutional strategies; to ensure that curricular content, pedagogy, teacher training, and professional development are fit for purpose; and to ensure that student sustainability learning is demonstrated via robust and evidence-based assessment processes. Only with such a transformative mission can Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) affirm with confidence that they provide their students with a quality education via the knowledge they create and transmit, the skills and competencies they build, the attitudes and mindsets they nurture, and the behaviors and actions they encourage. In a world of climate change and collapsing nature, “quality education” henceforth means *educating for sustainability!*

The role of Sulitest

The Sulitest vision is a world where everyone understands sustainability, develops a mindset of sustainability, and becomes deeply committed to building a sustainable future. To achieve this, sustainability must become an integral part of every training, educational system, and pedagogical framework. In this context, **the purpose of Sulitest is to enable institutions to measure and improve sustainability literacy through various tools and insightful data that drive such transformational change, and by redefining the ethos and outcomes of Higher Education for a sustainable future.**

Educational systems exist within a complex web of interests, incentives, barriers to change, and inequalities, all of which are expressed within the context of environmental collapse and social injustice. *How, then, can HEIs systematically improve sustainability literacy? How can such systems reimagine and redesign academic programs vis-à-vis promoting sustainability education? How can they monitor, measure, and demonstrate their impact?* Answering these questions is the “raison d’être” of the Sulitest movement.

The Sulitest expertise, developed for over a decade working in higher education, strengthened our conviction that assessment is a powerful (and yet under-utilized) lever to foster systemic change toward sustainability in higher education. Change what you measure, and you will shift the very structures and objectives of higher education frameworks. Provide relevant metrics and indicators, and you enable HEIs to drive change,

demonstrate impact, and inspire wider educational sectors beyond the good practice of a single institution.

Since 2013, Sulitest has developed and provided easy access to three online tools designed to raise awareness about sustainability, namely the **Awareness Test**; an engaging and interactive **Quiz**, and the reverse pedagogy platform called **Looping** (more on page 24). Nearly 400,000 people worldwide have used these tools over the past decade—a notable contribution to the achievement of SDG Goal 4.7.

In 2023, Sulitest added to its ecosystem **TASK™ — The Assessment of Sustainability Knowledge**, the first online, psychometric assessment and certification of sustainability knowledge. Today, TASK™ is used by HEIs in pre- and post-

“I believe that universities are the world’s greatest hope for solving the world’s grand challenges – through their knowledge creation and inventions, of course, but vitally, through their role in nurturing the next generation of sustainable citizens. Universities will not just provide graduates with the specific labour market ‘green skills’ required for a net-zero future, but will also nurture the attitudes and mindsets across the whole graduate population that the world will need to take on the existential threats we all face. I applaud all efforts to support universities in ensuring they are sending their graduates out into the world as true sustainability leaders.”

–Phil Baty, Chief Global Affairs Officer at Times Higher Education



assessment, generating relevant and reliable data for adapting, monitoring, and improving the dissemination of sustainability as a common language. In just over three years since its launch, over 100,000 TASK™ online assessments have been processed, generating an unprecedented store of data and revealing interesting current states and trends that are further discussed in this report.

TASK™ is not only an assessment instrument. It offers institutions a common language and framework to inform curricular revision (as seen in the case studies featured on page 30), as well as resources to support continuous student learning on sustainability—namely the **Intro2TASK** and **TASK™ Study Guides**—and fruitful exchanges between a growing community of HEIs.

Additionally, Sulitest continues to engage in research and development projects to expand the horizons of its work and engagement. Notably, in 2026, a series of interviews with deans, program directors and other stakeholders involved in curricular design informed the writing of a new Sulitest White Paper—*Transforming higher education: the role of strategic leadership and academic governance*—published earlier this Summer (more In Chapter 2). Moreover, Sulitest contributes to BIOFIN-EU, a European commission funded project aiming to accelerate finance flows towards biodiversity-positive outcomes and nature-based solutions (more In Chapter 8).

Given the challenge humanity faces, no initiative on its own can effect systemic change. For this reason, Sulitest plays a leading

role in advancing the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), and today it co-chairs this initiative—alongside UNDESA, UN University, and IESALC—facilitating multi-stakeholder discussions, actions, and the dissemination of good practice. Sulitest also collaborates with several UN entities to create SDG-specific modules (a set of multiple-choice questions complemented with learning feedback) designed to raise awareness about specific SDG goals. Moreover, Sulitest continues to facilitate and contribute to global conversations that advance the 2030 Agenda and help transform Higher Education, such as moderating panels in key conferences, publishing articles in leading journals, and developing supporting impactful research projects.


With our tools and a continuous contribution to the higher education sector, Sulitest accelerates the sustainability literacy movement worldwide and contributes to a planetary ambition to empower everyone to understand and engage in the collective building of a sustainable future.

“Sulitest is an innovative pedagogical tool that can be deployed in various ways to advance educational objectives in sustainability and global responsibility. Sulitest has proved its relevance in promoting action toward addressing urgent global challenges and fostering transformation in sustainability education and beyond.”

—Matthew Wood, Director at EFMD



Transforming higher education: Embedding sustainability into academic programming



Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to integrate sustainability into teaching and learning. However, how such expectations are translated into concrete curriculum change and transformation, how change is managed, and which role executive leadership and academic governance actors play in accelerating such sustainability integration remains largely unexplored.

To address this, Sulitest conducted a research project in 2026 to explore **how sustainability moves from institutional strategy to operational implementation within academic programs**. Based upon twenty-two interviews with program directors, deans, sustainability directors and others, we examined **the governance dynamics that shape how sustainability is embedded in curricula**. This endeavour was important and aligned with Sulitest's mission, as understanding how sustainability is translated from ambition into educational practice is crucial to realizing Agenda 2030 Target 4.7.

This chapter summarizes many of the findings of this research, which is published as a Sulitest White Paper—*Transforming higher education: the role of strategic leadership and academic governance*—that readers can find [here](#).

Where change takes place: the life cycle of academic programs

To drive meaningful change in a system, we must first know where to intervene. As systems thinker Donella Meadows highlighted, not all intervention points are equally effective—some have far greater transformative potential than others. The research found that academic program design and review operate through a **multi-layered governance process** that combines strategic decision-making, regulatory compliance, pedagogical implementation, market feedback, and epistemic adaptation. Rather than following a linear path, programs evolve through **successive cycles of negotiation and adaptation** involving multiple actors.

Institutional leadership—such as deans and executive teams—and **academic governance actors**—including program directors, academic leads, and faculty committees—interact through formal mechanisms such as curriculum review boards and pedagogical committees. Beyond these, a **wider ecosystem of stakeholders**—students, alumni, employers, accreditation bodies, and external partners—also plays an important role in shaping programs.

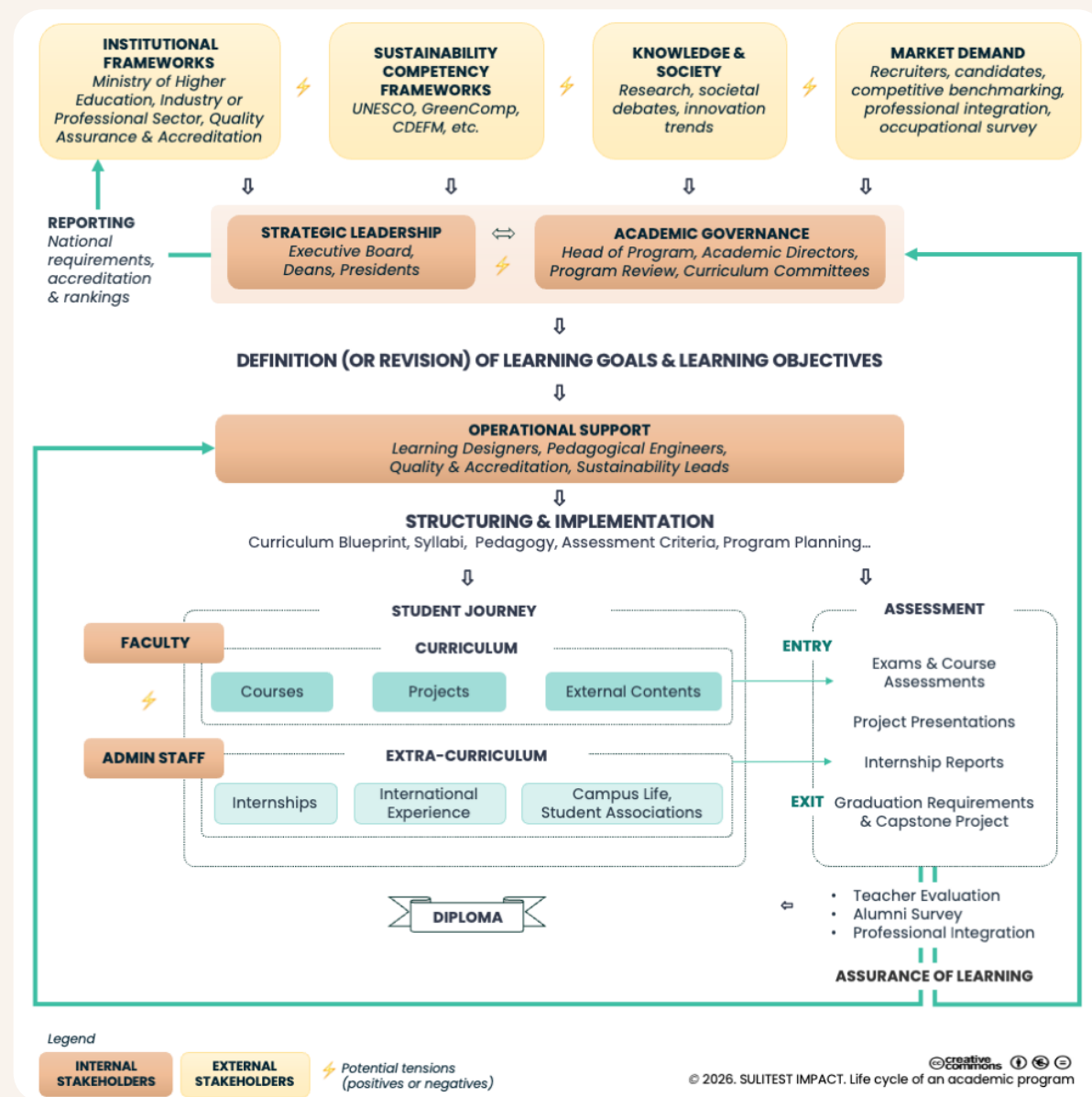
The research findings suggest that five interrelated phases structure the process through which sustainability—and other emerging priorities—is integrated into academic programs:

1. Strategic decision-making phase: Program direction and positioning are shaped by the institution's broader strategy. They often reflect broader shifts in the higher education landscape and the growing institutionalization of sustainability. This phase plays a crucial role in legitimizing sustainability and embedding it within institutional priorities.

2. Normative and compliance phase: Regulatory frameworks play a dual role. They can create administrative burden and inertia, but also provide strong leverage by turning sustainability from a symbolic commitment into an operational teaching objective. Importantly, interviewees emphasized that sustainability only becomes meaningful when it is embedded in assessment systems.

3. Market and corporate phase: Input from employers, industry partners, internship supervisors, and alumni helps identify evolving competency needs and ensures alignment with external expectations—effectively “closing the loop” between education and practice.

Figure 1. Life cycle of an academic program



4. Epistemic and innovation phase: Scientific developments, societal debates, and regulatory transformations continuously reshape understandings of sustainability. Academic programs must reconcile this with competing demands—from employers, institutional priorities, disciplinary traditions, and student expectations—making curriculum development an ongoing process of knowledge negotiation.

5. Pedagogical and operational phase: At this stage, curriculum transformations become operational through syllabus revisions, the creation of new modules, and the integration of sustainability within existing courses. Faculty play a central role here, highlighting the need for strong “translation mechanisms” to ensure a shared understanding of sustainability and adequate support.

These phases continuously interact and often create tension. **Integrating sustainability into academic programs is, therefore, less a question of adding new content than of how leadership and governance bodies organize curricular change. Meaningful curriculum transformation occurs when institutional strategy, governance coordination, and pedagogical implementation are aligned.** Without this alignment, sustainability initiatives tend to remain fragmented, isolated, or limited to the efforts of a small group of individuals.

This process exists between institutional and regulatory frameworks that define both constraints and opportunities. In line with Meadows’ perspective, when the “rules of the

game” evolve—for example through accreditation standards or national frameworks that value sustainability—the entire system begins to shift. **Institutions that successfully advance sustainability integration tend to treat frameworks not merely as accreditation requirements but as strategic tools guiding curriculum development.**

Barriers and levers for sustainability education

The integration of sustainability into academic programs depends not only on institutional frameworks and governance structures but also on a set of **organizational conditions that either facilitate or hinder implementation.** Interviews revealed that sustainability integration is shaped by a combination of institutional support mechanisms, faculty engagement, operational constraints, and the capacity of institutions to measure and monitor sustainability within curricula.

Across institutions, respondents consistently highlighted a number of **key levers** that enable sustainability integration, as well as **structural barriers** that may slow or limit the depth of transformation. These factors operate at different levels of the institution, including leadership strategy, pedagogical practices, faculty capacity, governance mechanisms, and evaluation systems.

Table 1. Summary of levers and barriers for sustainability education

Levers	Barriers or risks
<p>Strong institutional support – leadership treats sustainability as an explicit strategic priority.</p>	<p>Administrative over-compliance – applying frameworks declaratively without real impact on teaching.</p>
<p>Valuing existing practices – building on initiatives already implemented by faculty; gradual and motivating approach.</p>	<p>Additional workload for faculty – excessive tools or formal requirements can create resistance or disengagement.</p>
<p>Faculty training – ownership through training, awareness, and translation of sustainability concepts into disciplinary terms.</p>	<p>Difficulty translating sustainability into concrete content – even trained faculty may struggle to define precise learning objectives.</p>
<p>Engagement of all staff – coordination between teaching staff, administrative teams, sustainability officers, and leadership.</p>	<p>Limited post-graduation follow-up – difficulty measuring the long-term impact of sustainability competencies in professional practice.</p>
<p>Communication and recognition – visibility and reward of faculty and student initiatives through certifications, awards, or participation in international networks.</p>	<p>Fragmented measurement tools – difficulty linking mapping, assessment, and learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Curriculum governance and feedback mechanisms – program committees, accreditation audits, and student/ employer feedback support curriculum evolution.</p>	<p>Overlapping frameworks – SDGs, GreenComp, DDRS, ISO 26000 etc. can create complexity and administrative burden.</p>
<p>Measurement and monitoring systems – mapping courses, assessing student competencies, and tracking sustainability literacy help guide program improvements.</p>	<p>Indicators focused on inputs rather than outcomes – presence of sustainability topics does not necessarily reflect real competencies.</p>

Discussion and conclusion

The study shines a light onto the **ambivalent role of competency frameworks and accreditation systems**. While often perceived as compliance mechanisms, they can equally serve as sources of legitimacy and strategic leverage, enabling institutions to advance sustainability agendas when actively mobilized. However, their effectiveness ultimately depends on how they are interpreted and operationalized within local institutional contexts. Whether through incremental adjustments or more transformative strategic shifts, **the depth of sustainability integration is closely tied to leadership commitment, governance coordination, and resource allocation**.

Overall, the findings suggest that **meaningful and lasting integration of sustainability occurs only when three dimensions are aligned: institutional strategy, governance processes, and pedagogical practices**. Absent this alignment, sustainability initiatives risk remaining fragmented, symbolic, or confined to isolated components of the curriculum. Moreover, **it calls for better monitoring and support of what is effectively implemented within programs**. While many faculty members are willing to engage with sustainability, they often face significant barriers, including limited training, lack of pedagogical resources, and an uneven sense of legitimacy to address sustainability within their disciplines. Without visibility on actual teaching practices, sustainability remains a strategic abstraction; without faculty ownership and capacity-building, it risks remaining a formal requirement. **This dual focus on monitoring and empowerment is, therefore, essential**.

While this research project is recent, it reaffirms the vision and purpose of the tools Sulitest has developed in recent years. For example, TASK™, described in Chapter 3, offers institutions a coherent and comparable measurement tool of students' sustainability knowledge (outcome-focused), beyond providing a common language through its Model of Sustainability Knowledge, described in Chapter 4. TASK™ also brings recognition to both students and the institution, an important lever identified in the research. The learning tools described in Chapter 5, enable faculty of all disciplines to contribute to the collegial effort of including sustainability into teaching, e.g. through concept frameworks to guide curriculum revision (Navigational Charts). Forthcoming tools (mentioned in Chapter 8), including a tool to map curriculum against sustainability frameworks, will minimize administrative burden and framework complexity, facilitating the operational phase of curricular change.

Assessing sustainability knowledge with **TASK** BY Sulitest

To build a sustainable future, it is imperative that today's growing number of college graduates and emerging professionals achieve a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding of the basics of Earth sustainability as well as the ability to integrate such learning into personal and professional practice, into social interaction, and into civic action and public decision-making. While sustainability literacy calls for a discrete mix of knowledge, skills, and mindset, **a growing body of research highlights the importance of establishing an adequate foundational understanding and scaffolding for more meaningful and impactful learning experiences.**

Moreover, a key finding from the research aforementioned is that **sustainability education becomes most meaningful when it is embedded into assessment systems, not only into curriculum content.** To help institutions measure sustainability knowledge and competency development, as well as translate sustainability commitments into observable and comparable data, Sulitest launched TASK™—The Assessment of Sustainability Knowledge—in 2023, with the ambition of transforming education by (re)setting the standard of sustainability knowledge.

In practice, **TASK™ is an online, multiple-choice, psychometric test that measures both the quantity and quality of knowledge about sustainability** possessed by test-takers. It is available

in English, French, and since early 2026, Spanish. The process of translating the TASK™ assessment tools and process into Spanish is described in Chapter 8. Leading to an internationally recognized micro-credential, and upon completion of the test, the **TASK™ platform provides individuals with a digital certificate of the scores earned across TASK's 28 subjects** (described in Chapter 5). Many candidates choose to share their certificate on LinkedIn and other professional platforms, using it to showcase their readiness to infuse sustainability knowledge and values into careers in business, law, engineering, and beyond. Additionally, candidates now receive access to

"As progress around the world on tackling the impending climate catastrophe has been stalling, the role of the great minds of future generations in saving the planet has never become more acute. Sulitest provides a vital lens on how well we are equipping those generations to solve the crisis that they are on course to inherit. It provides important insights for higher education institutions around the world to ensure they adapt their pedagogical approaches to equip students with the right skills and mindset to not only challenge the status quo, but to tackle these challenges well into the future."

—Leigh Kamolins, Director of Analytics & Evaluation at QS Quacquarelli Symonds



the TASK™ Study Guides, which offer personalized learning recommendations and curated resources based on one's assessment results.

For HEIs offering the assessment, **TASK™ provides extensive aggregated and disaggregated data that can be used for measuring, monitoring, and steering both sustainability strategy and education throughout the institution.** The resulting insights help institutions demonstrate impact, track tangible changes in learning outcomes, and support the recognition of the sustainability strategy of the institution.

Today, TASK™ is widely recognized as a reliable assessment of sustainability knowledge and a valuable tool for advancing sustainability education. It is referenced within major rankings, ratings, accreditations, and networks, including QS, Times Higher Education, EFMD Programme Accreditation, AASHE STARS, PRME, Corporate Knights, IAE France, and the Le Point Business School Ranking in France. Several of these frameworks—including QS, Times Higher Education, EFMD, Corporate Knights, AASHE STARS, and Le Point—specifically ask institutions whether they assess sustainability knowledge and whether they use TASK™ as part of that process. Ultimately, **TASK™ provides a global diagnostic and benchmark of sustainability knowledge, which can be leveraged for strategy design, research, policymaking, reporting, and more.**

"TASK™ is an exciting initiative for measuring sustainability knowledge across the globe. At AASHE, we believe that sustainability should be incorporated throughout the curriculum so that all graduating students, no matter what career path they chose, are equipped with the knowledge and solutions they need to address sustainability challenges. TASK™, through its evaluation of students and their skills, will help realize this goal throughout the world."

—Meghan Fay Zahniser, Executive Director at AASHE



"Le Point is among the first French rankings to include sustainability education in its criteria. To ensure the reliability of data on the use of TASK™ certifications, it relies on Sulitest as a trusted third party."

—Claire Lefebvre, Journalist at Le Point



"It has been a challenge to provide some evidence that ethics, responsibility, and sustainability have in fact been achieved as an intended learning outcome of degree qualifications. Sulitest has provided us with a proven reference point which business schools may voluntarily adopt as part of the EFMD accreditation self-assessment reporting."

—Piet Naudé, Director EDAF and Associate Director EFMD Programme Accreditation at EFMD



Assessment of and for learning

To foster purposeful and meaningful student development, assessment plays an essential role in teaching and learning (Levy-Feldman, 2025) and as a key driver of educational change (Proboeuf, 2026). **When used strategically, TASK™ not only measures student knowledge—it helps refine teaching strategies, enhance program coherence, and demonstrate institutional impact.**

Deploying TASK™ as an **entry assessment**—either at the beginning of a program or prior to engaging in sustainability-related content—enables educators to tailor learning pathways to individual and cohort needs. As such, TASK™ helps educators meet their students where they are, and to track progress in a meaningful way, all along the learning journey.

The need for adequate student preparation and engagement is also highlighted in the wider educational literature, which shows that transformative teaching is likely to fail when

“I support the idea of seeking to identify key principles and insights around sustainability, track initial awareness and progress in business education and beyond to raise quality and ultimately action to tackle global warming. Sulitest is an important initiative to explore ways to meet these goals.”

—Andrew Jack, Global Education Editor at
Financial Times



students have an insufficient foundation of prior knowledge and learning upon which they can build new knowledge; when the support, guidance, and scaffolding lack sufficient competence, robustness, and sustained attention (Kirschner et al., 2016). This basis is also critical to develop the skills, mindsets, and attitudes needed for sustainability literacy. **By pinpointing specific areas where knowledge is lacking, instructors can adapt their course content, teaching methods, and supplementary materials to ensure a sufficient foundation of sustainability knowledge.**

Additionally, **TASK™ Study Guides provide individualized opportunities for learning**, identifying the subjects where candidates scored lower and providing curated corresponding learning materials.

It is important to note that for the entry assessment, some educators choose to administer TASK™ without preparatory resources, in order to measure entry-level baseline

“Societal impact begins inside the institution. Students, after all, are future leaders and change makers. TASK™ helps schools gauge how well students understand and embody key elements of societal impact. It’s a robust tool that gives schools deeper visibility into student mindsets. At BSIS, we’re always looking for complementary approaches like this that empower schools to build lasting, meaningful impact.”

—François Bonvalet, Director at BSIS



understanding. Others prefer to equip students with materials ahead of the assessment. For this purpose, Intro2TASK, a curated collection of introductory videos and interactive resources (described in Chapter 5), can be shared to help students feel more confident and informed about what the assessment entails.

The **exit assessment** plays a critical role in helping institutions evaluate their overall impact on student learning. By comparing TASK™ results before and after exposure to sustainability-related instruction, institutions can:

- Identify which subjects see significant progress and which require further attention
- Compare the performance of different programs or cohorts to reveal patterns
- Detect high-performing students and trace their engagement back to specific courses or activities, thereby identifying potential “impact hotspots” within the institution’s sustainability ecosystem of teaching and learning.

Such insights not only enhance curricular development but also inform strategic decisions at the institutional level, supporting continuous improvement and long-term planning.

To maximize the educational value of the assessment process, it is important that institutions embed follow-up assignments and reflective activities into pedagogical

strategies. Research in educational theory highlights that reflective learning consolidates knowledge, deepens personal relevance, and supports behavioral change (Blair, 2024; Fullana et al., 2014; Chang, 2019). Learning, after all, is shaped not just by instructional or pedagogical intentions, but by the actions and engagement of the students themselves (Goodyear et al, 2021, as cited in Fischer et al, 2023). Suggested follow-up practices include:

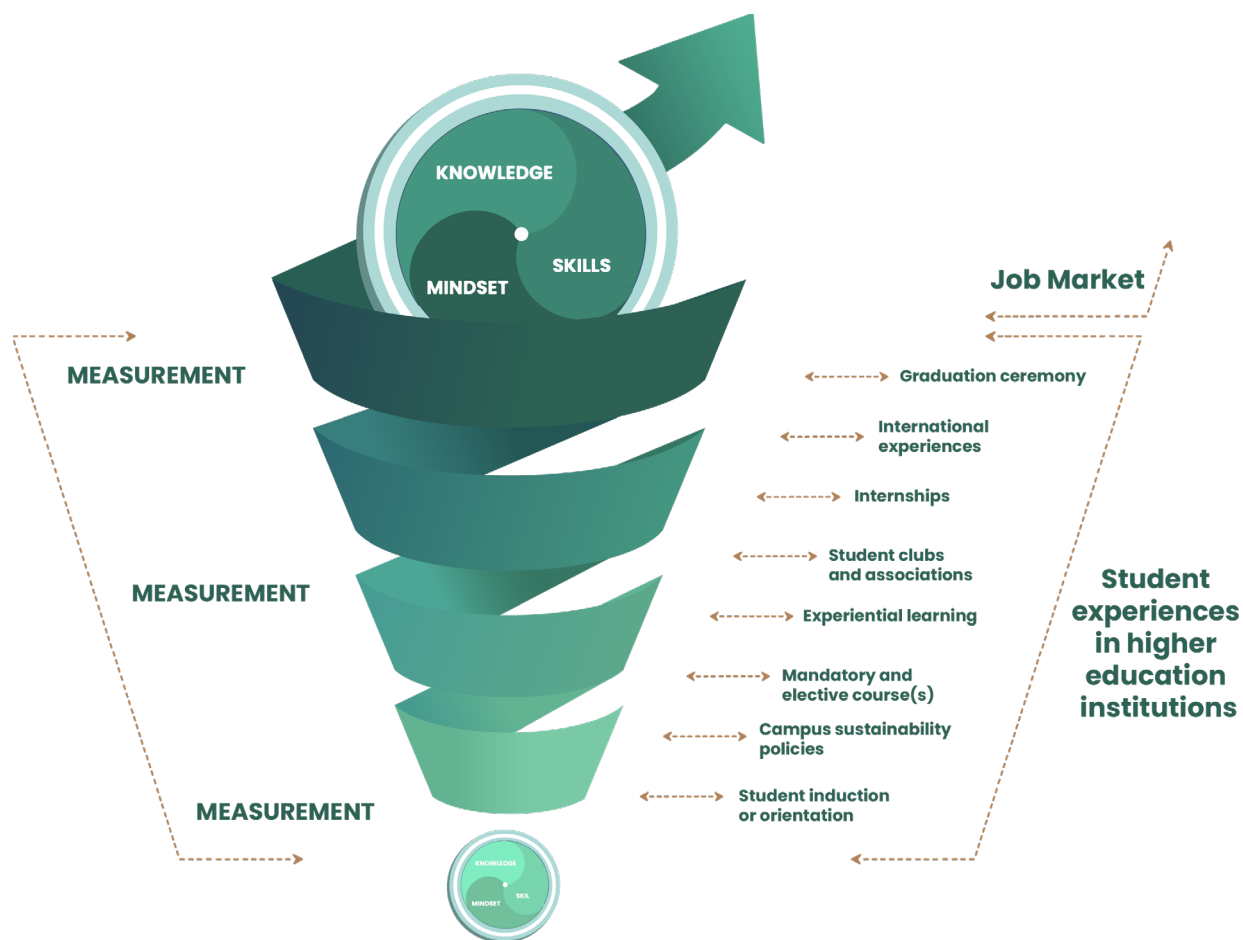
- **Reflective essays or journals** that encourage students to explore their TASK™ score and personal understanding of sustainability, and to connect it to their academic and career goals.
- **Peer-to-peer learning activities**, where students research areas identified for improvement in their TASK™ results

“The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations–supported initiative that works to transform business and management education through the values of sustainability, ethics, and global responsibility. PRME supports business schools in embedding the SDGs across curriculum, pedagogy, research, and faculty development. Sulitest plays an important role in this effort by helping institutions both raise awareness and assess student learning on sustainability topics. PRME is proud to recommend Sulitest and TASK as valuable tools for strengthening responsible management education.”

–Meredith Storey, Senior Manager at



Figure 2. Sustainability education and assessment embedded in the learning journey



and share insights with one another through presentations or group discussions. This approach reinforces collaborative learning and strengthens communication skills.

- **Facilitated discussions or workshops** based on assessment results, allowing students to collectively explore themes and share perspectives.

These pedagogical strategies help ensure that students do not merely acquire sustainability knowledge but internalize it and apply it in meaningful and solution-oriented ways. They also promote a culture of ongoing reflection and action—critical components of transformative education. Activity templates are available for the Sulitest community within its Resource Hub.

Research suggests that effective learning about the complex interconnections between people, planet, and prosperity (Wals & Benavot, 2017) requires—at a minimum—active, participative, and experiential learning methods that engage learners and transform their understanding, thinking, and behavior (Sterling, 2013). To this end, Sulitest encourages institutions to embed sustainability not only throughout the curriculum, but also throughout the learning journey, both within and beyond the classroom.

“Integrating sustainability into the curriculum begins with assessing the readiness of students and faculty. TASK serves that exact purpose. By providing a standardized baseline, it empowers universities and ministries of education to systematically assess knowledge gaps, design impactful curricula, and monitor institutional progress over time. TASK is a vital tool that echoes HESI’s core mission of mobilizing higher education for the SDGs.”

–Jongwhi Park, Academic Program Officer at UNU and Co-Chair at HESI



“Understanding ecological issues in all their complexity and systemic dimension must become the norm. Initiatives such as Sulitest and TASK™ help to ensure that the subject is taken seriously, through systematic assessment of learners, which is essential if any approach to teaching about transition issues is to be credible.”

–Clémence Vorreux, Higher Education Coordinator at The Shift Project



“The Sulitest movement challenges the outdated metrics of success in education, that’s exactly what we need. The TASK framework goes beyond grades and job-readiness—it surfaces the mindsets, values, and competencies we actually need to navigate a world in crisis. At oikos, we work to transform education into a force for systems change. Sulitest is a powerful ally in shifting assessment from passive evaluation to active transformation—of learners, curriculum, and institutions.”

–Patricija Zizyte, Co-president at oikos International



Ultimately, the effectiveness of TASK™ depends on how well it is integrated into the specific context of each institution. Variables such as institutional culture, student developmental levels, and existing sustainability initiatives all influence effective deployment strategies. There is no universal formula, but good practice suggests that **TASK™ achieves the greatest impact when students engage with it meaningfully, not just as an evaluation but as a learning opportunity and process; educators use the data it generates to inform both curricular and extracurricular design; and when the assessment is paired with reflection, discussion, and action to foster deeper understanding, personal engagement, and a process towards life-long learning.**

TASK™ is more than a means of assessment—it is a catalyst for educational transformation. When deployed thoughtfully and strategically, it enables institutions to fulfil their role in preparing the next generation of informed, ethical, and capable leaders for a sustainable world.

Methodology: Defining sustainability knowledge

Sustainability remains a contested concept, encompassing as it does diverse and sometimes conflicting notions and approaches, each reflective of the relative importance assigned to environmental protection, social welfare, or economic growth. Yet, as explored in Chapter 2, HEIs need coherent systems of governance, measurement, and pedagogy.

To inform the development of its tools—more specifically of its assessment TASK™—and to offer Higher Education **a unifying framework that can be used across program-level curriculum design and quality assurance**, Sulitest developed a **Model of Sustainability Knowledge**.

To this end, it created a “Task Force” of academics and sustainability professionals, and mobilized the “Fellows”, an assembly of relevant stakeholders (about 70 representatives from academic and corporate networks, accreditation and rankings bodies, student organizations, NGOs, and public institutions) charged with providing counsel and feedback for ensuring the relevance of the domain of sustainability knowledge as articulated by the Sulitest Task Force.

Main sources of conceptual inspiration

To develop a unifying framework, the Model was inspired and informed by four main institutional and academic approaches to sustainability:

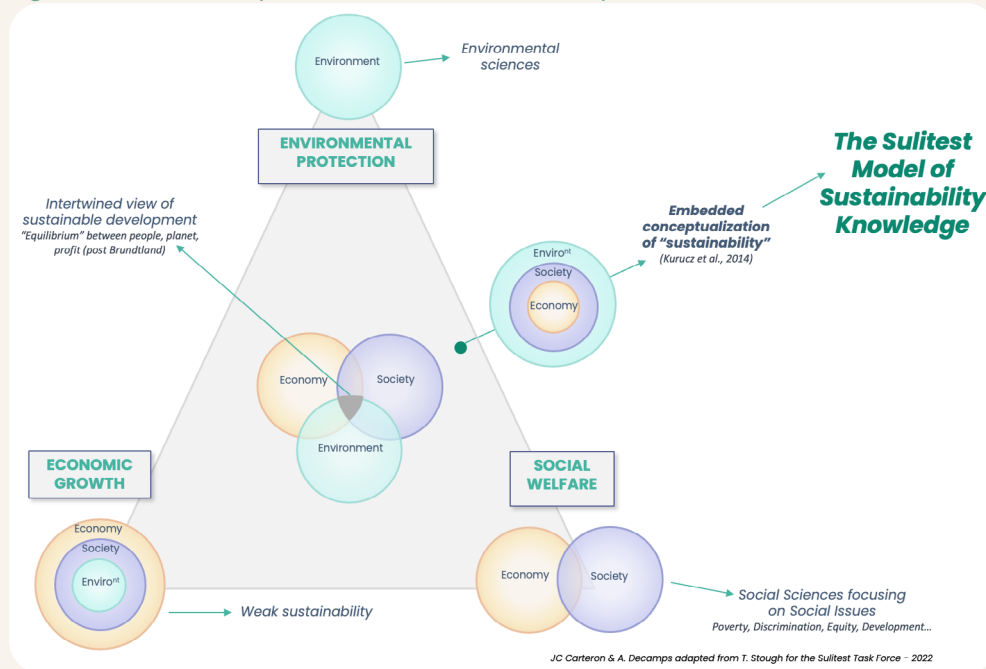
- The *UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which provides a common roadmap embracing the systemic nature of sustainability with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 related targets.
- The *Planetary Boundaries Framework* by the Stockholm Resilience Centre, which identifies nine planetary boundaries that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth system and provide a safe operating space for humanity to thrive.
- *Kate Raworth’s Model of “Doughnut Economics”*, which allows us to “rethink” the economy as a system that ethically should meet human needs (the social foundation) and ecologically must remain subject to the ability of the living planet to provide for such needs (the ecological ceiling).
- The *UN’s 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report—The Future Is Now: Science for Achieving Sustainable*

Development (GSDR), which provides the conceptual foundation for what Sulitest calls Levers of Opportunity—i.e., the principles, strategies, and techniques available to humans for implementing impactful solutions and effecting transformative societal change.

The Sulitest Model of Sustainability Knowledge

The Sulitest model of sustainability is situated at the intersection of environmental and social sciences—an **“embedded conceptualization” of sustainability** (Figure 3). It provides

Figure 3. Interpretations of sustainability

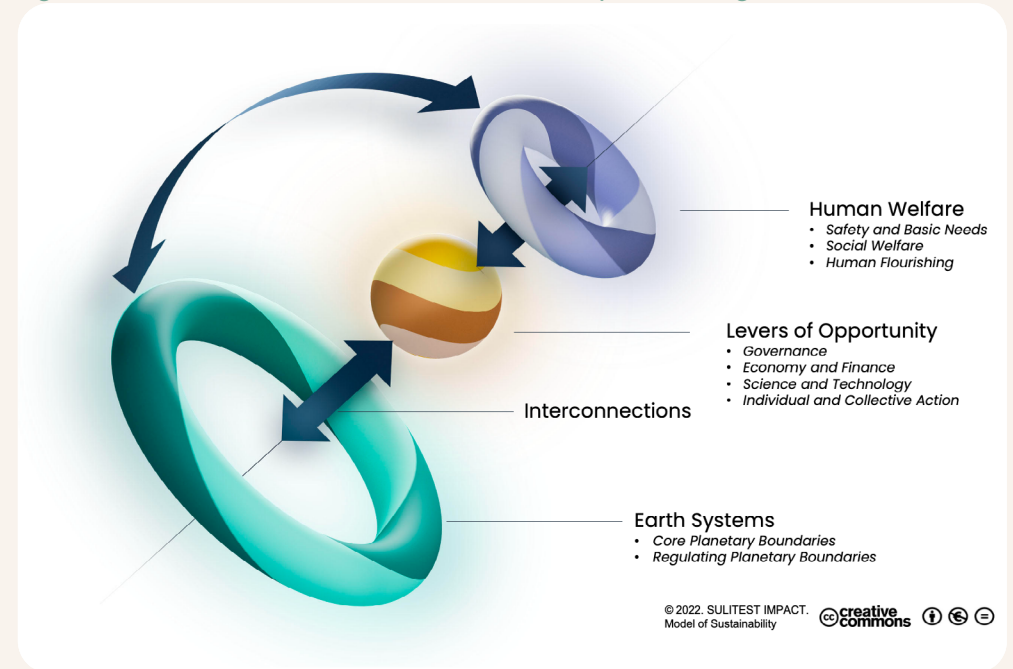


both a bold vision and a scientifically grounded definition of sustainability knowledge:

all individuals should know and understand Earth systems, the social foundations of human welfare, and the levers of action and opportunity that inform and influence our ability to build a sustainable future; and identify and appreciate the systemic interlinkages existing between and across them.

It is **a call for radical systemic change** in what we need to know and understand to empower ourselves for the building of the sustainable future we all want and need.

Figure 4. Sulitest Model of Sustainability Knowledge



Foundational Matrix of Sustainability Knowledge

The Model is structured and operationalized via a Foundational Matrix of Sustainability Knowledge organized into three Frameworks. Each first-order Framework is further structured into second-order “Domains” and third-order “Subjects”:

- **Earth Systems** represent our environmental ceiling and it includes the nine Planetary Boundaries as its third-order Subjects.
- **Human Welfare** represents our social foundation. It builds upon the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Doughnut Economics, encompassing Safety and Basic Needs, Social Welfare and Human Flourishing.
- **Levers of Opportunity** represent the many individual and collective public policies and processes, as well as cognitive capacities, at humanity’s disposal for making decisions and taking actions that either advance or, alas, impede progress towards sustainability.

Schematically, Earth Systems is presented as the largest because without a stable and sustainable Earth system, there can be no meaningful human welfare nor levers of opportunity to seize. Human Welfare is conceptually embedded in Earth Systems, given that humans are but one species in the community of life, and that the pursuit of such human welfare

cannot exceed the capacity of the Earth to provide for the welfare of all life-forms. The “sphere” in yellow in the middle represents the Levers of Opportunity that act upon both Earth Systems and Human Welfare. The arrows indicate the many direct and indirect relationships, interconnections, causal relationships, systemic impacts, and feedback loops both within and across the three frameworks.

To constitute a holistic understanding of each subject, **four discrete types of sustainability knowledge were identified:**

- **Descriptive knowledge:** What are we talking about? How does this work?
- **Contextualized knowledge:** Where are we now? How are things changing?
- **Causal knowledge:** Why is this happening? Who is doing what and why?
- **Integrated knowledge:** What are the related effects? How is this affecting the larger system?

The resulting Matrix (Appendix A) both expresses Sulitest’s systemic vision of sustainability knowledge and guides the creation and structuring of its assessments and learning resources. While questions vary from one test to the next, **each TASK™ assessment covers all 96 items identified in the Matrix, thus ensuring its standardization and comparability.**

Alignment with sustainability competency frameworks

By design, this model was both inspired by, and built to align with, existing pedagogical approaches to education for sustainability, sustainable development, and ecological transition such as UNESCO's *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives, GreenComp*, the Jean Jouzel report: *"Sensibiliser et former aux enjeux de la transition écologique dans l'Enseignement supérieur"* (French Ministry of Higher Education, 2022), and the four-dimensional Competencies/Sub-competencies Framework focused on knowledge, skills, character, and meta-learning (Center for Curriculum Redesign, 2019).

To describe and, in some cases, quantify the alignment between the content of the model and selected competency frameworks, Sulitest created a series of **comparative "Alignment Reference Frameworks"** (available [here](#)) for the following competency frameworks:

- Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives. UNESCO, 2017, GCSE, 2023.
- GreenComp — European Sustainability Competence Framework. European Union, 2022
- Reference Framework of Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility knowledge and skills ("Référentiel de

connaissances et de compétences en DD et RSO"). IAE France, 2023

- Reference Framework of Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility skills ("Référentiel de compétences DD&RS"). CDEFM, 2023
- Common base of cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills on the Anthropocene ("Socle commun de connaissances et de compétences transversales sur l'anthropocène"). Fondation UVED, 2023
- The French Ministry of Education Competency Framework, MESR, 2023. (Le cadre de compétences publié en juin 2023 par le ministère français de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, MESR, 2023.)

Psychometric assessment design

TASK™ is grounded within Item Response Theory (IRT), a controlled process for the design, analysis, and scoring of multiple-choice questions (MCQ) and related tools measuring knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and other variables. Its detailed granularity is particularly important given the systemic and complex nature of the idea of sustainability. Appendix C details the technical specification of the mode its reliability analysis. **Research papers describing our model were presented at the Academy of Management in 2023 and 2024, and published in 2025 in the Journal of Cleaner Production.**

An ecosystem of tools supporting sustainability education

The research presented in Chapter 2 highlights a central challenge for HEIs: sustainability integration cannot rely solely on institutional ambition, isolated courses, or individual faculty commitment. It requires translation mechanisms that help institutions move from strategy to implementation, from curriculum mapping to pedagogical practice, and from assessment data to meaningful student learning.

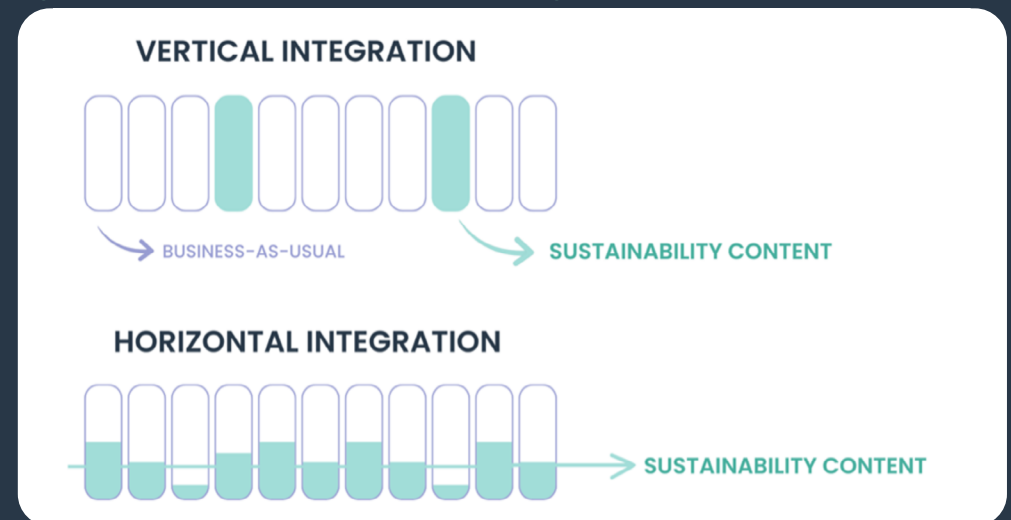
In an era marked by complex sustainability challenges, it is important to integrate sustainability knowledge into the curriculum horizontally—rather than vertically (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015). Teaching and learning therefore, require a shift from traditional, fragmented educational models to a more holistic approach whereby sustainability content is embedded into all courses or modules, as indicated to the right.

Chapter 3 described how TASK™ supports this transformation by providing institutions with a robust way to assess, monitor, and recognize sustainability knowledge. Yet assessment alone is not enough. **If sustainability knowledge is to become embedded throughout the learning journey, institutions also need resources that help faculty, students, and program teams act on what assessment reveals.** This is where Sulitest's

learning tools play a critical role.

Since its creation, Sulitest has been providing organizations with internationally recognized online tools to increase awareness of sustainability and the UN SGDs. These tools can be used at different stages of a program: to raise awareness, support active learning, prepare students for assessment, guide curriculum revision, and transform assessment results into personalized learning opportunities.

Figure 5. Vertical vs. horizontal integration of sustainability



Intro2TASK

Intro2TASK is an online pathway designed to **help individuals gain a better understanding of the main topics covered by TASK™ and, more broadly, of sustainability.** It includes curated resources, mostly short videos or interactive websites, which can be shared directly with TASK™ takers in a structured pathway or selected by educators for use in their classes.

Intro2TASK plays an important bridging role between assessment and learning. As described in Chapter 3, some institutions choose to administer TASK™ without preparatory resources in order to establish a baseline understanding of student knowledge. Others prefer to prepare students in advance. Intro2TASK supports the latter approach by helping learners become more confident and familiar with core sustainability concepts before engaging with TASK™.

Navigational Charts

Sulitest developed a bank of Navigational Charts, easy-to-read synoptic overviews of each subject listed on the TASK™ Foundational Matrix of Sustainability Knowledge, which include the definitions of key concepts, key international regulatory initiatives and legal regimes, a breakdown of core subject content into “bite-size” themes and bullet-point lists, and a bibliography of key resources.

Viewed together, the Navigational Charts constitute the basic ontology of TASK™. They provide a more complete

and structured understanding of the 28 subjects listed on the TASK™ matrix, enabling educators to better understand them and identify discussion points that can be brought to their classrooms or programs. It is important to note that the Navigational Charts are non-exhaustive and were not designed to provide one-to-one correspondence between every bullet point and specific TASK™ questions. Instead, they offer insight and inspiration for curricular review and revision. The entire bank of 28 Navigational Charts were revised and updated in early 2026.

TASK™ Study Guides

TASK™ Study Guides provide candidates with individualized recommendations for continuous learning, based on their TASK™ results. They complement other learning activities by helping learners build foundational knowledge in areas where they scored lower, or deepen understanding in subjects where they performed well. Each guide identifies key learning objectives, themes and topics, and directs learners to curated, high-quality resources for self-paced improvement. **TASK™ Study Guides are designed to complement teaching in Higher Education, helping institutions meet their students where they are and transform assessment scores into individualized opportunities for improvement.** In this sense, the Study Guides directly reinforce the idea of assessment of and *for* learning described in Chapter 3.

TASK™ Learning Activities

TASK™ provides a robust foundation by evaluating students' knowledge across key sustainability subjects. But, **its true potential is unlocked when educators use TASK™ results as a springboard for creating richer experiences that invite students to explore not only what sustainability entails but why it matters to them, both personally and professionally.** To this end, Sulitest designed learning activities to deepen students' understanding of sustainability by connecting knowledge—as measured by TASK—with meaningful, personal, and collaborative reflection.

Inspired by the TASK™ community and Sulitest's ongoing engagement with sustainability education literature and pedagogical theory, five activities were designed and made available through the TASK™ Resource Hub: **Peer learning, Reflective essay, Impact ripple map, Socratic dialogue circles, and Sustainability learning journals.**

In the same way that integrating sustainability into academic programs is less a question of content than of how leadership and governance bodies organize curricular change, as explored in Chapter 2, **transformative learning is also not only about content but how it is supported experientially by structured reflection, facilitation, sense-making, and iterative engagement.** These activities are designed to operationalize these principles in practice.

Awareness Test

Launched 12 years ago, the Awareness Test is designed to improve sustainability awareness through an **engaging formative test.** It consists of 28 multiple-choice questions which can be complemented with optional country-specific, SDG-specific, or customized modules. Nearly 400,000 people participated in an Awareness Test session in the last decade.

Over the years, Sulitest partnered with UN entities to create modules related to specific SDGs, such as:

- SDG Framework, in partnership with UN DESA.
- SDG-7: Affordable and Clean Energy, in partnership with UN DESA.
- SDG-11: Sustainable Cities and Community, focused on Holistic Waste Management, in partnership with UNEP.
- SDG-12: Sustainable Consumption and Production, focused on Circular Economy, in partnership with UNEP.
- SDG-14: Life Under Water, focused on Oceans.

Quiz

The Quiz is **an interactive activity featuring 6-10 thought-provoking questions.** Players connect on hand-held devices, have one minute to answer each question, and get instant

feedback with live and dynamic team scores. This 15-minute activity is perfect for classrooms, meetings, welcome orientations, or social events, serving as both a fun icebreaker and a tool to raise sustainability awareness.

Looping

Looping is a platform where **participants create their own sustainability-linked questions, with the aim of promoting active learning through questioning, synthesizing information, and providing peer feedback.**

From tools to a coherent ecosystem

This ecosystem of tools reflects Sulitest's broader mission—to enable higher education institutions to better embed sustainability into the learning journey—and an important principle emerging from both Sulitest's research—that tools have the greatest impact when they are used not in isolation, but as part of a coherent learning ecosystem. **They provide shared language, curated content, pedagogical entry points, individualized learning pathways, and structured learning experiences that help institutions move from commitment to implementation.**

Ultimately, improving **sustainability knowledge** is not a single activity or a one-time intervention. It is a continuous process that unfolds across the full learning journey: before assessment, during teaching, after results are received, through reflection, and into future academic, professional, and civic action.



A growing community of “Change Leaders”

Transformative impact requires sustained, systemic change. The TASK™ Change Leader community is designed to bring together HEIs who have a shared commitment to advance sustainability education. These institutions have taken on the ambitious goal of assessing and certifying a majority of their students with TASK™ within three years. Rather than treating sustainability as an optional or peripheral topic, they aim to make it a shared language and integral part of every student’s learning journey, regardless of their field of study.

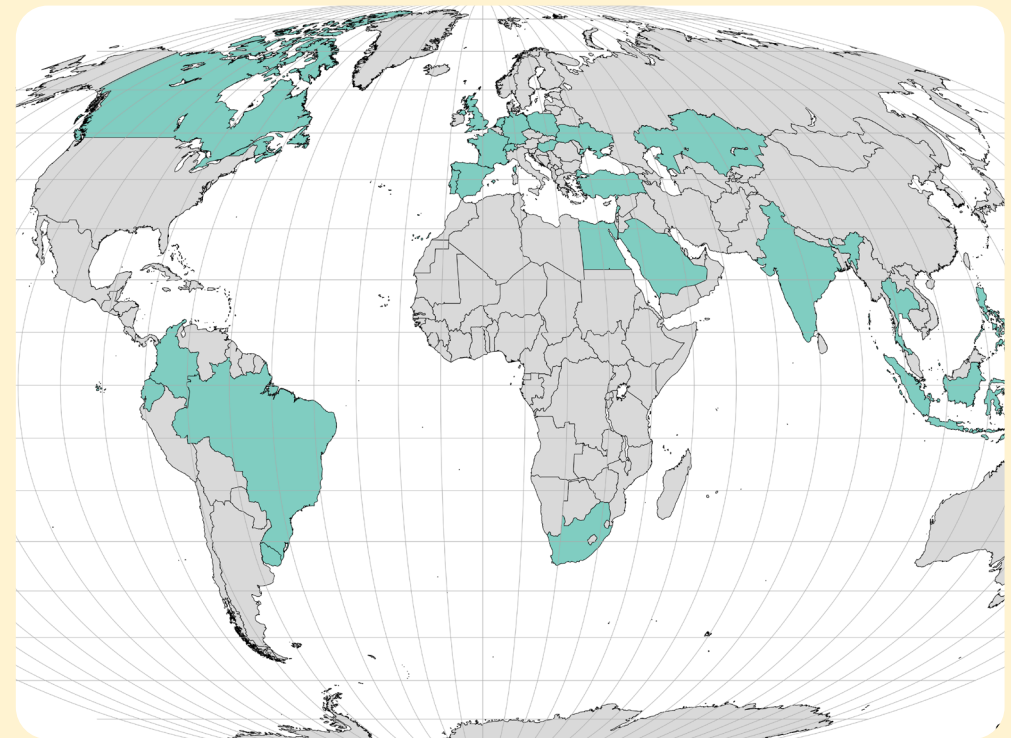
As part of this long-term engagement, Change Leader institutions receive unlimited access to the TASK™ assessment tool and become part of a growing network of like-minded institutions committed to advancing sustainability in higher education. Over a three-year horizon, institutions can experiment, refine, and institutionalize sustainability education into their assurance of learning processes, ensuring that their impact is measurable, visible, and valued.

Transforming education and mainstreaming sustainability literacy is a global endeavor—one that requires collaboration, adaptation, and the sharing of best practices. The Change Leader network fosters a vibrant community of practice where institutions learn from one another, co-create tools, and support one another in this shared journey. Together, they are pioneering innovative ways to integrate sustainability

into higher education and scale up impact across diverse educational and cultural contexts.

Today, 59 HEIs are part of the TASK Change Leader program, and another 27 institutions use TASK™ in smaller scopes. Together, they represent 26 countries.

Figure 6. Countries represented in the TASK™ community



Change Leader institutions:

- **From Africa:** Onsi Sawiris School of Business, Université Senghor
- **From Asia:** Alfaisal University, KAUST, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU), Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (AUB), The Education University of Hong Kong
- **From Europe:** 3IL, APHEC, Campus XII Avenue, Catolica Porto Business School, Corvinus University of Budapest, ECAM LaSalle, ECOPIA, EDHEC, EJCAM, EKLYA / HYBRIA, EM Normandie, ENTPE, EPISEN - UPEC (université Paris-Est Créteil), EPITA, ESCOM, ESCP Business School, ESSEC, ESTHUA, EXCELIA Group, GA Education - EBS, Grenoble Ecole de Management, Groupe OMNES, HES-SO, IAE Paris, IESEG, IREST, JUNIA, KEDGE BS, Koç University, Kozminski University, Leuphana School of Management and Technology, Nantes Université, NEOMA, ONET, Pôle Léonard de Vinci, RegenSchool, TBS Education, TERRA INSTITUTE, UCL Global Business School for Health, UniLaSalle, Université Paris Saclay, University of Exeter, University of Pécs Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Sussex Business School, YNOV, YSCHOOLS, École des Ponts ParisTech, École Supérieure des Technologies et des Affaires
- **From North America:** HEC Montréal
- **From South America:** Universidad Tecnológica del Uruguay

“What gets measured gets managed, as Peter Drucker observed. The Sulitest platform gets at the most impactful metric in sustainability education: whether business students actually master sustainable business thinking—and whether their school moves the needle. That’s why participation in Sulitest is now a factor in Corporate Knights’ Better World MBA ranking. Schools that are serious about graduating sustainability-literate leaders should be serious about measuring it.”

– Toby Heaps, CEO at Corporate Knights

Corporate Knights

“GRLI helped incubate Sulitest because we believed sustainability literacy needed to be honestly measured, not just pledged. TASK provides that: a genuine inquiry tool that gives institutions a clear-eyed look at where understanding actually stands. We continue to support the Sulitest community because it keeps a hard, necessary question alive inside the institutions that shape tomorrow’s leaders – and does so with rigour and integrity.”

– John North, Executive Director at GRLI Foundation (Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative)



Case studies

JSES: Rethinking sustainability education in India

The Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability at O.P. Jindal Global University provides a compelling example of how TASK™ can be used to support interdisciplinary sustainability education in a rapidly evolving national context. Established in 2020, JSES was created to address the growing need for sustainability education in India, bringing together science, policy, and applied practice across undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs.

At JSES, sustainability is not treated as a stand-alone topic, but as a framework for understanding how human and natural systems interact and coexist. TASK™ is integrated into the first-year undergraduate experience as part of a foundational course covering planetary boundaries, the SDGs, and systemic sustainability challenges. Participation is mandatory, but scores are not counted, allowing students to experience the TASK™ assessment process as a reflective diagnostic rather than a stressful exam. Around 80% of students choose to retake TASK™ later in their studies, showing strong voluntary engagement.

The assessment helps students identify strengths and gaps across sustainability pillars, while situating themselves against an international benchmark. For faculty, TASK™ has become a framework for curriculum refinement, helping ensure that courses collectively cover the depth and breadth of sustainability knowledge. JSES is also contributing to SDG 4.7 beyond its own school through university-wide sustainability initiatives, including a compulsory environmental science MOOC for all students, and early pilots of TASK™ across other schools.

Nantes Université: From awareness to action

Nantes Université illustrates how TASK™ can be deployed progressively across a large, complex public university to build a shared culture of sustainability. With 42,000 students, 6,000 staff, 12 campuses, and activities across three cities, the university brings together multiple academic clusters, faculties, and member institutions. Its Ecological Transition Office coordinates initiatives ranging from sustainable mobility and carbon footprint assessment to circular economy and awareness-raising for students and staff.

TASK™ has been adopted as part of a broader strategy of pedagogical transformation. It is offered across faculties through different models, including integration into programs, voluntary sessions for students and staff, structured learning pathways based on MOOCs and workshops such as *Climate Fresk* and *2tonnes*, and support from student tutors trained to disseminate the tool.

A key feature of the Nantes approach is its two-step assessment model: students first take TASK™ without preparation, then engage in a learning phase, and finally retake the assessment to measure progress. TASK™ is also perceived by students as a motivational tool, comparable to a GMAT or TOEIC-style benchmark, helping them understand where they stand and how to improve.

The deployment has also revealed important conditions for success: faculty adoption takes time, academic leadership is essential, and teaching teams need space to appropriate the tool. Looking ahead, Nantes Université is now working to connect TASK™ more closely with existing sustainability training and to develop follow-up activities that help students learn from their results.

Onsi Sawiris School of Business: Supporting curriculum revision and accreditation

The Onsi Sawiris School of Business at The American University in Cairo demonstrates how TASK™ can strengthen assurance of learning, curriculum revision, and accreditation processes in business education.

The school adopted TASK™ to embed a structured, evidence-based approach to assessing and developing sustainability knowledge across programs. A cross-functional task force—including faculty members, program directors, and the Assurance of Learning team—mapped TASK™ to existing learning outcomes, designed the student experience, and analyzed assessment data to inform curriculum revisions.

TASK™ is primarily delivered through the mandatory undergraduate Internship course, ensuring that students complete the assessment before graduation while giving the school consistent data across cohorts. Pilots in selected departmental courses also helped identify where sustainability competencies were already strong and where additional reinforcement was needed. The data revealed that many high-performing students came from a small set of courses, offering useful insight into where good practices could be scaled across the curriculum.

TASK™ has directly informed the revision of the school's undergraduate rubric for the learning goal "Global and Sustainable Awareness." The updated definition reflects the three pillars of the TASK™ framework—Earth Systems, Human Welfare, and Levers of Opportunity—and connects sustainability knowledge to business decision-making and responsible, future-oriented solutions. TASK™ also supports international accreditation processes by providing measurable evidence of learning outcomes, societal impact, and benchmarking opportunities.

Trends on sustainability knowledge

At a glance

- **Sustainability literacy continues to improve**, with the global average score increasing to 57.84, while score variability decreased slightly compared to the previous year.
- **Human Welfare is consistently the strongest framework**, with respondents demonstrating higher knowledge of topics related to health, equity, well-being, and social inclusion than of environmental systems or sustainability transformation.
- **Socioeconomic SDGs outperform environmental SDGs**, with SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) recording the highest average scores.
- **Disciplinary background matters:** students in Environmental & Sustainability Studies and Health & Medicine Studies achieved the strongest results overall, while all disciplines displayed similar challenges in Levers of Opportunity topics.
- **Sustainability literacy tends to increase throughout higher education**, with later-stage undergraduate and postgraduate students generally achieving higher scores than early-stage students.
- **Longitudinal data show that meaningful improvement takes time**, with the largest gains observed over periods of one to one-and-a-half years, reinforcing the value of embedding sustainability across entire programs rather than within individual courses.
- **Alumni significantly outperform the global cohort**, achieving an average score of 72.52, and 81% would recommend TASK™ certification to a colleague or peer.

Score distribution

Since the launch of TASK™ on 1 March 2023, over 100,000 assessments have been completed. The analysis of TASK™ data outcomes presented below is based on a rich dataset of 34,184 completions of the assessment in the last academic year, between 1 July 2025 and 30 April 2026.

Before analysing the results, the Sulitest Data team pre-processed the data to filter out assessments with a very short completion time, a highly suspicious indicator of guessing, and where the assessment conditions have not been respected and the certificates cancelled.

Key findings from the last academic year include:

- **Adjusted average score across all respondents: 57.84** (+0.88 increase compared to last year)
- **Standard deviation: 15.78** (-1.11 decrease compared to last year)
- **Score distribution: approximately normal distribution** (see Figure 7)
- **Competency threshold:** considering 65 as a desirable score, **30% of assessments were above expectations** (10,379 assessments), while 70% did not meet expectations (23,815 assessments).

The increase in average scores suggests a **modest improvement in overall performance**, while the lower standard deviation indicates **slightly more consistency** in results across respondents.

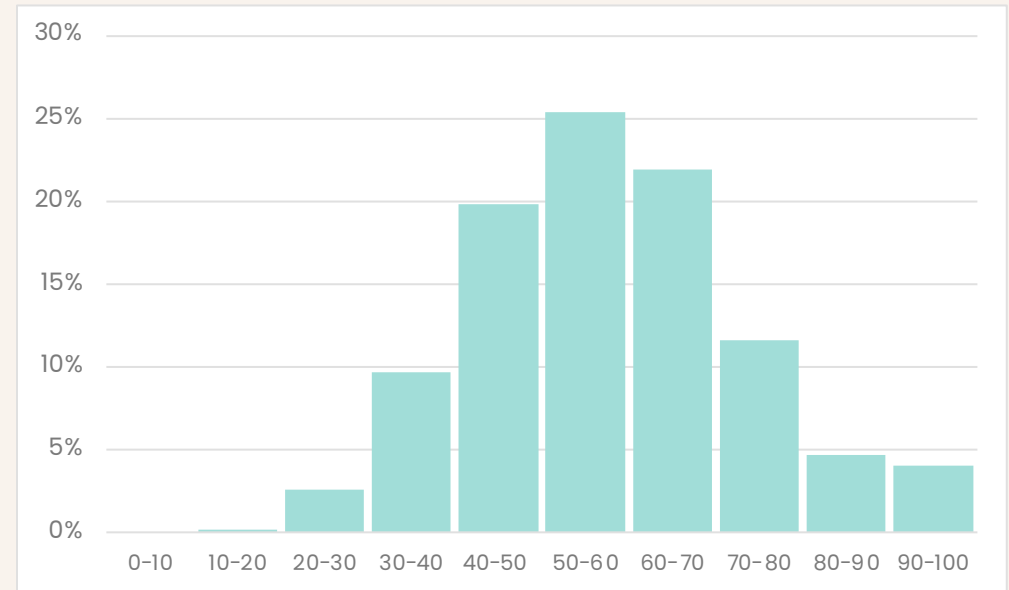
The analysis presented in this chapter reflects the approach Sulitest recommends institutions and organisations adopt when analyzing their own TASK™ data:

- **Assess the current state** by examining score distributions and performance across subjects and frameworks.
- **Explore differences between groups** (e.g. majors, programs, cohorts) to identify gaps, and patterns.
- **Track evolution over time** to understand how sustainability literacy develops and to evaluate the impact of educational interventions.

Together, these points of good practice provide a foundation for evidence-based curriculum enhancement and continuous improvement.

The score distribution generally follows a Gauss curve, as expected for this type of assessment. Compared to the 2023-24 curve, the 2025-26 data show a rise in assessments scoring over 80. Considering “pre-genAI” data, it is reasonable to assume that such high scores are unlikely to occur under normal testing conditions. Globally, with the growing functionality and accessibility of generative artificial intelligence, universities have been challenged to rethink their assessment design. **Sulitest has continuously introduced new features to prevent and identify assessments that violate exam condition**, yet some instances might still go undetected. Since these higher scores can distort averages, this report presents both average scores and distribution curves for most trends. Readers are advised to interpret the volume of assessments scoring above 80 with caution.

Figure 7. Score distribution



Score per Subject

This analysis is organized around two significant dimensions: the 28 subjects of the Sulitest Foundational Matrix of Sustainability Knowledge, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By examining the respondent scores according to the Matrix Subjects a more detailed understanding emerges of respondents’ relative strengths and weaknesses across

a wide range of sustainability-related knowledge areas. Simultaneously, aligning this investigation with the SDGs allows Sulitest to examine respondents’ abilities in the context of the global 2030 sustainability agenda. This alignment presents a unique opportunity to understand to what extent respondents are cognitively equipped to contribute to these universally agreed-upon goals.

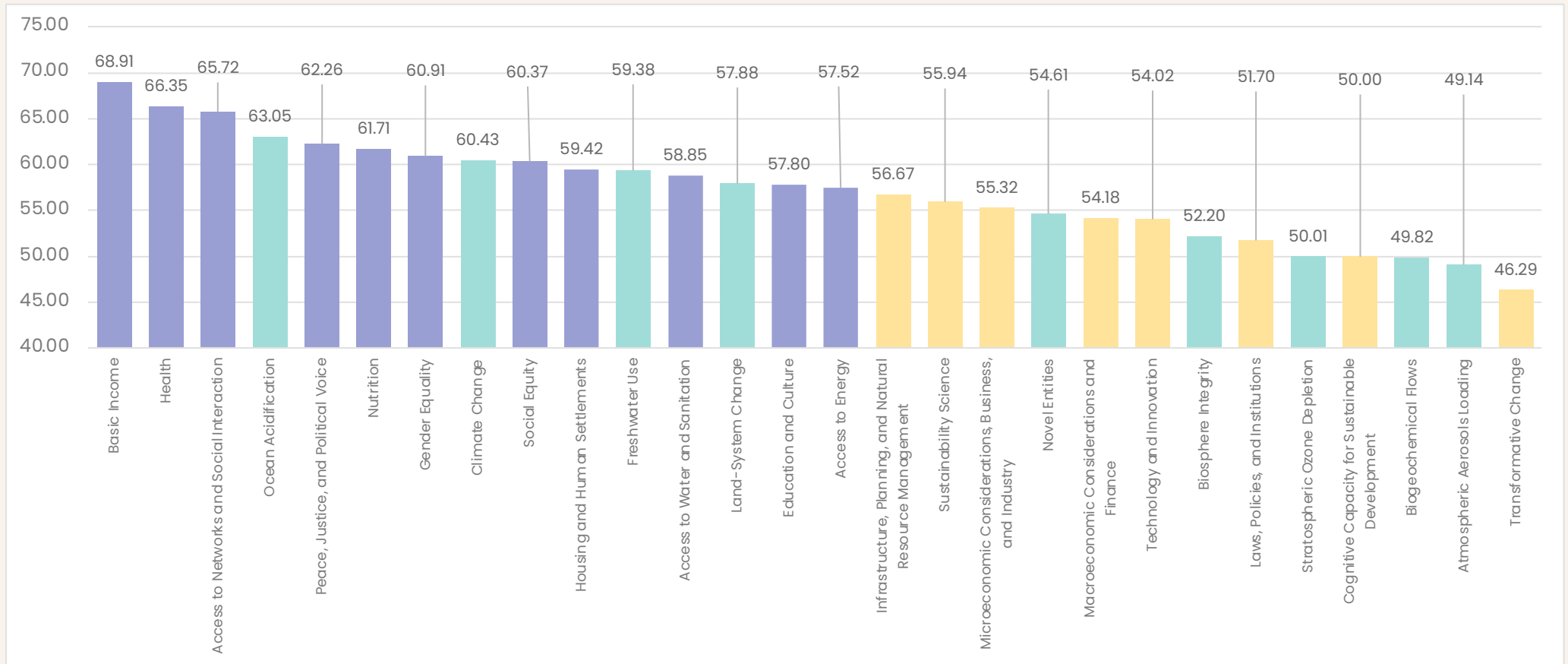
Figure 8. Average score per TASK™ Subject



Figure 8 presents the average TASK™ score for each Subject area across the full dataset, grouping them according to the three sustainability Frameworks — Earth Systems, Human Welfare, and Levers of Opportunity. A clear pattern emerges across the distribution: **Subjects within the Human Welfare framework consistently achieve higher average scores.** This suggests that respondents are generally more familiar with

sustainability topics connected to human well-being, equity, health, and social inclusion than with subjects related to systems transformation or complex environmental processes.

Figure 9. Average score per TASK™ Subject, from highest to lowest



When ranking the subjects from highest to lowest average score, this trend becomes even more apparent, as shown in Figure 9. **Many of the highest-performing subjects belong to the Human Welfare framework**, including:

- Basic Income (68.91),
- Health (66.35),
- Access to Networks and Social Interaction (65.72),
- Peace, Justice, and Political Voice (61.71), and
- Gender Equality (60.91).

By contrast, **subjects within the Levers of Opportunity framework tend to cluster toward the lower end of the ranking.** While some topics such as Infrastructure, Planning, and Natural Resource Management (56.67) and Sustainability Science (55.94) achieve intermediate scores, lower results are observed for:

- Laws, Policies, and Institutions (51.70),
- Cognitive Capacity for Sustainable Development (50.00), and
- Transformative Change (46.29), which records the lowest average score across all subjects.

This pattern suggests that **respondents may find systemic transformation, governance mechanisms, institutional processes, and long-term transition pathways more difficult to understand** than social sustainability topics.

The Earth Systems framework presents a more mixed distribution. Some subjects score comparatively highly, including Ocean Acidification (63.05), and Climate Change (60.43), while others appear among the lowest-scoring subjects overall, notably:

- Atmospheric Aerosols Loading (49.14),
- Biogeochemical Flows (49.82), and

- Stratospheric Ozone Depletion (50.01).

This variation suggests that respondents may be more familiar with environmental issues that receive significant public and/or curricular attention—such as climate change—while more technical Earth Systems concepts and planetary boundary processes remain less well understood.

This is particularly salient when considering the 6-point disparity in score between the TASK™ subject Climate Change (60.43) and SDG 13 on Climate Action (54.47). (See below.) Questions within the TASK subject Climate Change focus quite specifically on the physical principles, characteristics, trends, drivers, and impacts of global warming that are widely documented in scientific reports and reported in the media. In contrast, the larger bank of TASK™ questions tagged to SDG-13 provides a measure of knowledge about all the very more complex, discrete, and diverse systemic impacts climate change has upon other Earth systems, human social systems, and human efforts to take action (following the targets listed under SDG-13). The two categories—TASK™ Climate Change and SDG 13—reveal and measure two different aspects of sustainability knowledge—one quite specific, definitional, and highly documented and mediatized, and the other more systemic, dispersed, contingent, and highly complex, all qualities that make action so difficult to apprehend and articulate, as also seen in the lower average scores across the entire Levers of Opportunity framework. This has important implications for the teaching and learning agenda as well as the need for societal-wide climate action.

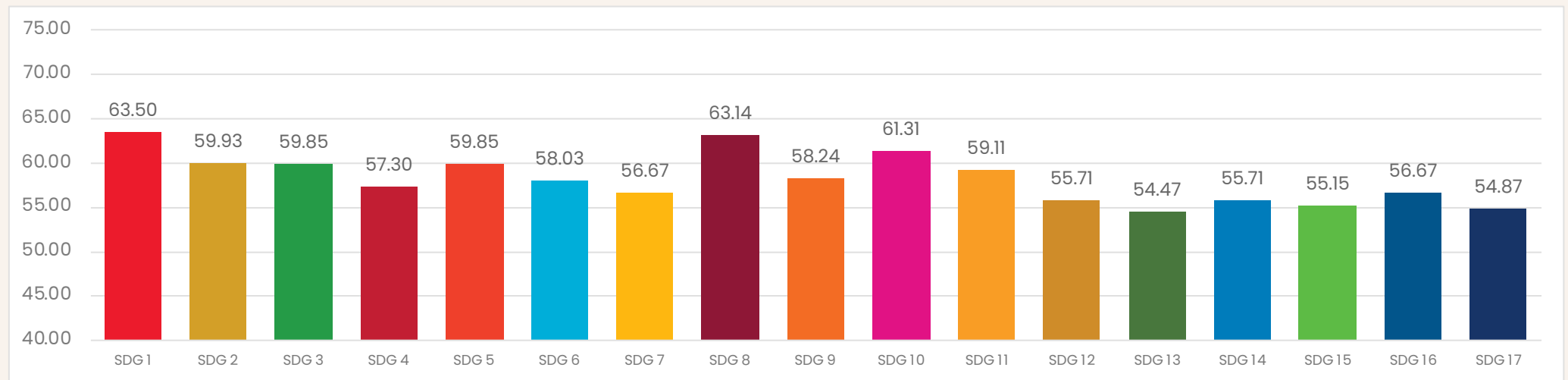
Taken together, the figures reinforce a broader trend observed throughout the TASK™ dataset: sustainability literacy appears stronger for social and human development dimensions than for systems transformation and complex environmental

processes. **The results suggest that while learners increasingly engage with sustainability-related topics, important gaps remain in areas requiring systems thinking, governance understanding, and deeper ecological literacy.**

Score per SDG

The bar chart per SDGs also provides interesting insights vis-à-vis the average scores of respondent's abilities linked to each of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Figure 10. Average score per SDG



Overall, average scores across the 17 SDGs remain relatively close, ranging from 54.47 to 63.50. This suggests that sustainability literacy is relatively balanced across themes, while still revealing notable differences between social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

The strongest-performing SDGs were:

- SDG 1 – No Poverty: 63.50
- SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth: 63.14
- SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities: 61.31

These results suggest that respondents demonstrate comparatively stronger understanding of socioeconomic and human development challenges. Several socially-oriented SDGs also recorded comparatively high scores (e.g. SDG 2, SDG 3, and SDG 5). These findings align with earlier analyses showing stronger overall performance in Human Welfare dimensions than in Earth Systems concepts.

The lowest-performing SDGs are predominantly those focused on taking environmental action, both individually and collectively:

- SDG 13 – Climate Action: 54.47
- SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals: 54.87

- SDG 15 – Life on Land: 55.15
- SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production: 55.71
- SDG 14 – Life Below Water: 55.71

Taken together, the results suggest that sustainability literacy in higher education may currently be more socially-oriented than systems-oriented. **While learners appear relatively comfortable engaging with issues of poverty, inequality, health, and inclusion, more complex ecological interdependencies and transformation mechanisms remain less well understood.** This reinforces the importance of strengthening interdisciplinary sustainability education, rather than addressing the SDGs or sustainability subjects as isolated themes.

Assessments metadata

To provide more granularity to the dataset, moderators can provide more information about the candidate profile when setting up a session. As an optional field, not all assessments have their Metadata indicated, and as such, the sample size of the analysis below has been reduced. Categories of Metadata include: Location, Role, Program Level, Major, Stage, and Engagement

Results per Major group

The analysis of TASK™ scores by Major group reveals distinct disciplinary patterns in sustainability literacy. To facilitate interpretation, the wide range of reported majors was grouped into five broader categories: Business Studies, Engineering & Mathematics Studies, Environmental & Sustainability Studies, Health & Medicine Studies, and Social Sciences Studies.

Figure 11. Score distribution per Major group

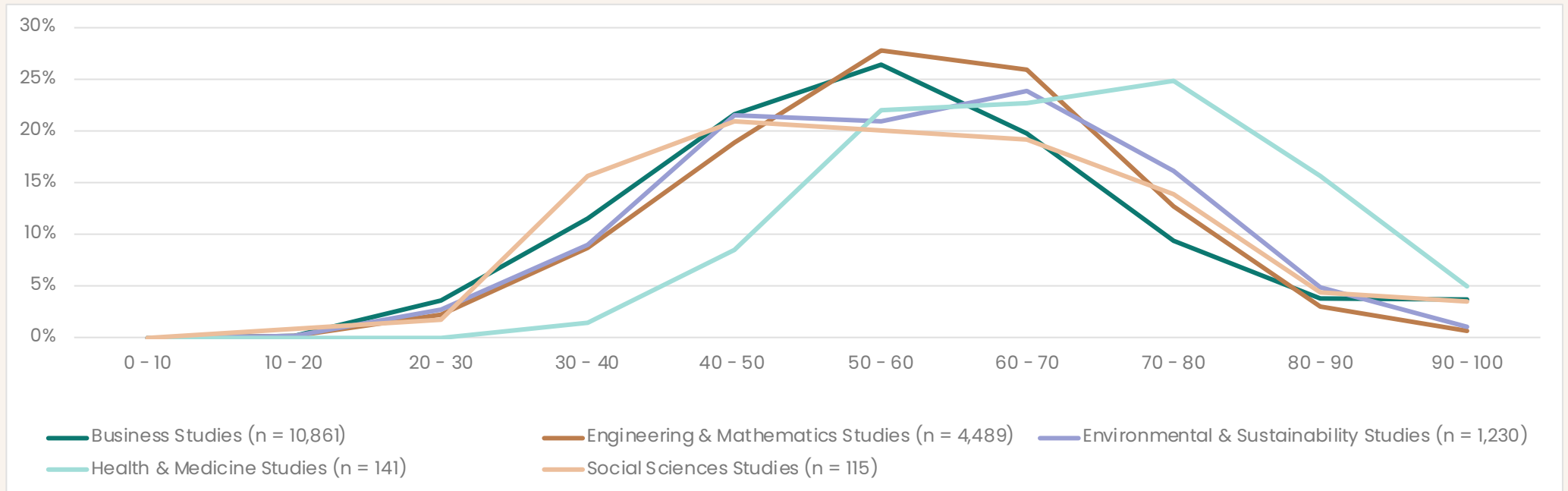


Figure 11 presents the distribution of overall TASK™ scores across the five major groups. It is important to interpret these results with caution due to significant differences in sample size between groups. As the Health & Medicine Studies and Social Sciences Studies cohorts are comparatively small, their results may be more sensitive to cohort-specific effects and should not be interpreted as fully representative of these fields globally. Several key patterns nevertheless emerge across the dataset.

While all distributions broadly follow a bell-shaped curve, noticeable differences appear in the concentration and spread of scores between disciplines:

- The distributions for **Business Studies** and **Engineering & Mathematics Studies** are centred around the **50–60 score range**.
- Students in **Environmental & Sustainability Studies** tend to cluster at slightly **higher score ranges**, with the distribution shifting toward the 60–70 interval.
- The distribution for **Health & Medicine Studies** is shifted furthest toward higher score ranges, with the **largest proportion of respondents scoring between 70–80**.
- **Social Sciences Studies** display a **broader distribution**, with results spread more evenly between the 40–80 ranges.

Analysis by Framework

As sustainability literacy is shaped in part by disciplinary exposure and curricular focus, Sulitest investigated the Frameworks and Subjects results across Major groups.

Across all disciplines, respondents achieved their highest average scores in the Human Welfare framework, while Levers of Opportunity consistently recorded the lowest results.

The following tables explore per Framework the comparison of each Major group across Sustainability subjects:

Earth Systems

Table 2. Score per Subject per Major group - Earth Systems

	Business Studies	Engineering & Mathematics Studies	Environmental & Sustainability Studies	Social Sciences Studies	Health & Medicine Studies
Atmospheric Aerosols Loading	47.07	46.76	51.15	48.48	59.40
Biogeochemical Flows	46.50	48.70	55.16	47.55	65.76
Biosphere Integrity	49.98	50.70	52.24	57.46	59.72
Climate Change	57.81	61.38	60.79	57.62	67.02
Freshwater Use	56.45	61.67	60.82	53.98	69.47
Land-System Change	54.76	58.04	62.80	57.97	66.43
Novel Entities	52.29	53.65	57.02	52.01	71.11
Ocean Acidification	59.60	66.10	65.06	61.29	75.70
Stratospheric Ozone Depletion	47.72	49.04	53.51	45.84	60.48

Across all disciplines, scores were generally lower on complex Earth Systems concepts than on Human Welfare topics. Key observations include:

- Ocean Acidification, Climate Change, and Freshwater Use recorded some of the highest Earth Systems scores overall.
- Atmospheric Aerosols Loading, Biogeochemical Flows, and Stratospheric Ozone Depletion were among the lowest-scoring themes across nearly all groups.
- Students in Environmental & Sustainability Studies achieved the strongest performance on most planetary boundary-related topics. Students in Health & Medicine Studies also achieved notably high scores in several environmental dimensions.
- Overall, the results suggest **stronger familiarity with sustainability issues directly connected to climate and resource use than with more technical Earth Systems processes.**

Human Welfare

Table 3. Score per Subject per Major group - Human Welfare

	Business Studies	Engineering & Mathematics Studies	Environmental & Sustainability Studies	Social Sciences Studies	Health & Medicine Studies
Access to Energy	55.95	56.46	55.34	55.00	64.83
Access to Networks and Social Interaction	64.30	65.19	62.54	64.80	75.43
Access to Water and Sanitation	57.03	58.30	58.05	54.06	69.28
Basic Income	66.84	68.19	67.09	72.06	77.18
Education and Culture	56.58	55.15	54.50	54.61	74.40
Gender Equality	59.84	58.29	60.53	62.64	68.91
Health	65.20	66.36	64.89	63.23	77.62
Housing and Human Settlements	57.31	58.30	58.15	57.23	69.40
Nutrition	60.20	59.41	61.71	63.50	68.63
Peace, Justice, and Political Voice	60.70	61.18	61.43	61.27	70.73
Social Equity	58.68	59.00	58.05	65.50	71.32

Human Welfare themes produced higher average scores across all major groups. Notable findings include:

- **Health, Basic Income, and Access to Networks and Social Interaction** were among the **strongest-performing topics**.
- Scores relating to Access to Water and Sanitation and Housing and Human Settlements were comparatively lower across several groups, despite their central importance to sustainable development.

- Students in Health & Medicine Studies achieved particularly high scores in themes related to well-being and social determinants of health.
- These findings indicate stronger understanding of social and human development topics than of environmental systems concepts.

Levers of Opportunity

Table 4. Score per Subject per Major group - Levers of Opportunity

	Business Studies	Engineering & Mathematics Studies	Environmental & Sustainability Studies	Social Sciences Studies	Health & Medicine Studies
Cognitive Capacity for Sustainable Development	49.62	49.78	48.32	44.18	57.44
Infrastructure, Planning, and Natural Resource Management	54.78	56.16	58.92	58.90	65.26
Laws, Policies, and Institutions	50.14	47.80	53.03	51.69	60.87
Macroeconomic Considerations and Finance	53.93	50.30	52.05	52.98	60.30
Microeconomic Considerations, Business, and Industry	53.64	50.97	51.28	58.01	62.34
Sustainability Science	53.91	54.47	55.10	51.16	67.91
Technology and Innovation	51.79	55.65	52.19	45.35	61.75
Transformative Change	45.67	41.57	44.62	47.10	50.92

The “Levers of Opportunity” dimension highlights some of the clearest disciplinary differences. Key patterns include:

- **Students generally performed better on practical and operational themes** such as Infrastructure, Planning, and Natural Resource Management and Technology and Innovation
- **Transformative Change recorded the lowest scores of**

any topic area across every discipline, suggesting that systemic transformation remains a particularly challenging area of sustainability understanding.

Analysis per Major group

- **Business Studies:** Business Studies students represent the largest cohort in the dataset (n = 10,861). Their results show relatively consistent performance across frameworks, with stronger outcomes in Human Welfare topics than in Earth Systems dimensions.
- **Engineering & Mathematics Studies:** Engineering & Mathematics Studies students (n = 4,489) demonstrated relatively balanced performance across frameworks. Results indicate comparatively stronger understanding of technical and infrastructure-related sustainability topics than governance and transformation dimensions.
- **Environmental & Sustainability Studies:** Students in Environmental & Sustainability Studies (n = 1,230) achieved consistently strong performance, particularly on Earth Systems topics. However, comparatively lower scores were still observed in Transformative Change (44.62) and Cognitive Capacity for Sustainable Development (48.32). This suggests that even among sustainability-focused disciplines, systemic transformation remains a challenging area.
- **Health & Medicine Studies:** Although based on a comparatively small sample (n = 141), Health & Medicine Studies students achieved the highest scores across almost all dimensions of the assessment. The consistently high scores may reflect strong exposure to systems thinking, human wellbeing, and interconnected social-environmental

determinants within health-related curricula.

- **Social Sciences Studies:** The Social Sciences Studies cohort (n = 115) also represents a relatively small sample and should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Its results suggest comparatively stronger performance on social and equity-related sustainability dimensions than on technical or Earth Systems topics.

Score per Program level

Figure 12. Score distribution per Program level

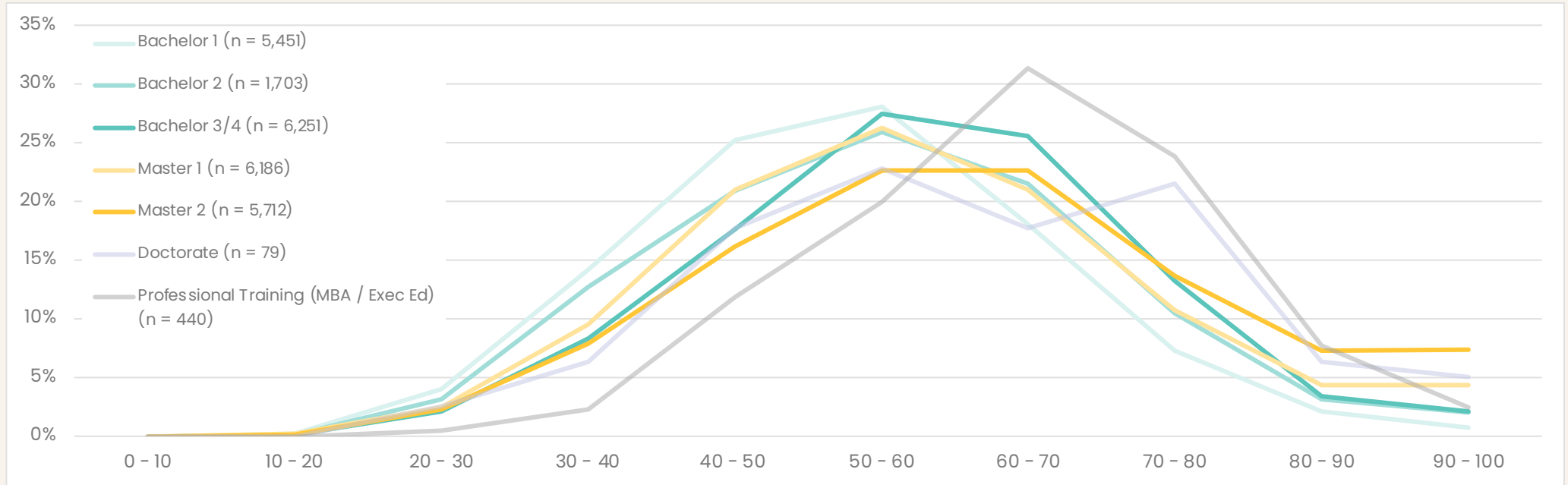


Figure 12 presents the distribution of TASK™ global scores by program level. To support comparability and improve sample robustness, Bachelor 3 and Bachelor 4 cohorts were combined into a single category (“Bachelor 3/4”). This decision reflects both the comparatively smaller sample size for Bachelor 4 students and differences between higher education systems, where undergraduate programs may last either three or four years. In most cases, the combined category therefore represents students completing the final stage of a bachelor-level program. As with the major group analysis, results for

smaller cohorts — particularly Doctorate and Professional Training respondents — should be interpreted cautiously.

Several trends emerge from the score distributions:

- The distributions for **Bachelor 1 and Bachelor 2** are centred more strongly around the **40–60 score ranges**, with comparatively fewer respondents achieving scores above 70.

- Results for **Bachelor 3/4** shift toward higher score ranges, suggesting an increase in sustainability literacy as students progress through undergraduate education.
- The distributions for **Master 1 and Master 2** are concentrated between **50–70**, with Master 2 students displaying a slightly greater proportion of higher scores in the 70–90 range.
- The **Doctorate** cohort displays the **highest concentration of scores in the 60–80 range**. However, given the very small sample size ($n = 79$), these results should not be overinterpreted.
- Across nearly all program levels, scores below 30 remain

relatively uncommon, while most respondents cluster within the intermediate-to-high score ranges.

Overall, the distributions suggest **a gradual upward shift in sustainability literacy across successive stages of higher education**, indicating that additional years of study may contribute to broader understanding of sustainability-related concepts and systems thinking competencies. At the same time, **the overlap between distributions remains substantial, highlighting that sustainability knowledge is influenced not only by program level, but also by disciplinary focus, institutional context, and exposure to learning opportunities throughout the educational journey.**

Longitudinal analysis

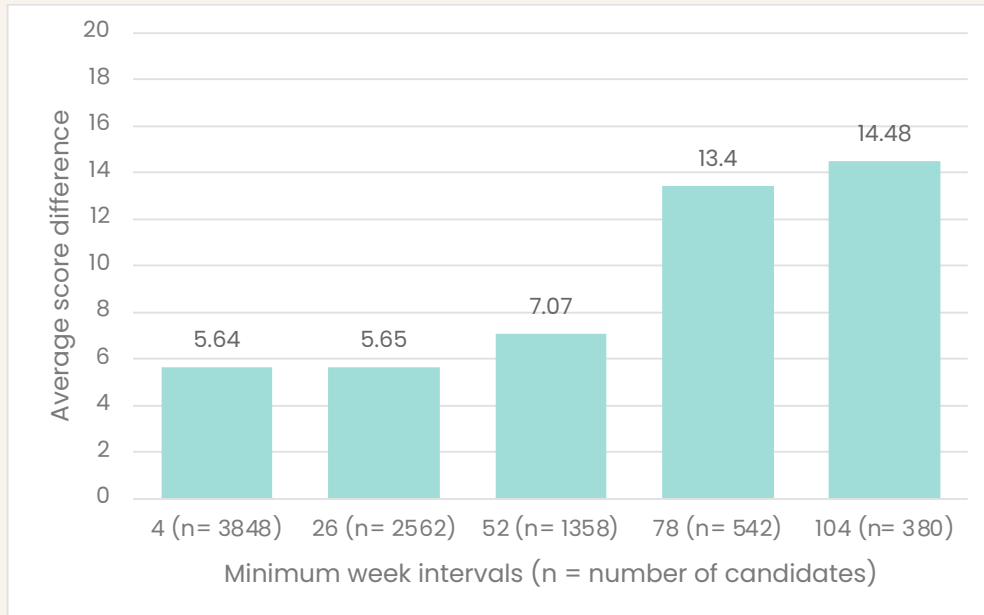
To complement the analysis presented above, the Sulitest team conducted a longitudinal analysis of TASK™ results using assessment data collected between the launch of TASK™ in March 2023 and April 2026. Two longitudinal cohorts were analysed:

- candidates who completed TASK™ at least twice, regardless of metadata provided ($n = 3848$);

- candidates with one assessment tagged as Entry and another tagged as Exit ($n = 1300$);

The second cohort represents a smaller sample size, as it depends on moderators correctly indicating program-stage metadata. However, it also provides a more reliable indication of progression, as it confirms that the assessments were intentionally administered at different stages of a learner's educational pathway.

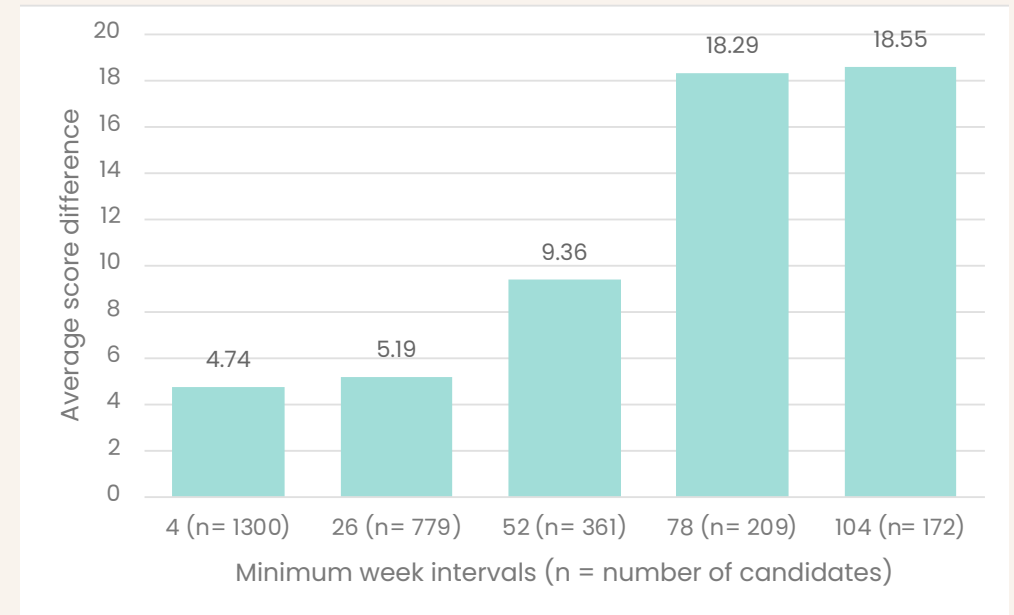
Figure 13. Average score difference (multi-assessment)



The analysis shows a clear relationship between the time interval separating assessments and score improvement. **Improvements remain relatively steady for assessments completed within shorter intervals** of up to approximately 26 weeks. **More substantial increases in average scores are then observed between the 52- and 76-week intervals.** After then, the trend begins to plateau, although this may partly reflect the progressively smaller sample sizes observed at longer intervals.

Nevertheless, the overall pattern remains significant. It reinforces one of the Sulitest’s central recommendations: **TASK™ appears most valuable when embedded across the**

Figure 14. Average score difference (entry/exit)



duration of a program rather than within a single course or short-term module. This observation is also consistent with the broader literature regarding the horizontal integration of sustainability across curricula. The findings suggest that sustainability literacy develops progressively through repeated exposure and sustained engagement over time, rather than through isolated learning experiences.

Across all interval ranges, the greatest improvement was observed within the Human Welfare framework. This aligns with the broader findings of the report, where Human Welfare subjects consistently achieved the highest average scores across the dataset.

Alumni

Every year, Sulitest invites its Change Leaders (those HEIs using TASK™ institution-wide) to offer the sustainability assessment to alumni. Beyond providing former students with an opportunity to obtain a sustainability literacy certification, this initiative offers valuable insight into how sustainability knowledge and engagement evolve after graduation.

In 2026, **318 alumni completed TASK™**. Their **average score was 72.52** (+14.68 in comparison to the global cohort). Consistent with the broader trends, **alumni achieved their highest scores within the Human Welfare framework**, with an average score of 76.52. This compares with 70.52 for Earth Systems and 68.75 for Levers of Opportunity.

Sulitest also included an alumni-specific survey at the end of their assessment, to better understand their experience with sustainability education, interest in the sector and perceived value of the assessment.

Over half of respondents reported seeking sustainability-related information or training frequently or very frequently, while a further 39% engage occasionally. Only a small minority indicated that they rarely or never seek sustainability learning opportunities.

Alumni also reported perceptions of the role their studies played in preparing them to professionally address sustainability challenges. 40% described this impact as strong or very

Figure 15. Alumni survey results - Interest in sustainability training

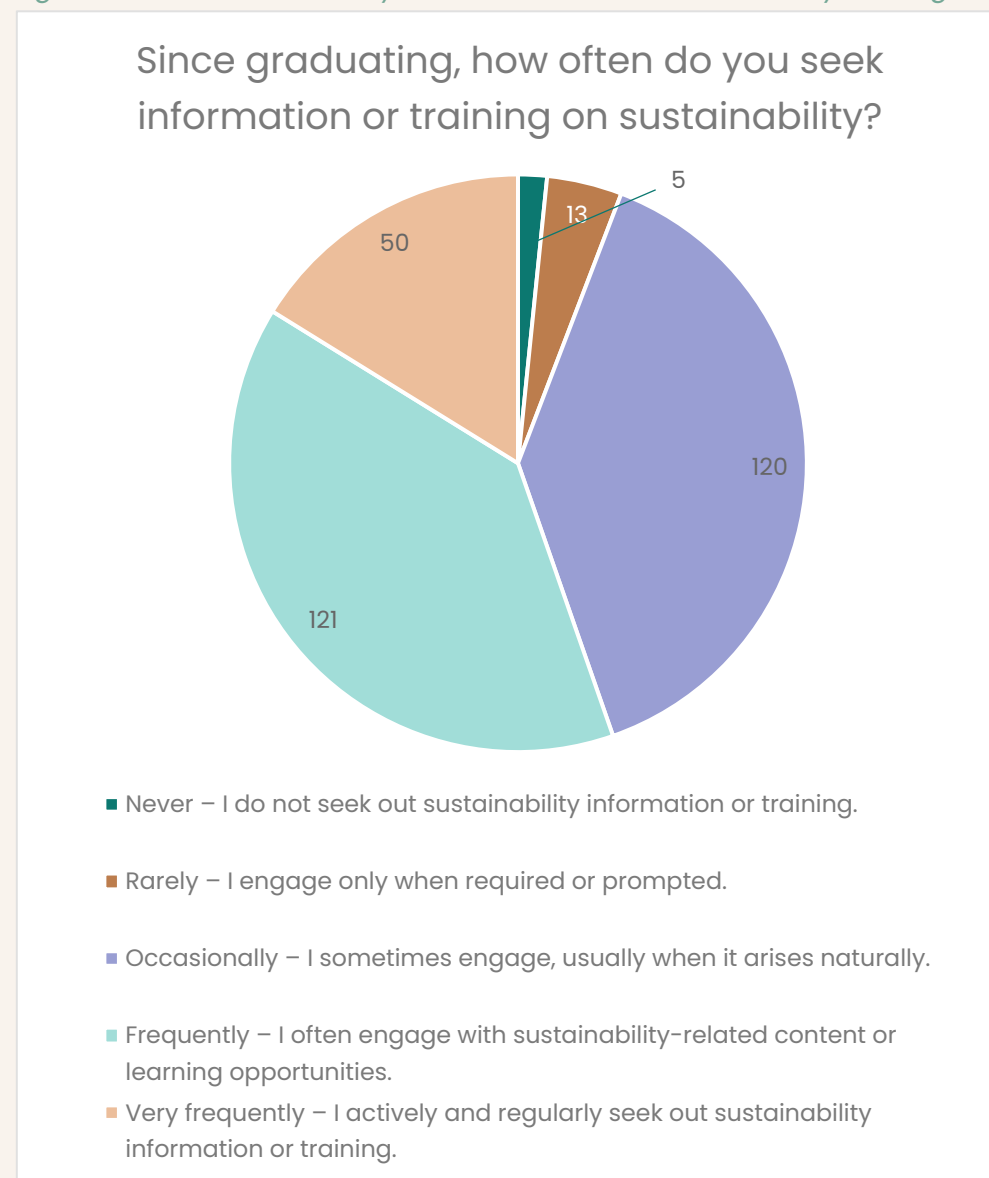
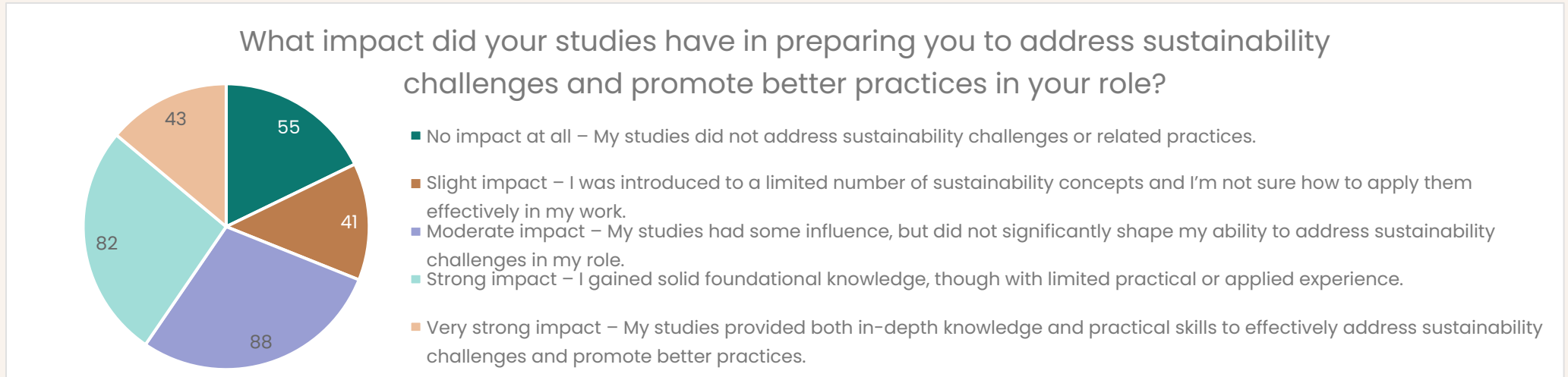


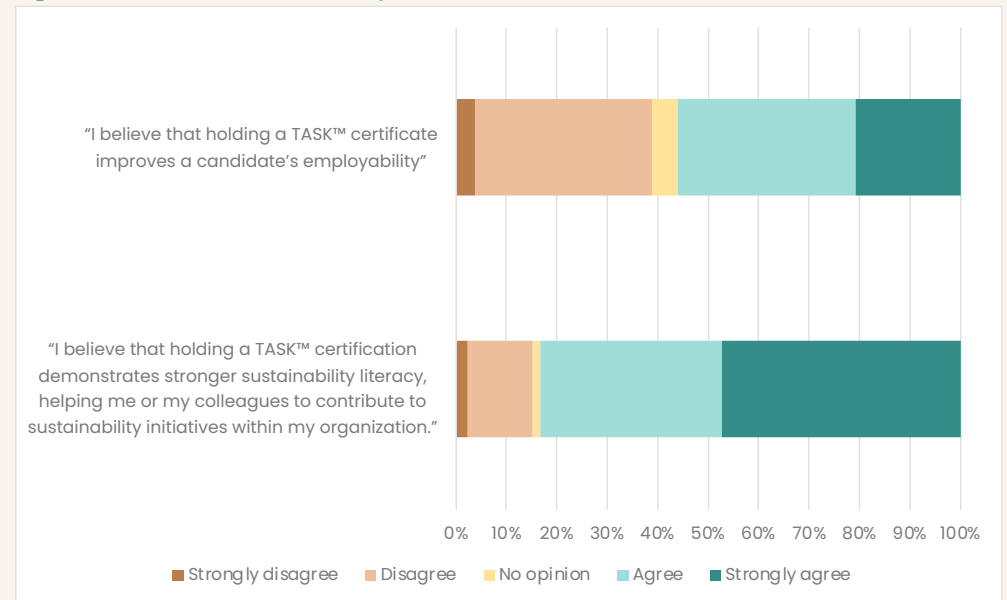
Figure 16. Alumni survey results - Perceived preparedness from higher education



strong. At the same time, **over half felt that their educational experience was limited in its coverage or ability development to address sustainability in their role.** This supports the need for higher education institutions to strengthen the integration of sustainability across curricula.

The perceived value of TASK™ certification was also high. A large majority of respondents agreed that holding a TASK™ certificate demonstrates sustainability literacy and can support contributions to sustainability initiatives within an organisation. Similarly, most viewed the certification as a positive asset for employability. Overall, **81% of alumni indicated that they would be likely or very likely to recommend TASK™ certification to a colleague or peer,** demonstrating strong confidence in its relevance and value within professional contexts.

Figure 17. Alumni survey results - TASK™



Impactful projects



Since its creation, the Sulitest movement has sought to contribute to systemic change in higher education by equipping institutions with tools that support sustainability learning, assessment, and transformation. With TASK™, Sulitest made a strategic choice to focus on one of the levers capable of transforming educational structures: robust, comparable, and actionable measurement of sustainability knowledge. As described in Chapter 3, by providing data that can be used by program directors, quality assurance teams, and institutional leaders, TASK™ helps higher education institutions monitor progress, identify gaps, and report on their efforts to embed sustainability into learning.

However, as Sulitest's work with institutions evolved, an important limitation became increasingly clear. Defining what students need to learn and assessing whether they have acquired this knowledge are necessary but insufficient conditions for transformation. Sustainability integration ultimately depends on what happens within teaching and learning practices and pedagogy. Faculty members are the

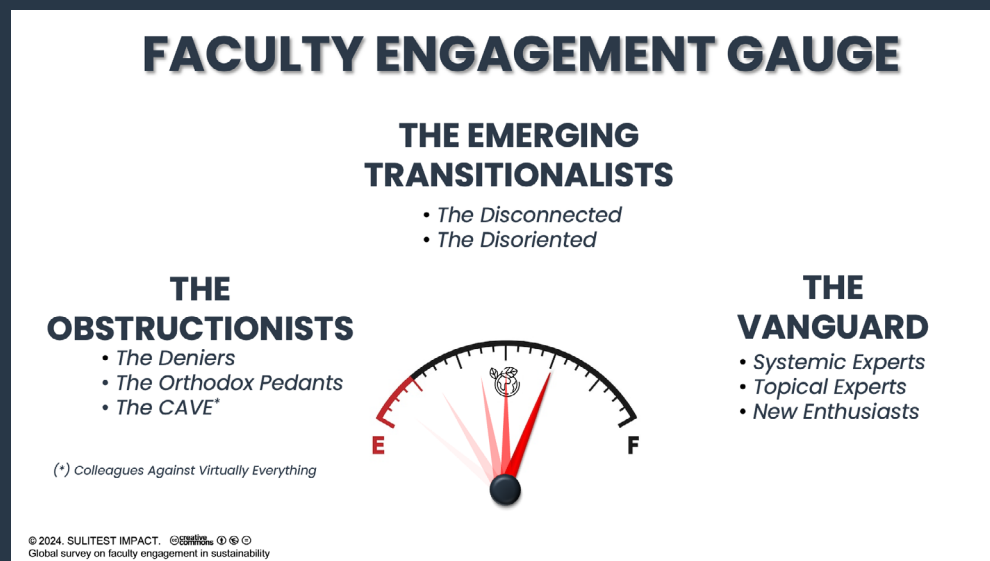
actors who translate learning objectives into course content, pedagogical activities, assessment tasks, and student engagement. Yet many so-called "conventional" courses still integrate sustainability only partially, or not at all, because instructors often lack the support, tools, confidence, or legitimacy needed to connect sustainability to their disciplines.

In 2024, Sulitest conducted an international survey on faculty engagement in sustainability, the results of which were presented at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum (available here). The survey, involving 425 respondents from 42 countries, confirmed that sustainability awareness is present and growing. At the same time, it revealed persistent barriers that continue to hinder the integration of sustainability into mainstream teaching. These include: lack of support, lack of pedagogical tools, and uncertainty among faculty regarding their own legitimacy to address sustainability issues within their courses.

These findings point to a central challenge. Many high quality resources on sustainability exist. Their weakness does not lie in the quality of the content, but rather in their limited ability to respond to the diversity of faculty profiles. Faculty members, like society broadly, are highly heterogeneous. Some instructors are already convinced of the importance of sustainability and are seeking advanced tools to deepen their practice. Others

may be hesitant, resistant, disoriented, or simply unsure of how to respond to what they perceive as yet another institutional demand. Given this diversity of perspectives and experiences, a one-size-fits-all approach to professional development around sustainability is ineffective.

Figure 18. Faculty engagement gauge



In response to this challenge, Sulitest is launching EXPANDIA, a project designed to accelerate the integration of ecological transition into higher education curricula. Led by Sulitest and funded by the French Government under the France 2030 “Compétences et Métiers d’Avenir” program, EXPANDIA represents an unprecedented effort to train instructors—at scale—in sustainability teaching and learning, with the objective of engaging 6,000 higher education faculty members over four years in the EXPANDIA initiative.

EXPANDIA is designed to align with Sulitest’s theory of change: i.e., to scale up student acculturation to sustainability, it is not enough to act only at the level of institutional strategy or academic programs. It is also necessary to activate the full faculty body, including instructors beyond the limited circle of those already engaged. The project therefore provides a progressive, hybrid pathway supported by a dedicated digital platform integrating self-assessment tools, curated resources, and artificial intelligence. Its purpose is to enable all instructors, regardless of their initial level of engagement, to identify relevant disciplinary entry points around sustainability and progressively integrate ecological transition into their teaching and assessment processes.

By facilitating measurement through TASK™ and faculty activation through EXPANDIA, Sulitest seeks to strengthen the conditions for systemic change. TASK™ supports institutions in identifying what students know, where gaps remain, and how sustainability knowledge can be monitored over time. EXPANDIA complements this by supporting the educators who shape students’ learning experiences every day. EXPANDIA acts as an activator within this ecosystem, transforming persistent obstacles—lack of legitimacy, lack of adapted tools, diversity of faculty profiles, and difficulty navigating existing resources—into concrete levers for transitional action. The acceleration sought through EXPANDIA is therefore both quantitative (premised on reaching an unprecedented number of instructors) and qualitative (designed to anchor ecological transition durably into everyday and lifelong teaching practices).

With this initiative, Sulitest confirms its role as a catalyst for educational transformation. Having informed institutional decision-making with assessment and measurement tools and metrics, Sulitest is now also accelerating the transmission of sustainability knowledge through faculty training, engagement, and pedagogical support. This shift in both scale and purpose is essential if the massification of sustainability literacy is to become a reality at local, national, and international levels.

A consortium for systemic transformation

To achieve its mission, EXPANDIA brings together a consortium of leading and futures-thinking organizations:

- **Sulitest**, leveraging its experience in sustainability assessment, facilitating collaborations, and inspiring systemic change.
- **Université Paris-Saclay** and **Nantes Université**, renowned French universities, serving as pilot institutions to co-construct training strategies and materials.
- **Campus de la Transition**, a French training and research center on ecological and social transition.

- **Ticket for Change**, a nonprofit organization empowering individuals to become changemakers and innovators in societal transformation.

Three levers to scale up sustainability integration:

EXPANDIA is structured around three major levers for scaling up sustainability integration in higher education.

- **Amplify integration** by offering an ambitious program built around individualized pathways and progressive objectives. These pathways are designed to initiate movement, maintain momentum, equip instructors with practical tools, and support deeper transformation in one's teaching practice.
- **Integrate and enrich the existing ecosystem** by accelerating existing efforts, facilitating access to available resources, and supporting their effective use by faculty members.
- **Ensure national and international reach** through collaboration with French and international ecosystems,



build on existing initiatives worldwide, and rely on reinforced governance mechanisms. These include a pedagogical committee, a research committee, and an international committee.

A platform at the heart of learning pathways

At the center of EXPANDIA is a digital platform designed to help instructors identify their starting point, navigate resources, and progress along a personalized learning pathway.

- **Appreciate where they start:** the platform helps instructors identify their current level of sustainability integration, understand the links between their discipline and ecological transition, and determine their next steps for development.
- **Access relevant resources and networks:** the platform connects instructors with curated resources and peer contributions, tailored to their profile and teaching context, making it easier to find and use appropriate sustainability education materials.

A scalable model for faculty engagement

EXPANDIA aims not only to mainstream sustainability education in France but also to contribute to a global movement empowering educators worldwide. Its combination of technology, pedagogy, and strategic faculty engagement offers a replicable model for higher education institutions aiming to meet the urgent challenges of sustainable

development. With faculty supported, empowered, and equipped, EXPANDIA demonstrates that transformative change in higher education is achievable—and scalable.

“Our university is committed to taking on the challenges of sustainable development through its core missions around higher education, research and innovation. Being involved in the Expandia project will enable us to reach out to our faculty as a whole and trigger rapid, transformative changes by leveraging the unique expertise of our consortium. We expect a high impact on our curricula and the capacity of our graduates to tackle sustainability issues as citizens and professionals.”

– Benoit Gabrielle, Sustainability Science and Bioeconomy Professor, Pro Vice Chancellor for Sustainable Development and Societal Responsibility at Université Paris-Saclay



“At the institutional level, our aim is for Expandia to help strengthen and build on existing collective dynamics by building on our achievements, to foster sustainable communities of practice, and to equip lead staff and teachers with the tools to support this transformation over the long term. More broadly, at national level, our aim is to position Expandia as a model demonstrating that it is possible to reconcile mass enrolment with quality, voluntary engagement with institutional structure, and pedagogical exploration with academic rigour.”

– Laurent Devisme, Vice-President for Ecological Transitions and Science Communication at Nantes Université





BIOFIN-EU

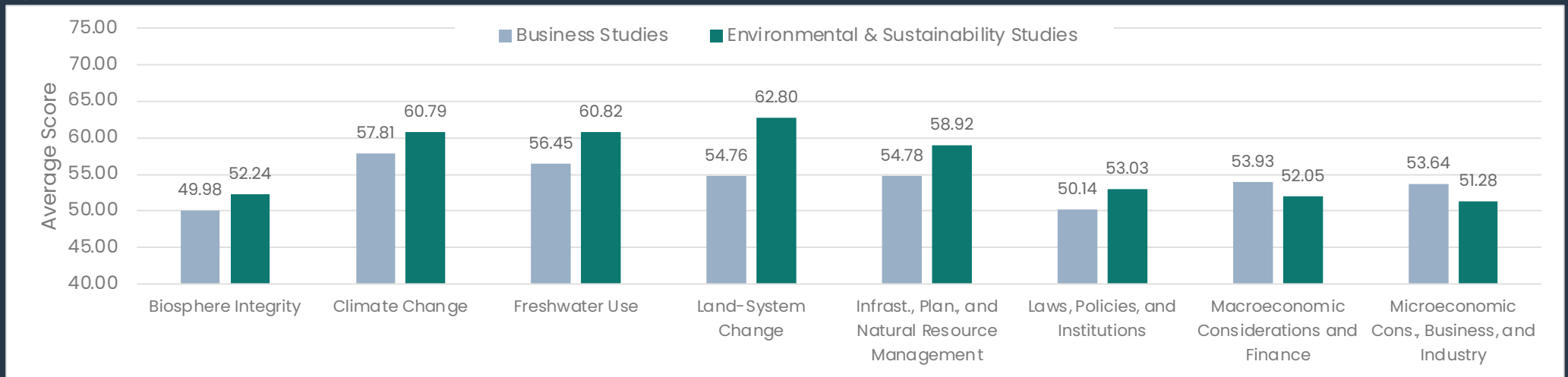
Despite growing awareness of environmental issues, **biodiversity often remains an under-represented topic in both public discourse and educational programs.** The latest IPBES Global Assessment report warns that around 1 million species face imminent extinction unless urgent action is taken. **BIOFIN-EU (Protecting and Restoring Biodiversity Using Mainstream Finance)**, a project funded by the European Union, aims to **unlock and accelerate financial flows to protect and restore biodiversity through better alignment of regulation, business models, financial instruments, and the skills and mindsets of the people behind them.** Sulitest is a partner in the

BIOFIN-EU consortium and supports its mission by analyzing sustainability knowledge trends and building capacity among current and future finance professionals.

Given BIOFIN-EU's focus on building capacity in the finance and business sectors, a comparison of TASK™ scores between students of Business Studies and those of Environmental Sciences and Sustainability Studies show alarming trends:

- Business students score lower across all environmental topics.
- They also underperform in Levers of Opportunity, suggesting a lack of awareness about how their future roles in finance and business can be used to drive biodiversity-positive outcomes.

Figure 19. Comparison between Business Studies and Environmental & Sustainability Studies scores in key BioFin-related Subjects



To respond to this need, Sulitest and the BIOFIN-EU consortium aim to build awareness and know-how among economic actors by **co-designing and developing a suite of skills and knowledge accelerators**. These resources are designed for use in business schools, as well as financial institutions, financial services companies, non-financial corporations (NFCs), policy-making bodies and regulators.

The development of the Biodiversity-Linked Skills and Knowledge Accelerators began with defining a clear and accessible conceptual framework, which informed the creation of the first resource—an interactive glossary to help educators and students navigate the core (but often ignored) environmental concepts.

While numerous online courses and educational materials already exist, curricular change in higher education is slow, and elective modules often attract only self-selected, already interested students. It was therefore important for BIOFIN-EU that the resources developed remained relevant for finance-related academic programs, and flexible, so they could be easily integrated within the current curricular structure. The consortium thus developed a series of case studies that can be integrated into core finance modules. These case studies leverage BIOFIN-EU research and expertise to contextualize biodiversity and Nature-based Solution (NbS) in real-world financial decision-making. Finally, a collection of curated resources has been designed to support students and educators alike to deepen and broaden their understanding.

TASK™ in Spanish

Latin American institutions have consistently shown their dedication to the agenda of sustainability and SDG 4.7, seeking to increase their educational impact by reducing social inequalities, expanding economic opportunities, and promoting stewardship of the natural environment they are surrounded by. Moreover, the TASK™ community already includes two institutions from Spain. To support such ambition to advance the 2030 Agenda, and to respond to the growing

demand in the Spanish-speaking world, **Sulitest launched the Spanish translation of TASK™ in February 2026.**

Ensuring the assessment worked fairly and reliably within a different culture and language was vital. Because the original version of TASK™ was developed in English and French, the Spanish version not only needed to “sound right”—it had to function linguistically exactly the same way: questions should be equally clear, equally challenging, and measure the same underlying knowledge as the other two languages. After all,

TASK™ is a psychometric assessment.

To do so, a pilot version was organized in which HEIs offered a translation of TASK™ for free to their students. While not receiving official scores, participants received preliminary insights, while Sulitest was able to gather data on how the Spanish questions were answered. **Thanks to the strong engagement of our educational partners across the region, the pilot brought together a diverse group of 29 universities from Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela, who collectively enlisted nearly 3,800 candidates to complete TASK™.**

In contributing to this effort, participating institutions gained a first-hand experience with the TASK™ assessment. Debriefing meetings were organized to explore the TASK™ dashboard and preliminary results. Dr. Celsa Guadalupe Sánchez Vélez, Director of the College of Business and Management, CETYS Universidad stated *“We value this collaboration, as the results will provide us with an initial diagnostic that will help us strengthen and enrich our curriculum on sustainability topics.”*

Sulitest extends its gratitude to all the institutions who participated in the pilot. More broadly, and as an important milestone in the Sulitest journey, **the Spanish pilot both strengthened the global robustness of TASK™ and ensured that TASK™ in Spanish is not simply a translation, but a validated and tested version of core assessment processes.** This helps ensure that a TASK™ score and certificate have the same value globally, no matter which language is used.

Participating institutions:

- **From Argentina:** Universidad Siglo 21, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba
- **From Colombia:** Universidad Externado, Universidad Autónoma del Occidente, Universidad Simón Bolívar, Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA), Universidad del Rosario, Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios
- **From Ecuador:** Universidad Internacional de Ecuador, Universidad Tecnológica ECOTEC, Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- **From Guatemala:** Universidad Rafael Landívar
- **From Mexico:** Universidad Panamericana, EGADE Business School, CETYS Universidad, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, Universidad de Monterrey
- **From Peru:** Universidad Católica de Santa María, ESAN Graduate School of Business, Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola, Universidad Católica Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo, Centrum PUCP, Universidad Católica San Pablo, Universidad de Lima, Universidad del Pacífico
- **From Spain:** Universidad de Alcalá
- **From Uruguay:** Universidad Tecnológica del Uruguay
- **From Venezuela:** Universidad Rafael Beloso Chacín



Looking ahead

As 2030 approaches, higher education stands at the forefront of a pivotal moment, tasked with training and equipping citizens and decision-makers with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to navigate an increasingly complex world and build a sustainable future. Yet, critical questions remain: *How do we ensure that sustainability education translates into lasting impact? How can we move from declarations of intent to transformative education with measurable outcomes?*

Bridging this gap requires a shared vision and common language of sustainability, embedded in curricula, culture, strategy and key learning objectives. It also requires leadership and the courage to assess where you are today as an institution, to direct your journey toward education for sustainability.

Since the launch of Sulitest, our ambition has been clear and remains unchanged: to mainstream sustainability literacy, resetting educational standards and transforming the structure of higher education as a system. Looking ahead, our focus sharpens on scaling this vision. We commit to:

- **Make sustainability the new norm in higher education**, by integrating TASK™ in every continent and discipline, and by embedding sustainability assessment into accreditations, rankings, and national policies.

- **Turn data into actionable insights and recommendations**, thus empowering educators and institutions to refine their approaches and amplify their impact.
- **Train educators** to inspire, support and accelerate the transformation of learning and pedagogy through EXPANDIA.

The role of higher education is not only to produce experts in diagnosing the polycrisis that we face today, but to cultivate architects of the world we need to build. Sustainability must be desirable, not just mandatory—a living, breathing part of how we teach, learn, and lead. Together with researchers, educators, students, and civil society, we will continue to co-create pathways that inspire action, not just compliance.

In the translated words of French poet, René Char: *“Press your luck, embrace your happiness, and take risks. Those seeing you will adapt and follow.”*

Data will remain our compass. Collective boldness will be our engine.

2030 won't wait. Neither will we.

– Sulitest



Testimonials from the TASK™ community

"We are very excited about implementing TASK™ at KAUST. TASK™ will provide a comprehensive overview of our students' sustainability knowledge, allowing us to identify gaps and tailor their academic paths effectively. This ensures that sustainability literacy is deeply integrated into their education at KAUST, preparing them to address global sustainability challenges. Beyond their academic and professional journeys, this literacy will empower them to become changemakers and responsible citizens, equipped to contribute positively to society."

–Prof. Ana Margarida Costa, Professor of Practice and Head of Sustainability at KAUST

"Since 2014, GEM has actively engaged in the development and implementation of Sulitest tools to enhance sustainability awareness among students, alumni, staff, and faculty. The TASK™ certificate allows for measuring and benchmarking core sustainability knowledge, including understanding planetary limits and emerging economic models. GEM is working to equip our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide responses to pressing global issues and create a common language to address them as professionals and citizens. Sulitest has been an important enabler in this transformation."

–Julie Perrin-Halot, Associate Dean and Director Sustainability at GEM Alpine Business School

"At CPBS we want to monitor the knowledge of our students on sustainability issues. This monitoring guides our actions in terms of teaching and related activities. Sulitest is the partner that allow us to make this process real. Its TASK™ test has been applied in various levels of education and is particularly appreciated by our alumni that can obtain a sustainability certification at no cost."

–Maria da Conceição Andrade Silva, Associate Dean for Research, innovation and sustainability at Católica Porto Business School (CPBS)

"TASK is an outstanding tool for testing student sustainability knowledge, identifying gaps and certifying knowledge. TASK helps our business school stand out in terms of our commitment fostering sustainability knowledge among the next generation of change makers. We have embedded TASK into our curriculum across the vast majority of our degrees and multiple levels of study."

–C Rashaad Shabab, Associate Dean (Education and Students) at University of Sussex Business School

"We used TASK for the first time this year for all our students. Within 3 years, we expect to reach 70% at least of our students having passed the test in the course of their program. We are not there yet, so we'll have to adjust our process next time. The main value I see in the TASK test from Sulitest is the fact that it now constitutes an international reference in the realm of sustainability knowledge assessment, so the certification it delivers has more value for our students. Besides, it covers every aspect of a sustainable society, as defined by the UN, which was also a key factor for us."

–Nathalie Lallemand-Stempak, Associate Professor and Deputy Director of Societal Issues at IAE Paris-Sorbonne, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

"While sustainability education must go beyond knowledge transfer with shaping mindsets, attitudes, and active student engagement, measurement remains essential. To understand whether our students' sustainability literacy develops between entry and graduation, we need reliable, comparable insights. No single indicator can capture the full complexity of sustainability learning, so using multiple measures is crucial. Sulitest and TASK provide a valuable tool to support this evidence-based approach and help us identify where further intervention may be needed."

–Petra Putzer, PhD, Head Of Sustainability Centre, Assistant Professor at University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics

"As the Director of the Office of Institutional Data and Research at The Education University of Hong Kong, I am proud to support the Sulitest movement. Sulitest TASK is an invaluable tool for advancing sustainability literacy, providing a global framework to assess and enhance knowledge of the UN SDGs. At our university, we use TASK to evaluate and strengthen sustainability education, ensuring our students and staff are equipped to tackle global challenges. By participating in the Sulitest Change Leader Programme, we reaffirm our commitment to nurturing responsible leaders who will drive meaningful, sustainable change in society."

–Jesse Xiao, Director at The Education University of Hong Kong

"We use TASK™ at Kozminski University as a common benchmark for sustainability literacy across our programmes. Its value for us is twofold: it informs curriculum decisions, and it gives us credible Assurance of Learning evidence in our EFMD and AACSB conversations. I support the Sulitest movement because it turns sustainability literacy from an abstract goal into something measurable, and because the team behind it engages as a real partner."

–Franjo Mlinarič, ESG Manager at Kozminski University

"At PSAU, sustainability is our institutional DNA, shaping strategy, teaching, research, and partnerships. This commitment led us to make the Sulitest TASK mandatory across the university, embedding sustainability literacy into curricula, student mobility, faculty research funding, and our Global South Partnership activities. TASK provides a shared foundation for knowledge, accountability, and culture change. As a founding partner of the International Green Skills Initiative and pilot institution for the Green Skills Assessment Framework, we are proud to translate ambition into measurable action and global leadership."

–Abdullah Elias, Professor and Director, PSAU Rankings, Sustainability, and Institutional Advancement at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU)

"HES-SO supports the Sulitest movement because we are committed to embedding sustainability across all our 70+ programmes spanning 32 sites. TASK provides essential benchmarking across our heterogeneous curricula, allowing us to measure the long-term impact of the "Former pour Transformer" programme. We offer TASK to all faculty, departments, and local leadership willing to integrate it into their pedagogy. Regular open sessions enable students everywhere to assess their sustainability literacy progress independently."

–Eric Doman, Adjoint au projet "Former pour transformer" at HES-SO

"As Dean for Sustainability at Corvinus University of Budapest, I see sustainability literacy as a core competence for all graduates. TASK helps us measure what students know, identify development opportunities, and strengthen sustainability integration across programmes. The assessment provides valuable evidence for curriculum development and institutional decision-making. Beyond measurement, it stimulates meaningful dialogue among students, faculty, and leaders about the role of higher education in advancing sustainable development."

–Katalin Ásványi, Dean for Sustainability at Corvinus University of Budapest

"I support the Sulitest movement because it empowers students to understand the societal, environmental, and economic challenges shaping our world and equips them to become responsible future leaders. The value I see in Sulitest/TASK is its ability to open students' eyes to critical sustainability issues and broaden their global perspective. At our institution, we use TASK as a required component of the student development program to ensure that every graduate possesses the minimum sustainability knowledge and competencies expected in today's workforce."

–Maha Mourad, Professor of Marketing – BP Endowed Chair of Management Heikal Department of Management Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Administration at Onsi Sawiris School of Business (The American University in Cairo)

“At EM Normandie, TASK™ plays a key rôle in the implementation of our academic strategy on sustainable development. This international certification enables us, as a school, to assess our students’ level of knowledge in a structured and objective manner. This information guides the development of our programmes and supports a process of continuous improvement. TASK™ contributes to our efforts to design relevant educational pathways rooted in the local context, which meet the expectations of both students and employers. The TASK™ assessment enables our students to measure the level of expertise required to master all the systemic challenges of sustainability and also to highlight these skills in their job applications. The Sulitest initiative reinforces our commitment to training future professionals capable of tackling environmental and societal challenges with professionalism and determination.”

–Marine BASTIEGE, Assistant Professor in Economics, CSR and Public Management at EM Normandie

“Collaborating with the Sulitest team is a great pleasure. At SOS-International, we consider Sulitest a critical partner in our work advancing sustainability and environmental justice in higher education. We perform a convening role in the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), Student Action Group and we have been delighted to work with Sulitest in their capacity as co-chair of HESI to advance opportunities for our student members on the global education policy agenda. The TASK metrics are a vital indicator of sustainability competency across institutions and provide a benchmark and insight on how we can work together at a global level to advance student skills, knowledge and mindset to address global challenges.”

–Darren Axe, Membership and Engagement Manager at SOS-International

Appendix A – Our governance

The Sulitest movement was born out of the dynamics of the Rio+20 Earth Summit. With the mission of “raising awareness and assessing sustainability literacy”, the Sulitest association, created in 2014, intends to play a key role in achieving objective 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda, which aims to “ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development.”

Tangible implementation of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), the Sulitest movement was recognized in 2016 as one of the remarkable initiatives in the United Nations partnership for the Sustainable Development Goals. Today, the association holds three United Nations accreditations, co-chairs HESI alongside UN DESA, and has a very strong international recognition.

In order to scale up its impact, the association and its two co-founders decided to create in 2021 a social business. Under French law, Sulitest Impact is a *Entreprise de l'Économie Sociale & Solidaire* (SAS de type ESUS), a framework that guarantees not only purpose but also commitments and responsibilities of the company as a social business. In January 2022, a fundraising initiative saw the participation of six private and public HEIs, along with business angels, who invested capital into the venture.

We are committed to making Sulitest a movement and a community serving the “common good”. Today the Sulitest movement is therefore supported by two legal structures, the association and the social business, in order to combine relevance, independence and efficiency. The association, shareholder of the social business, is the guarantor of meaning and purpose. It has a role of advocacy supporting the mainstreaming of sustainability literacy. It will eventually play a role in capacity building, supporting sustainability education and research. The social enterprise is responsible for the design, editing, development and management of all tools, as well as the deployment of the business. Finally, it develops research and development on the impact of the use of Sulitest tools on individuals and organizations.

Appendix B – TASK™ Matrix

TASK™ Matrix by Sulfest			x.1. Knowing and Understanding		x.2. Interlinkages		
Sustainability Knowledge			x.1.1 Definitions and Key Concepts <i>Descriptive Knowledge</i> What are we talking about? How does this work?	x.1.2 Current State and Trends <i>Contextualized Knowledge</i> Where are we now? How are things changing?	x.2.1 Major Causes <i>Causal Knowledge</i> Why is this happening? Who is doing what and why?	x.2.2 Systemic Impacts <i>Integrated Knowledge</i> What are the related effects? How is this affecting the larger system?	
Framework	Domain	Subject					
1. Earth Systems	1.1 Core Planetary Boundaries	1.1.1 Climate Change	U1.1	U1.1	U1.1	U1.1	
		1.1.2 Biosphere Integrity	U1.2	U1.2	U1.2	U1.2	
	The Environmental Ceiling	1.2 Regulating Planetary Boundaries	1.2.1 Freshwater Use	U1.3	U1.3	U1.3	U1.3
			1.2.2 Land-System Change	U1.4	U1.4	U1.4	U1.4
			1.2.3 Ocean Acidification	U1.5	U1.5	U1.5	U1.5
			1.2.4 Novel Entities	U1.6	U1.6	U1.6	U1.6
			1.2.5 Biogeochemical Flows	U1.7	U1.7	U1.7	U1.7
		1.2.6 Atmospheric Aerosols Loading	U1.8	U1.8	U1.8	U1.8	
		1.2.7 Stratospheric Ozone Depletion	U1.9	U1.9	U1.9	U1.9	
2. Human Wellfare	2.1 Safety and Basic Needs	2.1.1 Nutrition	U2.1	U2.1	U2.1	U2.1	
		2.1.2 Health	U2.2	U2.2	U2.2	U2.2	
		2.1.3 Access to Water and Sanitation	U2.3	U2.3	U2.3	U2.3	
		2.1.4 Housing and Human Settlements	U2.4	U2.4	U2.4	U2.4	
		2.1.5 Access to Energy	U2.5	U2.5	U2.5	U2.5	
	The Social Foundation	2.2 Social Wellfare	2.2.1 Basic Income and Decent Work	U2.6	U2.6	U2.6	U2.6
			2.2.2 Social Equity	U2.7	U2.7	U2.7	U2.7
			2.2.3 Gender Equality	U2.8	U2.8	U2.8	U2.8
		2.3 Human Flourishing	2.3.1 Education and Culture	U2.9	U2.9	U2.9	U2.9
			2.3.2 Peace, Justice, and Political Voice	U2.10	U2.10	U2.10	U2.10
		2.3.3 Access to Networks and Social Interaction	U2.11	U2.11	U2.11	U2.11	
3. Levers of Opportunity	3.1 Governance	3.1.1 Laws, Policies, and Institutions	U3.1	U3.1	U3.1	U3.1	
		3.1.2 Infrastructure, Planning, & Natural Resource Management	U3.2	U3.2	U3.2	U3.2	
	3.2 Economy and Finance	3.2.1 Macroeconomic Considerations and Finance	U3.3	U3.3	U3.3	U3.3	
		3.2.2 Microeconomic Considerations, Business, and Industry	U3.4	U3.4	U3.4	U3.4	
	That Make Sustainability Possible	3.3 Science and Technology	3.3.1 Sustainability Science	U3.5	U3.5	U3.5	U3.5
			3.3.2 Technology and Innovation	U3.6	U3.6	U3.6	U3.6
		3.4 Individual and Collective Action	3.4.1 Transformative Change	U3.7	U3.7	U3.7	U3.7
	3.4.2 Cognitive Capacity for Sustainability		U3.8	U3.8	U3.8	U3.8	

U# letters indicate the order in which TASK questions appear in the assessment with each lettered category. TASK questions are randomized.

Appendix C – Assessment’s psychometric Model

The development of TASK™ is based on Item Response Theory (IRT), a psychometric framework widely employed to assess latent constructs, including knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and personality traits. Owing to its extensive use in standardized testing and educational assessment, IRT is recognized as a reliable and valid methodology for test development and score interpretation. Therefore, IRT provides the theoretical and methodological foundation for the design and implementation of the TASK™ assessment framework.

In this section, the methodologies currently deployed in TASK™ are examined, with a particular focus on:

- the psychometric models currently deployed within the platform;
- the procedures used to ensure the reliability of these models; and
- the methods used to scale and calibrate TASK™ assessment items.

Methodology and structure of the Model

The primary modelling approach employed in TASK™ is the Bayesian Two-Parameter Logistic Item Response Theory implemented (2PL IRT) via Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) sampling (Fox, 2010). In our test development, IRT was applied throughout the process, beginning with the construction of the item bank—a repository of questions that can be continuously expanded and refined. Lastly, IRT also serves as the basis for evaluating and scoring participants’ sustainability knowledge through their assessments’ responses in TASK™.

The construction of the item bank begins with the training model. The model produces three primary outputs:

- Discrimination parameters indicating how well items differentiate between levels of ability.
- Difficulty parameters reflecting item challenge relative to the ability.
- Ability correlation matrices capturing ability structure among subject and domain scores.

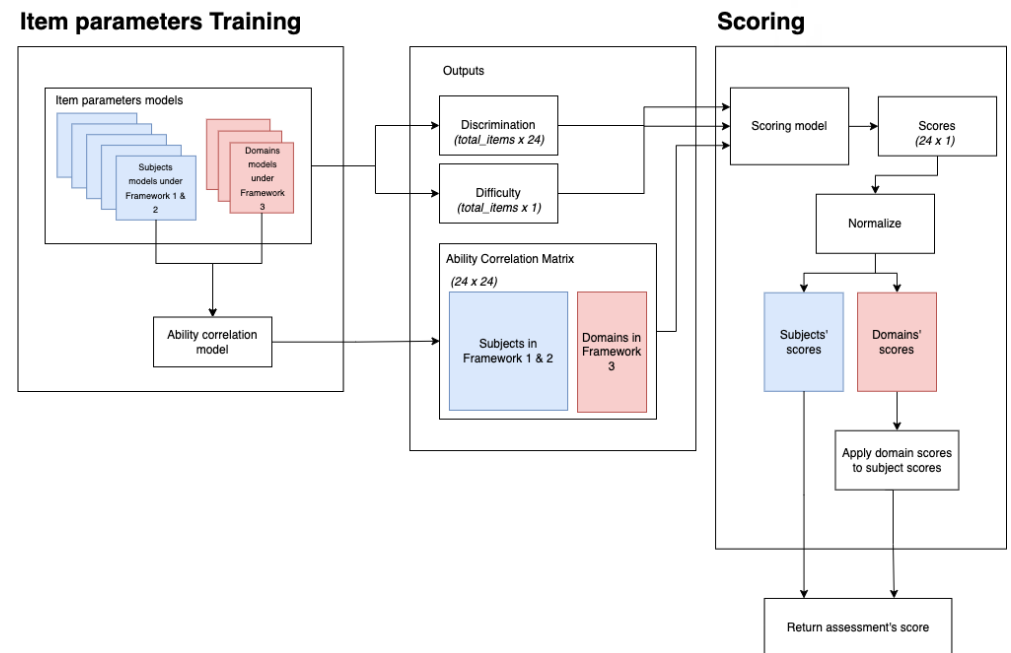
The outputs from training for the discrimination and difficulty parameters are derived from fitting the 24 separate unidimensional IRT models for each subject or domain in TASK™. This ensures each question belongs to a single subject or domain. The result from those samplings is then integrated in another model to sample for the ability correlation matrix, as illustrated in Figure 20.

The scoring model, in turn, leverages these three parameters to estimate individual scores. As previously mentioned, for framework 1 “Earth Systems” and framework 2 “Human Welfare”, scores are computed at the subject level (20 subjects). For framework 3 “Levers of Opportunity”, scores are computed at the domain level (4 domains), with domain-to-subject score conversion applied using the ratio of correct answers in each subject. All the calculated scores are then each geometrically transformed into a score that ranges between 0 to 100, for ease of interpretation. Thus, a TASK™ score is calculated to reflect:

- the total number of questions answered;
- whether or not each question was answered correctly, and;
- the parameters associated with each question (difficulty, discrimination, and place in the matrix).

Both training for the parameters and scoring models were designed with the help of Prof. J. Templin (personal communication, January 7, 2025)¹.

Figure 20. Overview of training and scoring workflow.



¹ Professor Jonathan Templin is the professor and E.F. Lindquist Chair in the Department of Psychological and Quantitative Foundations in the College of Education at the University of Iowa. He is specialized in development of psychometric methods being applied in psychological, educational, and social sciences fields.

Model diagnostics and reliability

To ensure convergence of the model inferences, we adhered to the STAN diagnostic guidelines (Stan, n.d.) during every sampling iteration. Accordingly, the model's validity and reliability were rigorously evaluated using established Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) diagnostics, as follows:

R-hat values for all parameters remained below the critical threshold of 1.01, indicating convergence across chains. Deviations beyond this value typically signal potential non-convergence.

Bulk Effective Sample Size (Bulk-ESS) exceeded 400 for all parameters, confirming adequate mixing. A higher ESS corresponds to more reliable estimates from the MCMC samples.

Bayesian Fraction of Missing Information (BFMI) exceeded 0.3, suggesting the Markov chains adequately explored the posterior distribution. A low BFMI indicates poor exploration.

Divergence occurrences were zero, confirming that the sampler did not encounter pathological regions in the posterior space.

Tree-depth warnings occurred in a few iterations, where the sampler hit the maximum tree depth. However, according to STAN documentation, this is primarily an efficiency issue rather than a validity concern, provided that all other diagnostics remain within acceptable thresholds.

Step size adaptation was evaluated, with 90% of iterations maintaining a step size near 0.8, which indicates appropriate tuning during the warm-up phase.

In addition to STAN's recommended diagnostics, we employed Pareto-Smoothed Importance Sampling Leave-One-Out cross-validation (PSIS-LOO) as an additional model validation tool. While Luo and Al-Harbi (2017) utilized PSIS-LOO for IRT model selection and evaluation, we adopted the same methodology with a slightly different purpose: to assess the model's ability to generalize beyond the training data.

Following the model validation guidelines provided by (Vehtari, 2025) monitoring the Pareto K-hat values, with the recommended threshold of 0.7. The objective was to ensure that none of the observations, when re-fitted during PSIS-LOO, yielded Pareto K-hat values exceeding this threshold.

During training, a small number of observations exhibited Pareto K-hat values above 0.7. However, after increasing the number of posterior draws from 2,000 to 4,000, the number of such cases decreased. This improvement suggests that the model is not overfitting and can capture the structure of the observed responses.

Scalability of the model

In TASK™, new assessment items are continuously developed by the content team. Consequently, the psychometric model must accommodate these incoming items while ensuring that

item parameters remain comparable within each subject or domain. To achieve this, a psychometric procedure known as linking is employed. Linking refers to the process of placing item parameter estimates onto a common scale, thereby enabling meaningful comparisons across different sets of items and test administrations (Kolen & Brennan, 2014).

During the initial calibration phase of the psychometric model, the prior distribution means of the item parameters were explored and established separately for each subject or domain. These estimated prior means were subsequently fixed and retained for calibrating newly developed items. This approach ensures that item parameter estimates within each subject or domain are consistently placed on a common measurement scale.

In addition, the assessment design implemented in TASK™ follows a Non-Equivalent Groups with Anchor Test (NEAT) framework (Ricker & Von Davier, 2007). Under this design, anchor items are administered across different assessment forms to provide a basis for scale alignment. The combination of fixed prior distributions and the NEAT design enable the implementation of a fixed-parameter scale-linking approach, whereby the parameters of anchor items are held constant while new items are calibrated onto the existing scale (Von Davier & Von Davier, 2007).

Appendix D – TASK™ OLS Regression Results

Table 5. TASK™ OLS Regression Results

Variable	B	SE	t	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	VIF
Constant	42.23	0.42	101.17	< .001	41.42	43.05	-
is_woman	-1.44	0.18	-8.01	< .001	-1.80	-1.09	1.02
age	0.27	0.02	18.34	< .001	0.24	0.30	1.06
Has a degree	2.46	0.21	11.71	< .001	2.05	2.88	1.09
Has taken 3+ sustainability classes	4.21	0.25	16.99	< .001	3.72	4.70	1.5
Has taken sustainability class	2.15	0.22	10.01	< .001	1.73	2.57	1.46
Expert in sustainability	11.58	0.54	21.54	< .001	10.52	12.63	1.11
Has knowledge in sustainability	8.78	0.21	42.84	< .001	8.38	9.18	1.12

Note. N=28,997 R²=0.10 Adjusted R²= 0.10 F(7,28989)=459.90, p<.001. CI = confidence interval; VIF = variance inflation factor. Values are rounded to two decimal places.

For more information, email us at contact@sulitest.org 

By Estela Castelli Florino Pilz, Aurélien Decamps, Jean-Christophe Carteron, Scott Blair, and Tadsawan Tansuwan.

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The Sulitest Association holds Observer status to the UN Environment Assembly (Accreditation 430/218), Special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council since 2019, and is an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO (consultative status) since 2022.

Under French law, the Social Business Sulitest Impact is an *“Entreprise de l’Économie Sociale & Solidaire”* (*“SAS de type ESUS”*).

