KTH Internship Opportunity with SEI Latin America #1

Spring 2023

SEI Latin America has played a prominent role in developing and launching SEI’s publicly available SDG Synergies platform¹. This included organizing a number of the early practical applications of the theoretical approach proposed in Weitz et al (2017)², organizing learning from these early applications into a development plan for the pilot platform, beta testing the platform, and completing final platform development prior to the platform’s public launch in 2021. The SEI Latin America team also led the effort to publish a paper placing SDG Synergies within the efforts to analyze progress towards the Agenda 2030 from a systems analysis perspective (Hernandez et al 2021)³.

This paper made the argument that SDG Synergies should be considered within the framework of Soft Systems Analysis proposed first by Checkland (1989)⁴, and expanded upon by others. This was offered as an alternative to more Hard Systems Analysis espoused by a number of current authors as the correct framing to understand the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals as an integrated system (e.g. Guerrero and Castañeda 2020)⁵. While SEI Latin America remains satisfied with SDG Synergies and its intellectual positioning, it has not been free from criticism from the Hard Systems Analysis community. This internship would involve research that would allow SEI Latin America to better prepare for criticism coming from those promoting Hard Systems Analysis as the correct framing for understanding SDG interactions by suggesting ideas that would allow us to explore possible integration of Soft and Hard Systems Analysis approaches. Some potential activities might include:

- Further developing a database of Hard Systems Analysis approaches applied to Agenda 2030 cross-impact analysis and SDG interactions.
- Exploring new ways of measuring and calculating SDG interactions.
- Propose ways to couple SDG Synergies with Hard Systems Analysis and other systems modelling methods.

In addition to these research tasks, SEI Latin America would welcome support and innovation related to improving the day-to-day management of the recently launched SDG Synergies Platform. Some potential activities might include:

- Managing and extracting value from the platform’s user database, and requests for access to the platform.
- Marketing and outreach related to the platform.
- Proposing and leading new applications of SDG Synergies, and formalizing learning from these applications as a contribution to future updates to the platform.

The intern would integrate with the SDG team at SEI Latin America located in Bogota Colombia during the completion of the proposed internship.

¹ https://www.sdgsynergies.org/
² DOI 10.1007/s11625-017-0470-0
³ DOI 10.1007/s10668-021-01808-z
⁴ DOI 10.3233/HSM-1989-8405
⁵ DOI 10.1111/dpr.12498