

- **SDGs are off track**
- **Especially the environmental dimensions**
- **Why are SDGs off track?**
- **Studies of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) don't explain why**
- **Common reasons:**
 - Insufficient financing
 - COVID-19
 - Wars
 - Geopolitical competition
- **Little discussion of role of policies**

Existing Studies of VNRs Focus On:

- Document lack of progress
- SDG national institutional framework
- Discussion of specific topics (leave no one behind, interlinkages, challenges, etc.)
- Most Studies of VNRs do not focus on actual policies

➤ **Therefore, more studies of policies are needed**

VNRs Actually Include Many Policies

G20	4,112 Policies (Average 228/Country)
ASEAN	1,573 Policies (Average 175/Country)

G20 Policies Seem Mostly Substantial

Policy Types	Percent
1. Major laws, policies, strategies, enforcement	47.4%
2. Money-related (tax, spending, finance)	11.9%
3. Physical infrastructure, land management	6.4%
4. Projects, programs	16.5%
5. Information (education & training, monitoring, data, certification, registration, public awareness)	8.0%
6. Other	9.7%

Budget Results

G20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Most reported budget items, but not systematically ➤ Cumulative total: \$ 2.7 trillion ➤ Largest: India (\$ 689 billion)
ASEAN	➤ Most didn't report budgets

Budget Implications

- Most policies in any country are related to SDGs.
 - Policies are underreported and have associated spending.
- Therefore**
- Government SDG spending is significantly underreported.
 - Most spending is related to SDGs.

Global Government Spending

Global Gov. Spending (2021)	Global GDP (2021)
\$ 16.5 trillion	\$ 96.5 trillion

Probably close to real SDG spending by governments

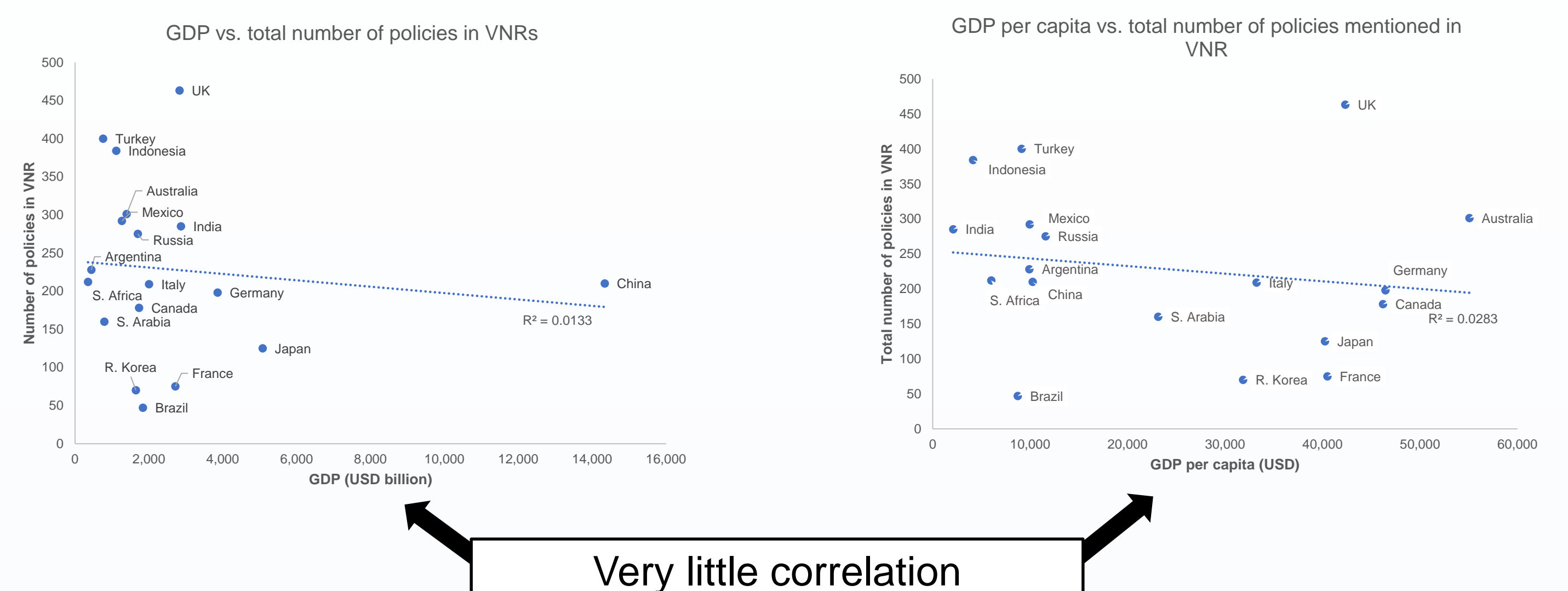
➤ **Key issue: need more spending on SDGs**

Environment-related SDG Policies in ASEAN

Country	Total SDG policies	Env. Policies	Percent
Brunei	270	65	24.1
Cambodia	128	51	39.8
Indonesia	225	48	21.3
Lao PDR	77	35	45.5
Malaysia	130	66	50.8
Philippines	92	33	35.9
Singapore	235	105	44.7
Thailand	215	89	41.4
Viet Nam	201	101	50.2
Total	1,573	593	37.7
Average	175	6624.1	39.3

Environment-related SDG policies in ASEAN: 593 / 1,573 = 37.7%

Comparison of Developed and Developing G20 Countries



Results

- Many SDG implementation policies in G20 VNRs
- Many policies are substantial, including strategies, regulations, financing
- Many policies were adopted after the start of SDGs
- G20 countries' spending is significant, but didn't include budgets systematically in VNRs
- Countries' GDP and GDP per capita were not major factors in the number of policies or their distribution

Conclusions

- **Lack of policies and budgets is not the main reason for insufficient progress on SDGs**
- **Need more research on actual SDG policies & budgets**

Implications for Future Research on VNRs

- **Policies' appropriateness**
- **Policies' level of ambition**
- **Policies' effectiveness**

Datasets Produced By These Studies

COUNTRIES	DATA	YEARS
1. G20	All SDGs	2016-2021
2. ASEAN	Environmental policies	2016-2021
3. ASEAN	All SDGs	2016-2020

How to Use The Datasets

- **To find policies on specific topics or SDGs**
- **Examples: environment, agriculture, health, etc.**

Advantage: Can find policies classified under various SDGs

Caution: Countries did not list all of their policies in their VNRs

This Poster Is Based On:

Elder, Mark, and Elli Newman. 2023. 'Monitoring G20 Countries' SDG Implementation Policies and Budgets Reported in Their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)'. *Sustainability* 15 (22): 15733. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su152215733>.

Elder, Mark, and Gemma Ellis. 2022. 'ASEAN Countries' Environmental Policies for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-022-02514-0>.

Elder, Mark. 2020. *Assessment of ASEAN Countries' Concrete SDG Implementation Efforts: Policies and Budgets Reported in Their 2016-2020 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)*. Hayama, Japan: Institute for Global Environmental Strategies. <https://www.iges.or.jp/en/pub/asean-sdg-vnrs/en>.