



## Supporting national policy-making for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Peer learning and exchange of experiences

On 25 September 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals are universal, applicable to all stakeholders and citizens, and involve all governance levels from the international, European, national to sub-national authorities. This new agenda is a global effort to provide guidance for a truly transformative endeavor for the future of our planet. With the aim to discuss and reflect upon the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and what it means for Europe, more than 80 participants from 21 European countries attended the **ESDN Conference 2015** (Luxembourg, 8-9 October 2015). The following recommendations for an effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Europe emerged from the conference:

### The ESDN Recommendations for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

#### Political commitment for the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is crucial

In order to effectively implement the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda for SD needs to be seen as a 'shared priority' for the future development of Europe: the European Commission should, therefore, announce SDG implementation as the '11<sup>th</sup> policy priority' of its mandate and consider a separate Communication on the 2030 Agenda for SD.

#### SDGs should be integrated in an overarching Sustainable Development policy framework in the EU (and its Members States) and in other European countries

This will make sure that the SDGs are at the centre of policy planning and annual budgets in the EU and all other European countries. At the international level, this would simultaneously show Europe's continued position as an ambitious frontrunner on SD. Thus, the ESDN underlines the importance of a new overarching strategic framework for implementing the 2030 Agenda for SD (which could be the role of a new EU-SDS), next to the integration of SDGs in existing strategic instruments (e. g. EU Semester, Europe 2020, 7EAP, etc.).

#### Immediate action in the EU is necessary to implement the 2030 Agenda for SD, complemented by progressive milestones and a long-term vision for 2050

Developing immediate action to implement the 2030 Agenda for SD and creating a new European narrative on SD is crucial. This should secure coherent short-term solutions that are able to respond to pressing policy issues whilst remaining in line with the long-term vision.

#### National implementation is key: the need and potential for peer learning is clear

The 2030 Agenda for SD suggests the use of "nationally owned SD strategies". Establishing peer learning processes

among policy-makers of European countries is strongly suggested. At the same time, increasing vertical cooperation would enhance the potential to support implementation and peer learning.

#### The EU and all other European countries should enhance horizontal integration and policy coherence

A particular focus on horizontal integration and policy coherence is needed to ensure effective cooperation between ministries and minimize the 'silo' approach in policy-making.

#### Stakeholder engagement, participation and partnerships are essential

It is important (i) to encourage and enable grass-root initiatives and experimentation; (ii) to create platforms that are not only comprised of institutionalized stakeholders, but also other actors for specific issues; and (iii) to use stakeholders for raising awareness for the importance of the 2030 Agenda for SD and to keep pressuring for its effective implementation.

#### The EU should adapt the global SD indicator set and complement it with its own measures

The EU should (i) agree on SD headline indicators, taking into account the global indicator set, and link them to a communication strategy; and (ii) provide common EU guidance and support on reporting.

### The ESDN's Proposition

In light of the efforts necessary to implement the 2030 Agenda for SD and the results of the ESDN Conference 2015, the ESDN aims to establish a **European SD Platform for Peer Learning** between national ministries responsible for the 2030 Agenda implementation process. This platform will facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices between national policy-makers. **The ESDN will strive to foster European policy-making on sustainable development**, through targeted ESDN workshops with national policy-makers on 2030 Agenda for SD implementation, and annual ESDN conferences with a broader stakeholder audience, including a strong collaboration with EU institutions (Council, Commission, and Parliament).

In addition, the ESDN will continue to offer its well-known services, incl.: its website as a one-stop shop for national SD policies and strategies in Europe, including country profiles of 33 European countries; ESDN Quarterly Reports on current SD topics as sources of high-quality knowledge; policy briefs to feed the results of the network's events and activities into the policy debates in Europe; and the management of the European SD Week as a cross-European, multi-stakeholder approach to encourage and visualize bottom-up contributions to deliver on the SDGs.