

POLICIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The Sustainable Development Strategies

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Evolution

- 1957 - 1972: Very little Environment
- 1972 - 1986: Environment within single market
- 1986 - 1992: Environment for its own sake
- 1992 - 2003: Environment as a priority; later becoming as a component of sustainable development
- 2005 - Present: Sustainable development as a component within the competitiveness agenda

Drivers: The internal market and national self- interest

- Different rules in different MS
- To avoid competitive disadvantage do we level up or level down?
- Environment and competitiveness: “First-mover-advantage” or merely higher costs?



Drivers: Rising public concern and impact

- Fear of a degrading environment
- Growing concerns on issues of public health and safety
- Looking to Europe to solve issues that domestic governments don't address



Drivers: Institutional Dynamics

- Commission actively pursues new domains
- Role of the Parliament in “greening” policy
- Ministers go above the national and straight to Europe
- European Environmental Agency gathers better information
- ECJ creates precedents



Drivers: Internal Coherence

- Environment naturally becomes SD as linkages become clearer
- All other drivers ultimately demand a joined-up approach
- Internal dynamics as well as responses to external international agreements



Drivers: Scientific Knowledge

- Understanding of environmental threats has increased
- Understanding of socio-ecological interface has increased

The importance of sustainable development

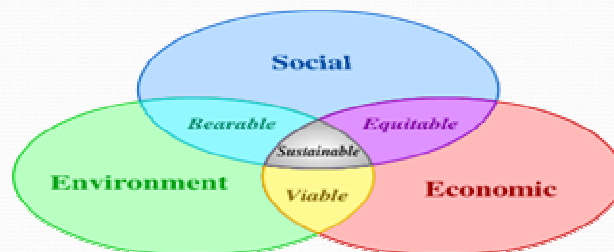
Several reports and initiatives, including:

- Club of Rome report “Limits to Growth” (1972) and “A New Path for World Development” (2008)
- Kyoto protocol (1997) on reduction of greenhouse gases
- Millenium Goals of the UN (2000)
- Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006)
- The new EU Agenda 2020, proposed by the European Commission in March 2010
- Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Truth” (2006)

What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but in the indefinite future.

A broader concept (People, Planet, Profit) than just environmental care (Planet)



The 2006 European agenda for SD

A Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy was adopted by the European Council in June 2006. It is an overarching strategy for all EU policies which sets out how we can meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The Sustainable Development Strategy deals in an integrated way with economic, environmental and social issues

Structure of EU SDS

- Introduction: "Our commitment to SD"
- "Declaration of SD"
- 7 key Challenges: overall objective, targets and measures
- Cross-Cutting policies contributing to the knowledge society (education, research and development)
- Financing and economic instruments
- Communication and mobilising actors
- Implementation, monitoring and follow-up

7 Key Challenges

- Climate change and clean energy
- Sustainable transport
- Sustainable consumption and production (eg. Green Public Procurement target, Eco-design directive, Eco-label regulation, EMAS regulation..)
- Conservation and management of natural resources (e.g. resource efficiency target)
- Public health
- Social inclusion, demography and migration
- Global poverty

Governance cycle

- Existence of follow-up mechanism very important: Commission progress report every two years, peer reviews
- National contribution/progress at national level – national SD strategies
- European Council will discuss about SD every two years
- SD-indicators
- Role of the regions and local level

Instruments to implement SDS

- Education and Training
- Research and Development
- Financial and Economic Instruments
- Communication and Monitoring
- Legislation

New developments and EU2020

What's happening now: Several parallel crises

- 1. Financial crisis, spilling over into the economy
- 2. Climate crisis
- 3. Ecosystem/Natural resources crisis
 - All these crises have the same roots, unsustainable use of resources – in the economic system and in nature.
 - Climate change and resource constraints will affect our economies negatively, will aggravate poverty in many developing countries and may lead to serious conflicts

EU Agenda for 2020: 5 targets

An EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

1. **Employment**
75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed
2. **R&D / innovation**
3% of the EU's GDP (public and private combined) to be invested in R&D/innovation
3. **Climate change / energy**
greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right) lower than 1990; 20% of energy from renewables;
20% increase in energy efficiency
4. **Education**
Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%
at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education
5. **Poverty / social exclusion**
at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion

Agenda 2020: 7 flagship initiatives

1. Innovation Union
 2. Youth on the move
 3. A digital agenda for Europe
 4. **Resource efficient Europe** to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernise our transport sector and promote energy efficiency
 5. An industrial policy for the globalisation era to improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally
 6. An agenda for new skills and jobs
 7. European platform against poverty.
- > **reduce environmental stress in growing economy and transform environmental challenges into economic opportunities**

Implementation of 2020 strategy

- Commitment of 27 EU member states: translation to national policies
- Funding programs
- Innovations in industry and transport
- “Green” mindset
- Energy saving (reduction of waste and more efficiency)
- Development of new energy sources
- Raising awareness of the citizens of Europe
- Promoting and supporting individual efforts of citizens

NEW ROADMAP:

A Resource Efficient Economy must:

- Save resources, taking existing opportunities for efficiency
- Reduce – dematerialize ways to meet people’s needs
- Substitute, for alternatives with lower resource use over the life cycle
- Value resources correctly in policy and business decisions
- Recycle and reuse, for a circular economy

Addressing the challenge: resource efficiency in Europe 2020 strategy

- Europe 2020 Strategy: Resource efficient Europe as a flagship initiative under sustainable growth;
- Communication "A resource-efficient Europe" Flagship initiative under Europe 2020 Strategy" of 26 January 2011;
- Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe – just published

Opportunities from resource efficiency

- Growth and job creation: reduced costs for companies and households, improved productivity supporting new jobs, new business opportunities,
- EU 20% energy efficiency target to cut households' bills by €1000 per year and create up to 2 million new jobs
- Competitiveness: opportunities to gain market shares through clean technology investment; 'first mover advantage' on global markets; 75% of large global corporations project their clean technology spending to rise in next 5 years
- Fiscal benefits: revenue from resource use rather than labour can help balance public finances without negatively affecting competitiveness, while significantly promoting employment

Opportunities from resource efficiency

- Economic resilience: reduced dependency on imported resources, reduced risk of economic shocks or supply constraints.
- Environmental resilience: strengthened resilience to the effects of climate change and risks related to food, water and energy supply.
- Reduced environmental impacts of economic activity.
- Water efficiency can be improved by 40% through technological improvements. In FR and ES 34% of water is lost, 7% in DK
- Quality of life and human health improved due to cleaner air and water, better food, preserved natural habitats etc.
- Global stability: reduced risk of conflicts related to natural resources (e.g. fuels, food, water), and migration

How to move on:

- To make SDS really effective will require a fundamental rethinking of the policy frameworks, not least in the field of economy
- Economic growth has to be redefined, focusing on quality and content
- From that would, of course, follow a series of decisions pertaining to governance and institutions. Most important will be to manage the horizontal linkage

Key challenges:

- The 3 topics are interconnected, but often dealt with in separate worlds
- How to create a process which pulls together knowledge (science), strategies (governance), indicators (monitoring) and assessments (analysis)
- Need for search for an assessment approach where environmental, social and economic perspectives are considered in an integrative / balanced way
- Give guidance to policy-planning: how to manage the long-term goals with uncertain impacts and complexity of the societal challenges
- Help politicians to make justified and sound decision

Major implications for EU policymaking

- Merge Lisbon/EU2020 and SDS – tension today between short term and long term - and around the concept of economic growth
- Use EU Budget to support SDS
- Structural/Cohesion Funds – major shortcomings today
- CAP must be reformed to support SDS
- More ambitious sectoral policy

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- Thank you for your attention – I simply must move on...

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