Governance for Sustainable Development: How to bring home the 2030 Agenda for SD in Europe?

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Overview

Are we fit for purpose?

1) 2030 Agenda: From adoption to implementation;
2) Status-quo of governance for SD in EU and MS;
3) 2030 Agenda governance provisions;
4) Recommendations from ESDN Conference 2015;
5) Conclusions and food for thought
“Countries now need to move from inspirational commitments undertaken at the UN to the hard task of implementation at the national [and EU] level.”

(Derek Osborn, President Stakeholder Forum, think piece on SDGs, published in report for EEAC)

or

How to bring home the ‘superlatives of hope’?
European Sustainable Development Strategy of 2006

Officially still with us, but not an active policy process...

**VERY MIXED BAG, but some things still active...**

- **NSDSs**: achieved since 2007 – but different degree of activities; *no steering / coordination from EU level*
- Eurostat Monitoring Reports on the EU SDS (since 2007, last one Sept 2015)
- Networks ESDN and EEAC continue to offer their exchange platforms

**Coming up...**

- **Karl Falkenberg** works on report on the EU SDS due in June 2016.
Europe 2020 Strategy

Also still with us, but from previous Commission...

→ Not an SD strategy (though with links to SD, e.g. resource efficiency)

Streamlined and coordinated implementation and review process:

• 5 headline targets, 7 flagship initiatives
• European Semester and Annual Growth Survey
• National Reform Programs at the MS level (done every year, latest April 2015); country-specific recommendations

Review to be expected later in 2015 (also based on results of public consultation)
National SD governance processes

National SD Strategy processes

All EU MS & most European countries have strategic SD process, most have NSDSs (26 out of 28 EU MS)

- Great variety in NSDS processes

**NSDS activities exist on all governance principles:**

a) Vertical integration (coordination between different government levels);

b) Horizontal integration (coordination between ministries on the same level);

c) Participation (inclusion of stakeholders);

d) Review processes (qualitative reviews and evaluations); and

e) Monitoring processes (quantitative, indicator based reports)
2030 Agenda – governance provisions

Implementation process:
- “Cohesive nationally owned SD strategies, supported by national financial frameworks, will be at the heart of our efforts”;
- Important role of stakeholders: national governments and parliaments, private sector, CSOs → multi-stakeholder partnerships

Follow-up and review processes:
- Will be “voluntary and country-led”, taking into account “different national realities”;
- Will build on “existing platforms and processes” and will be “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent” for all people

Regional level (e.g. EU):
- “facilitate the effective translation of SD policies into concrete action at national level”;
- Provides “useful opportunities for peer learning (incl. voluntary reviews), sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets”
“Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD at the EU and national level: Designing effective governance architectures and strategic frameworks”

- About 90 participants from 22 countries (EU and national policy-makers, CSOs, business, research)
- David Donoghue, Co-chair of the Post-2015 Development Agenda negotiations
- Keynotes, conversations, group work
(1) Political commitment is crucial:
• 2030 Agenda implementation needs to be seen ‘shared priority’ by EU and MS levels;
• New strategic EU approach on SD should be endorsed by all institutions.

(2) Europe needs overarching SD framework strategy:
• Lighthouse strategy for EU and MS level;
• Should be complemented by new engaging SD narrative and policy instruments;
• Establishing ambitious frontrunner position for international implementation

(3) SDGs as strategic and central policy objectives:
• SDG implementation as 11th policy priority of the European Commission;
• Integrating SDGs into new Europe 2020+ strategy;
• Giving SDGs priority in national development plans and budgets

(4) Making use of existing structures and processes
• ... as resources and capacities will remain limited...
• Make use of existing successful processes → focus on policy coherence
2030 Agenda impl. – governance principles

**Long-term vision and short-term action**
- Long-term vision for **2050** necessary;
- Short-term *action plans* to guarantee implementation

**Vertical policy integration**
- *Coordination & cooperation* among the various political levels (EU, MS, subnational);
- *Shared responsibility* in implementation;
- Strong *bottom-up* dimension

**Horizontal policy integration**
- *Changing silo-structures and -mentalities* in policy-making/administration;
- Creating system of ‘*sustainability checks’ or ‘tick-boxes*’ for each ministry;
- *Spaces for exchange* and cooperation between ministries
### Stakeholder participation

- Encourage and enable *grass-roots initiatives and experimentation*;
- *Exchange platforms for all stakeholders*, not only institutionalized ones;
- CSOs important to *reach out and raise awareness* for 2030 Agenda

### Follow-up, review and learning

- *Headline indicators* needed and linked to communication strategy;
- Establishing *peer learning process* between countries (role of the ESDN);
- *Learning mentality and adaptive changes*, rather than defensive mindset
Thanks for your attention!

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