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**REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

(Work in progress)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Review assembles information on different frameworks and processes, compiles and analyses it. It highlights promising practices and derives some orientations and principles for the formulation or improvement of strategic initiatives. The primary audience of the Review is the countries and all interested institutional or individual stakeholders.

Most countries in the region have taken the initiative to develop their own strategies.

Commitment

The strategy development process is in general backed by a strong political commitment from some influential individuals at high government level. Cross-government and local level institutional support do exist in places. Efforts are needed this commitment to be effectively shared by various sectors of government machinery and across levels of government.

Because in particular of international commitments, a sense of urgency is maintained by governments. However, it is premature to say that the commitment is there on a continuous, long-term basis.

Political commitment to sustainable development has not yet fully translated into financial resources that are affected to the strategy preparation and earmarked for implementation by different stakeholders, including government line agencies.

Some mechanisms are in place to foster multi stakeholder ownership and governance. They will necessitate continuous attention and efforts to ensure that there is a share vision of what needs to be done in the future, and an agreement on the courses of actions and responsibilities.

Although there is a huge variety of country situations, most often, a single government institution coordinates the process. When, this institution is a line agency or has limited influence at various administrative levels then its coordination capacity and technical leadership have to be built up.

In most countries of the Region, decentralization is a key dimension of government policies. Institutions and non-government stakeholders at the local level have shown their commitment to sustainable development process through various initiatives. Support to and coordination of these initiatives will contribute to forge national commitment.

Integration and Coherence

Most countries strive to foster integration and improve coherence.

Non-environmental sectors are progressively integrating the notion of sustainable development and its three traditional pillars in their policies. This does not automatically translate into sector strategies and programmes that are formatted in conformity with overall sustainable development objectives. The environment-social or economic-social interfaces have to be addressed more consistently and thoroughly.

As is often the case when planning horizons and government mandates are mid-term, the time dimension appears to be most difficult to factor into the policy processes. At the planning and programming levels, the establishment of strong linkages between immediate and mid-term undertakings and their monitoring and evaluation remains a challenge.

With decentralization processes, local initiatives have gained momentum and recognition. However, these need to be consolidated and mainstreamed into national efforts. Linking national and local priorities and actions in a two-way iterative process will call for departing from natural inclinations towards top-down exercises.

Most countries now display a set of methods, instruments and legislation that bring together different aspects of sustainable development. Following environmental analysis that are now anchored in legislation and routinely performed, economic instruments have become popular among policy makers. Although striving to incorporate different dimensions, the utilization of these instruments tends to remain the domain of specialists, environmentalists or economists. Methodological development and multidisciplinary capacity-building will be necessary to guarantee their acceptance and appropriation by a larger audience of institutional and individual stakeholders.

Stakeholder involvement

All countries strive to involve the different stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of their strategies. National steering committees or forums are the most common consultation mechanisms. Mandate and composition are broadly similar. The roles and responsibilities of different key participants are not always clearly defined and the level of stakeholders' engagement and appropriation varies significantly across countries.

The political influence of these mechanisms on the decision-making process is difficult to assess. Most often the relationships between the multi stakeholder entities, the lead government institution, and the secretariat are not specified. Effectively reaching a consensus remains a major challenge.

In general, legal frameworks have not been reviewed and adapted to provide specifically for stakeholder involvement in strategy preparation and implementation. Although exceptions exist in countries that have acceded to the Aarhus Convention or where EIA procedures traditionally leave room to public consultation.

The Review was not able to trace the existence of mechanisms in place for the evaluation of and feedback on consultation events or mechanisms.

In most countries, modern information and communication technologies are being used by responsible government agencies to foster communication and information dissemination. National media and NGOs are also playing a significant role in spreading the sustainable development concept. The extent to which they have contributed to raise awareness, alter behaviour, influence governance and engage stakeholders' responsibility is not known.

Management Systems

Most secretariats established to coordinate the formulation and implementation of the strategy are facing the dilemma of providing leadership and impetus, while remaining

politically neutral and arbitrating conflicting interests between and within major groups.

Secretariats are placed in the lead agencies, most often Ministries of environment. They do not all have the political clout and stakeholders acceptance. They do not always possess the specific skills (e.g. coordination of multi stakeholder processes, strategic analysis, communication, conflict management, etc.) or cannot easily obtain the additional financial and human resources that are needed to perform their functions.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose

This Review maps out what strategic and coordinated approaches are taken by the countries to foster sustainable development. It examines the relevant policy frameworks and processes as well as the arrangements to implement and monitor the change toward sustainable development. This stocktaking exercise can be used as baseline information for future reviews.

The Review also strives to distil promising practices that support the preparation and implementation of strategic and coordinated approaches. Highlighting promising experience may inform the better design of future national or regional sustainable development strategies.

Resources allowing and depending on the interest shown by different stakeholders, the Review could be transformed into a tool¹ to monitor countries' sustainable development efforts at the regional level; and to help identify, explore and possibly address common issues² through partnerships.

In a nutshell, the Review assembles information on different frameworks and processes, compiles and analyses it. It highlights promising practices and derives some orientations and principles for the formulation or improvement of strategic initiatives. The Review is largely based on current conceptual thinking and principles. Its purpose is not to assess, rate and compare the different national situations using a set of stringent criteria. The primary audience of the Review is the countries and all interested institutional or individual stakeholders.

1.2. Background

At the Rio Summit and in later commitments, countries agreed on sustainable development (SD) as the guiding vision for the world. Since then, the countries in the Mediterranean region, as in other parts of the world, are striving to incorporate sustainable development concerns in their understanding, practices and behaviours.

Making sustainable development happen poses new challenges to countries: to address issues within, across and beyond traditional sectors in a way that integrates the sustainable development dimensions (integration of economic, social and environmental aspects); to develop a longer term vision that embeds short-term steps (inter generational perspective); and, to involve a wider range of stakeholders and respond to their expectations, interests, needs and concerns (governance).

Sustainable development indeed requires a fundamental change of perspectives and new ways of working. The new paradigm and commitments call for re-visiting and inventing the relationships between policy, knowledge and consensus. This does not necessarily mean starting anew everything but rather strengthening, reforming and

1 e.g. a website.

2 e.g. Capacity building and information management issues.

supplementing what policy frameworks, processes and mechanisms already exist with the view to increase consistency and coherence³.

In order to channel change efficiently and effectively, some sort of formalized canvas may prove indispensable to guide, manage and monitor the restructuring or aligning of existing policies, institutional arrangements and procedures. This canvas like any other strategic framework would specify goals, steps and activities, responsibilities, means and tools for implementation and monitoring. It is generically referred to as a "sustainable development strategy".

There cannot be a unique approach to internalize sustainable development systematically: each country needs to steer its own path according to specific context and circumstances⁴. As a consequence, there is bound to be a diversity of efforts and experience.

Although differing in their strategic approaches towards sustainable development, countries are confronted with similar challenges. Introducing changes is difficult, seldom straightforward or immediate, and not readily acceptable to all stakeholders. Whatever approach is adopted, this will require time, necessarily be incremental, and will entail continuous learning by doing. One implication is that changes need to be permanently managed, monitored and documented.

Being different while facing similar challenges creates opportunities to learn from each other's experience and be stimulated by achievements elsewhere. Belonging to a wider global or regional community is also an incentive. The momentum created by international and regional policy dialogues and commitments towards sustainable development has positively influenced national knowledge, know-how and attitudes⁵.

Based on conceptual work and countries' experience, there starts to be a better understanding of what strategies for sustainable development are and entail. Concepts become clarified, common principles and criteria emerge, and guidance is progressively available.

As requested by several members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), the MAP Secretariat has undertaken an overall assessment of the countries' decisions and actions related to sustainable development, more precisely the preparation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development. The Review was prepared in the lights of the recent developments in the knowledge base⁶, with a view to supporting the eventual preparation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD).

³ see footnote 4 next page.

⁴ e.g. natural, human, financial capacities; policy, institution, organization and procedures; historical background and values, etc.

⁵ for instance, the European Commission's Sustainable Development Strategy has had significant influence on a number of Members' NSDS. The forthcoming MSSD could certainly have a similar stimulating effect.

⁶ Further to OECD work, the conceptual base on sustainable development strategy is quite developed. Source books and Guidelines are available. There starts to be reviews and assessments of national efforts.

1.3. Methodology

The Review is guided by generic questions that differ according to the country situation:

- when a national strategy is being prepared: what are the elements, mechanisms and arrangements for preparation?
- when a national sustainable development strategy has been approved by government and is being implemented: what are the components, mechanisms and arrangements for implementation?
- when there is no national sustainable development strategy: what elements, mechanisms and organisational arrangements of already existing frameworks could be used, on which to build a national sustainable development strategy?

1.3.1. Working definitions and Analytical framework

Under the impulse of UN-DESA and OECD, there is now a substantial and enlightening conceptual work on sustainable development strategies. Yet all information contained therein may not be directly operational. The methodological effort of the Review was geared at trimming the conceptual work down to elements that help to structure the stocktaking exercise and the report, i.e. to establish a method and a questionnaire⁷ that can be used to assemble information, and obtain it on a regular basis.

Overall considerations

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) defines a strategy for sustainable development as comprising: “ a coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and investment, which seek to integrate the short and long term economic, social and environmental objectives of society- through mutually supportive approaches wherever possible- and manages trade-offs where this is not possible”. It is a combination of processes that concur to mainstream sustainable development concerns and action.

In most countries, there already exist a variety of strategic frameworks and processes that taken together could meet their definition. Working towards sustainable development calls for progressively improving the complementarity between these frameworks and processes, supplementing them when needed, and increasing the overall coherence⁸. Policy consistency has to do with design and implementation of policies of several sectors or agencies to support an overall common goal (vision). The key is to avoid policies that conflict in reaching for the defined goal. i.e. remove policy contradictions. Coherence is the quality of being logically integrated, consistent and intelligible. Coherence evokes logic, consistency and constancy of purposes and decisions. Ensuring coherence involves the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policy actions across government and other stakeholders, creating synergy towards sustainable development. Policy coherence goes beyond consistencies and implies synergies of the different

⁷ structured questionnaire in annex 1.

⁸ adapted from OECD 2003. Policy Brief. *Policy coherence: Vital for global development.*

contributions from different sector policies (policy areas). i.e. a more positive, stronger vision of how objectives can be achieved.

For the sake of activating and managing changes and reforms, countries may, depending on their needs, priorities and resources, consider it appropriate to formalize an overarching approach (i.e. a sustainable development strategy) and establish a system to manage the process of change. This entails political will, a vision and continuous commitment, capacities and financial resources.

UNDESA and OECD define the key components of a sustainable development strategy preparation and implementation as follows:

a long term vision with principles and priorities, that is implemented through a set of inter related processes⁹ (e.g. achieving policy integration and convergence, involving stakeholders, and using and building up the knowledge base) that are effected by

- a combination of different mechanisms (e.g. coordination and planning, participation and communication, information systems and capacity building) and tools (e.g. conflict management, strategic assessment), managed, when appropriate, through
- organisational arrangements (e.g. a "management system" with a mandate, resources and influence) that provide for overall coherence and coordination.

Strategic Frameworks

Strategic frameworks here comprise National sustainable development strategies and National Agenda 21 as well as cross-sector strategic frameworks that incorporate a vision, principles and priorities pertaining to sustainable development concerns and issues (e.g. National Environmental Strategies and Action Plans, Poverty reduction Strategies, Comprehensive Development Frameworks, etc). On strategic frameworks, the Review is guided by the following questions:

- What are the major frameworks that relate to sustainable development?
- What are the principles, themes and priority areas?

Processes and Mechanisms

The OECD DAC Guidelines offers a comprehensive description of processes and mechanisms that are essential to strategic frameworks.

The Review initially focuses on three processes¹⁰ and the related mechanisms and tools:

- (i) *Achieving Policy Integration and Convergence;*
- (ii) *Involving Stakeholders;*
- (iii) *Using and Building up the Knowledge base.*

In general terms, a process is defined as a series of action that produces a change or effect. Mechanisms are sets of tools, procedures, institutional and administrative measures, means and responsibilities, that are arranged together to perform a

⁹ OECD DAC

¹⁰ Indeed, while the Review recognizes the importance of other processes such as Financial Resources Mobilization and Allocation, or Planning and Decision-making, it does not analyze them because the related information is not always readily available for all countries in the region.

specific function or achieve a given output. For instance, the process of involving stakeholders may require conflict management techniques and training, legal and financial provisions for participation, planning, infrastructures, organization, etc

Achieving Policy Integration and Convergence

Integration and increasing convergence toward sustainable development entail striking the balance between social, environmental and economic perspectives and objectives; incorporating other level concerns and actions (i.e. local, regional or global) into national decisions and implementation; and, adopting a long term perspective combined with short term targets.

Integration and convergence can be promoted through a variety of mechanisms: policy formation and instruments, like legislation and economic instruments; organisation, institutions and procedures; planning, implementing and monitoring.

On integration and convergence the Review focuses on the following generic questions:

- How are sustainable development concerns streamlined into sector and overall policies¹¹?
- What are the local initiatives towards sustainable development?
- What planning tools and fiscal instruments provide for integration?
- What are the linkages between different planning horizons?

Involving Stakeholders.

A balanced representation of civil society, stakeholder groups and business as well as government, is fundamental to sustainable development.

There exist different forms and levels of participation in policy processes that ensure governance of the strategy: on the one hand, there is a representative multi-stakeholder steering entity that makes key policy decisions, and engages partners who are indispensable for effective implementation of changes and reforms. On the other hand, public involvement¹², through periodic consultative events and continuing communication, is also important for building up broad-based legitimacy.

Essential mechanisms include: multi-layered and inclusive consultative events (e.g. forum, workshops, roundtables), institutionalised public communication and awareness raising (e.g. through media), promotion of strategic partnerships to share opportunities and responsibilities (e.g. private voluntary initiatives).

On stakeholder involvement, the Review is guided by the following generic questions¹³:

- What steering mechanism exists to represent stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of the strategy?

¹¹ The central issue of investment pattern and how SD is integrated in existing budget process is not addressed here.

¹² UN DESA (2002) Guidance in Preparing a National Sustainable Development Strategy: Managing Sustainable Development in the New Millennium. Background Paper No.13. (DESA/DSD/PC2/BP13). Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book. IIED 2002. Compiled by Barry Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass for OECD and UNDP.

¹³ Partnerships building is another central mechanism that is not considered by the Review due to limited resources and time available.

- What regular consultation forms have been used to engage the different stakeholders across sectors and between levels?
- What communication and information systems are being used to inform and raise awareness on sustainable development?

Using and Building up the Knowledge base.

Decision-making for sustainable development depends on reliable information and knowledge on environmental, social and economic conditions, trends, pressures and responses, and their correlation with strategic objectives and indicators. Due to complex interactions between factors, there may not be conclusive scientific evidence or converging stakeholders' perspectives on sustainable development issues. In these cases, there is a need to support debate to confront visions and values in order to take decisions based on trade-offs as widely acceptable as possible.

On knowledge, the Review limits itself to mentioning some of the existing tools or systems in order to provide a picture of the state of resources, trends in their quality and quantity, and the pressures upon them. The central issues of: incorporating the diversity of knowledge among stakeholders into policy decisions, assessing the outcomes of the sustainable development processes, and building up the knowledge and capacity of different stakeholders could not be addressed given the resources and time available.

Organisational arrangements

Leadership and effective management are among the essential common characteristics exhibited by successful strategies. Usually, there is a small team that maintain the spirit and momentum, provides leadership, organizes, coordinates and administers the different processes, harnesses the human and financial capacities and potential, and monitors achievements.

Initially, the Review intended to explore the different management systems, their mandates, organizational structures and resources. Limited information and time availability have hampered the analysis. The Review therefore limits itself to describing some examples of management systems.

1.3.2. Sources of information

On the conceptual framework

The analytical framework is largely inspired by the conceptual work of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the guidance developed by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). Primary sources and related websites include:

OECD DAC (2001). *The DAC Guidelines. Strategies for Sustainable Development. Guidance for Development Cooperation*. Development Cooperation Committee, OECD, Paris. <http://www.oecd.org/topic/>

UN DESA (2002) *Guidance in Preparing a National Sustainable Development Strategy: Managing Sustainable Development in the New Millenium*.

Background Paper No.13. (DESA/DSD/PC2/BP13).
<http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/html/documents/backgrounddocs/nsdsreport.pdf>

Additional information was provided by:

OECD 2003. Policy Brief. *Policy Coherence: Vital for global development*. OECD, Paris.

OECD 2002. Policy Brief. *Improving Policy Coherence and Integration for Sustainable Development: A Checklist*. OECD, Paris.

OECD Policy Workshop, 2004. *Policy Coherence and Development Evaluation Concepts, Issues and Possible Approaches*. OECD, Paris

Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. IIED 2002. Compiled by Barry Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass for OECD and UNDP .
<http://www.nssd.net/working/resource/indexa.htm#contents>

Country level information

Information on the country status has been provided by official Websites of the concerned Ministries, the national reports submitted to UN DESA in the context of Rio follow up, as well as specific regional or global reviews. One should mention:

UNEP/MAP 2001. *Strategic Review for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region. Based on countries' reply to the Questionnaire on Initiatives and Actions towards Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Region and National report prepared for the MCSD Strategic Review*

UNDESA Country Profiles 2002. The 2002 Country Profiles provides the most comprehensive overview to date of the status of implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level. Each Country Profile is based on information updated from that contained in the national reports submitted annually by governments to the UN DESA. <http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natinfo>. and <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natinfo/natinfo.htm>

European Commission 2004. Commission staff working document. *National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union: A first analysis by the European Commission*.
http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/docs/annex_sustainable_development_strategies.pdf

When necessary information were supplemented by:

UN DESA (2004). *Assessment Report on the National Sustainable Development Strategies: The Global Picture 2003*.
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natinfo/nsds/map2002.htm>

OECD 2002. *Environmental Performance Reviews (1st Cycle) Conclusions & Recommendations 32 Countries (1993-2000)*

IISD and GTZ (2004). *National Strategies for Sustainable Development: Challenges, Approaches and Innovations in Strategic and Co-ordinated Action*.
<http://www.iisd.org/publications/publication.asp?pno=640>

UNDP 2004. *Capacity development for environmental sustainability. UNDP country level initiatives*.

When available, national NGOs' websites provided additional information.

1.3.3. Steps and Limitations

The country level information available in the UNEP/MAP Secretariat files and various websites was screened with the help of a structured questionnaire (Annex 1). Preliminary Country Profiles¹⁴ were prepared indicating the different strategic frameworks, the processes and mechanisms that relate to sustainable development, and the coordination system to implement them. The draft Country Profiles and a questionnaire highlighting the information gaps were sent to the MAP National Focal Points and some MCSD Members in order to obtain updated information, comments and suggestions, as well as possible additional information sources. Draft Country Profiles could be improved in so far as feed back was obtained within the deadlines.

In the context of post Rio process, the same level of information does not exist for all countries, despite standard questionnaires and common reporting obligations to CSD. The information from the websites and reports does not account for a constantly evolving situation but rather does it provide a snapshot situation. In a given country, there might be different documents issued by different government sources, at different time. Websites and reports may not reflect plainly processes at play (e.g. the effectiveness of a consultation or coordination mechanism), notably because independent assessments are not habitually made.

Most sections in the Report strive to follow the same structure: a brief explanation of the underlying concepts and ideas, based on the current common understanding; the limitations and the contents of the section; the description of overall situation in the region; some examples of specific country experience based on the information collected or received; and some observations and remarks.

¹⁴ Initially, the country profiles are not intended to be disseminated but rather used for the sake of compilation, analysis and synthesis.

2. STOCKTAKING RESULTS

2.1. Mapping out the current situation (Policy Frameworks)

2.1.1. Existing strategic frameworks

In addition to specific National sustainable development strategies (NSDSs) and National Agendas 21, most other cross-sector strategic frameworks also incorporate a vision as well as principles and priorities that encompass sustainable development concerns and issues. One can mention: Strategies for economic recovery and growth (e.g. Structural Adjustment Programmes, Comprehensive Development Framework), Strategies for poverty reduction and social development (e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategies), Strategies for environmental conservation and management that strive to integrate environment into development (e.g. National Conservation Strategies, National Environment Action Plans), and Convention-driven strategies (e.g. National Biodiversity Action Plans, National Action Programmes against Desertification, National Plans to address Climate Change).

This section identifies existing framework documents that relate to sustainable development, and, briefly mentions the context that have encouraged countries to prepare a national strategy.

Directly related frameworks

In the Region, different strategic frameworks, action programmes or action plans are inspired by sustainable development considerations and principles:

- NSDS; Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development; or Agenda 21: France, Israel, Greece, the Republic of Montenegro, Malta and Spain¹⁵, and Tunisia;
- National Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development; National Strategy or Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development: Algeria, Italy, Morocco;
- National Environment Action Strategies or/and Plans (NEAPS): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, Lebanon, Slovenia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey;
- Strategy for Land Management and Sustainable Development: Morocco.

Under different names, these frameworks already constitute sustainable development strategies or could serve as foundation to elaborate them. In the following chapters, the generic term “strategy” is used to encompass all frameworks that appear to be directly relevant to sustainable development concerns and issues, whatever their names.

¹⁵ as of November 2004, Malta is updating a draft a NSSD document and Spain's is in draft form.

Table 1. *SD related Strategic Initiatives and Frameworks*

	National SD Strategy	National Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development	National Environment Action Strategies or/and Plans	Links to overall national planning framework	Examples of Other relevant Strategic Frameworks
Albania			NEAP (2001)		PRS (2001) Management Program for Coastal zones (1996)
Algeria		National Action Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development (2002)		Strategy for Economic Revival (2001-2004)	
Bosnia and Herzegovina			NEAP (2002)		PRS (2004-2007))
Croatia			NEAP (2002)		
Cyprus			EAP (1996) Action Plan for the Protection of the Environment	Strategic Development Plan (2004-2006)	
Egypt			NEAP (2002-2017) National Agenda 21 (?)	Development and Reconstruction Map of Egypt up to 2017	
France	NSSD (2003)				
Greece	NSSD (2202)				
Israel	Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development in each Ministry (2003)			National Master Plan for Development and Conservation; Coastal Area Management Programme (1996)	Sector Master Plans for Infrastructures and Protection of Natural Resources
Italy		Environmental Strategy for Sustainable development (2002)		National Document for Economic and Financial Planning 2001-2004	
Lebanon					PRS
Lybian Arab Jamahirrya					
Malta	NSSD being prepared			National Development Plan 2004-6	Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands 1990
Monaco					
Morocco		National Strategy for Environment and Sustainable Development (1995). National Action Plan for Environment (1998)		National Plan for Economic and Social development (1999-2003)	National Charter for Land Management and Sustainable Development (2004)
Montenegro	Sustainable Strategy of the Ecological State of Montenegro (1996)				PRSP
Slovenia			NEAP (1999)	Strategy for Economic development (2001-2006)	
Spain	Draft NSSD (2002)				
Syria			NEAP (2001)		
Tunisia	National Agenda 21 (1995)			10 th Social and Economic Development Plan (2002-2006)	
Turkey			NEAP (1998)	FYP 1991-1996 and successors	

Other relevant Frameworks

Other comprehensive frameworks that can be built upon to meet the OECD definition of national sustainable development strategy include periodic National Development Plans as well as externally stimulated¹⁶ initiatives.

Besides National Conservation Strategies that are more frequent in the Southern part of the Region, most countries have developed National Plans and Strategies in conjunction with the implementation of international Conventions such as UNCBD and UNFCCC. Countries that are Parties to the UNCCD have also prepared National Action Plan to Combat Desertification. One should note that institutional responsibility for the preparation of these cross-sector strategies or plans has often been given to environment ministries.

Comprehensive Development Frameworks strive to reinforce long term strategic horizon and vision, ownership, partnerships between stakeholders as well as country accountability Under CDF, Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) deserve a special mention because they are opportunities to integrate environmental considerations in addition to social and economic aspects. The example of Albania illustrates how the National Strategy of Social and Economic Development - Poverty Reduction Strategy (launched in 2001) considers different sustainable development dimensions:

In **Albania**, the PRS process involves a range of consultation and dialogue with different stakeholders (e.g. civil society business and local governments) at central and local levels. The PRS's aim is to increase GDP, improve education and public health, improve and protect the environment and reduce regional differences.

A special PRS chapter deals with sustainable urban and rural development.

The workshop organized on "Poverty and Environment" has contributed to the inclusion of environmental issues in the strategy. The document recognizes environment protection (and its implementation through healthy, sustainable and integrated policies) as an important factor for poverty reduction, economic growth, and the long term development of the country.

Environment-related issues in PRS include: strengthening the Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Inspectorate, the definition of other central and local institutions' environmental responsibilities, the creation of emergency structures for cases of natural disaster, awareness raising for the business community and its participation in consultation and decision-making structures, the adoption of environmental economic policies and instruments, the adoption of environmental quality standards, the reduction of pollution sources. Other issues include: the development and sustainable exploitation of natural resources in a way that ensures access for the poorer segment of the population.

Source: World bank. PRSP-related coordination challenges in Europe; the case of Albania. Preliminary draft; Tirana donor workshop version, May 2004.

Other integrated frameworks comprise specific national strategies, plans or programme such as National Conservation Strategies and Coastal Area

¹⁶ For a full development see : OECD DAC (2001). *The DAC Guidelines. Strategies for Sustainable Development. Guidance for Development Cooperation*. Development Cooperation Committee, OECD, Paris. And Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. IIED 2002.

Management Programmes aimed at translating Agenda 21 and Med Agenda 21 into practical applications in Mediterranean coastal areas.

Whether in the South or the North, the profusion of integrated frameworks relevant to sustainable development is illustrated by the following examples:

Albania

National Strategy of Social and Economic Development - Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS launched in 2001).
National Strategy and Action Plan on Biodiversity (2000)
National Assessment Report for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002)
Albanian National Strategy for Water (2004)
National Plan of Government (2002-2005)
Stabilization Association Agreement
Local Environmental Action Plan (Korca, Lezha, Tirana, Vlore)
Management Programme of Coastal Zone (1996)
National Strategy for Energy
National Plan to Combat Desertification
National Plan for Land management
National Action Plan for Health and Environment (1998)
Green Strategy for Agriculture (1998)
Strategy for Forests and Pastures Development (1998)
National Water Strategy (1998)
National Plan for Waste Management (1996).

Spain

National Energy Plan
National Plan for Sustainable Tourism
National Strategy for Forests and Forest Plan
White Book of Water
National Program to combat desertification
National Strategy for Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity
Policy of Protected Marine Areas
National Strategy on Climate Change
National Hydraulic Plan
Purification and Drainage National Plan
Waste Management Plan.

Tunisia

National Action Plan to Combat Desertification
National Urban Development Strategy
National Land Use Plan (SNAT, 1997 which is largely based on sustainable development and National Agenda 21 principles).
National Strategy for the sustainable management of marine resources
Strategy to promote rural women and improve living conditions.

Observations and Remarks

As indicated in Table 1. *SD related Strategic Initiatives and Frameworks*, only few countries have a stand alone NSDS.

The panorama is contrasted and evolves as more countries are encouraged to prepare their own NSDSs.

NEAPs are frequently equated with sustainable development strategies, particularly second generation NEAPS that give increased importance to social and economic considerations.

One cannot say that there are more NSDS in the Northern or Southern countries of the Region, nor that the integration of sustainable development into policy processes is more advanced in developing countries than in others. There is no obvious stratification of the framework types according to geographic or economic situations. Some countries may have complementary or apparently parallel frameworks.

The existence or absence of a NSSD **document** does not necessarily indicate whether or not there exists a national sustainable development strategy in the sense of OECD or UNCSO definitions. The existence of a strategy document does not inform on the quality of on-going processes. (this could be explained further since it is rather vague).

Triggers

For a given country, different factors related to the global or regional context are conducive to the adoption of sustainable development perspectives and the preparation of a strategy.

The follow-up process to Rio, in particular the preparation of CSD Meetings and the related reporting obligations, as well as the signature of SD-related Conventions have been major drives for the adoption of sustainable development visions.

At a regional level, the European Commission has played a significant role to inspire most member or accession countries with sustainable development concern, and has in promoting the integration of sustainable development into policies, particularly environmental policies. For instance, the preparation of Greece' NSDS has been influenced by the European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy adopted at the Goteborg Council. The Italian National Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development¹⁷ (NESSD) was developed in accordance with the 6th Environmental Action Plan and the guidelines of Barcelona 2002 European Council. Prior to their accession, all recent members (e.g. Cyprus) had developed a National Environmental Action Programmes (NEAP¹⁸) and adopted/implemented the European Union's Environmental Acquis. (Not true for Malta as it does not have a NEAP).

In some cases, the catalyst role of organizations like the OECD or international and bilateral agencies has been important. The OECD's substantive work on Environmental Performance Reviews has influenced the environmental policies of members and other countries towards adopting a sustainable development perspective. In some countries (for instance, France), the NSDS conspicuously meet OECD Environmental Performance Study recommendations on the integration of

¹⁷ *Strategia Nazionale Ambientale per uno sviluppo sostenibile*. 1993. Ministero dell'Ambiente.
http://www.minambiente.it/sito/news/strategie_sostenibilita.asp

¹⁸ The new generation of NEAPs keep a strong environmental focus but also include social (participation) and economic (economic instruments) dimensions. The importance of social considerations is further supported by the adoption of the Aarhus Convention and its principles (it would be useful to explain what Aarhus is about).

sustainable development. Most developing countries of the Region have developed sustainable development frameworks with donor support. The UNDP supported a National Agenda 21, in Tunisia, the World Bank promoted the draft of a National Environmental Action Programme in Albania, and the State of Montenegro has developed its strategy with the European Centre for Peace and Development.

Some Remarks

The importance of international or regional initiatives and frameworks to create a momentum at country levels is recognized. One could anticipate that the recent European Union's SDS will have a similar stimulating effect to the 6th Environmental Action Plan, particularly if some form of "European Union Sustainable Development Acquis" is adopted and implemented. The proposed MSDS could also play such catalytic role.

If the direct support of international organizations remains important to developing countries, one could also consider the role of horizontal cooperation between countries. Exchange of experience between different countries is largely provided by the CSD's international and regional events. Synergies between two countries preparing or implementing their national strategy could be encouraged further. Assuming that the experience of paired countries can be mutually beneficial, one could foster these partnerships towards sustainable development¹⁹.

If they departed from previous approaches²⁰, donors could play an indispensable role to put in place mechanisms and processes for sustainable development. The OECD²¹ identifies different areas where coordinated and harmonized external partners' interventions could contribute significantly: promoting and ensuring country ownership, participatory approaches, strengthening strategic analysis and management capacity, public communication and information systems.

Whatever the influence of the international context, direct experience with country processes suggests that the presence and commitment of a charismatic, influential person is an important determinant of whether impetus and momentum are maintained in the process.

¹⁹ Ex. In Israel the impact of the WSSD was very significant in generating initiative and establishing inter-ministerial frameworks. Regarding paired countries, Israel benefited at the early stages from guidance from The Netherlands in establishing sector dialogue in target groups (such as industry, tourism, agriculture, etc).

²⁰ Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book. IIED 2002. make a critical assessment of past donor support: "...These initiatives have been promoted from outside as time-bound projects rather than ongoing policy mechanism... With donor financial support and technical expertise, little emphasis was placed by sponsors on country ownership".

²¹ OECD DAC (2001). The DAC Guidelines. Strategies for Sustainable Development. Guidance for Development Cooperation. Development Cooperation Committee.

2.1.2. Principles and Scopes

Most strategies enunciate general principles, focus on issues, themes and identify priority areas²².

This section describes the principles and scopes of the different strategies. It also considers which dimensions of sustainable development are privileged and whether dimensions are addressed from an integrated perspective (i.e. considering the interdependence and interactions between dimensions and/or interactions between different central, regional and local levels).

Principles

Table 2. *Founding Principles in Strategic Frameworks* presents the different strategic principles in the 21 countries of the region.

The variety is particularly striking in the case of National Sustainable Development Strategies. For instance, the Greek NSDS identifies general principles (precautionary principle, polluter pays principle, equity and shared responsibility) and specific principles (decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation, sector integration, emphasis on prevention and management rather than remediation and investment, identification and management of carrying capacity as a basis for policies). In Spain's NSDS, principles are largely based on the UN Rio Declaration (social cohesion and social development, balanced economic growth with sustainable production and consumption patterns, conservation of natural and human patrimony, balanced regional land dynamics and sustainable urban development, and contribution to global development).

Most countries who adopted the NEAP approach (e.g. Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina) share the same principles: integration of environment policy into other sector policies, partnership and shared responsibilities, change in behaviour/attitude of production and consumption, and increased utilization of economic instruments.

²² The very notions of "principles", "focus", "themes" and "priority areas" vary significantly across countries, to the extent that what is described as a "principle" in one national strategy can be labeled as a "theme" or "priority area" in another. This increases further the variety of situations and renders classification unhelpful.

Some observations on Principles

Principles can convey values (e.g. equity principle), give policy or strategic orientations (e.g. sector integration, decouple economic growth and pressure on environment, precautionary principle), or constitute merely action-oriented and operational rules (e.g. polluter pays principle).

Principles can refer to a single dimension of sustainable development (e.g. social cohesion, improve and protect the environment) or draw attention on the necessary synergy/balance between social, environment and economic dimensions (e.g. balance economic growth with sustainable production and consumption).

Principles can convey a sense of the intergenerational dimension (e.g. conservation of natural resources capital and human patrimony) or the interdependency of scales (e.g. balanced regional land dynamics, contribution to global development).

All strategic documents emphasize the need to better integrate the social, environmental and economic dimensions in the policies and decision-making processes. This concern does not systematically translate into similar principles. Consequently, the extent to which sustainable development considerations are effectively factored into country strategies varies widely.

The mixed nature (value, policy, operational) of principles makes them difficult to be implemented consistently and uniformly by different stakeholders.

Issues, themes and priority areas

The issues, themes and priority areas of a strategy determine its scope. The scope of a strategy reflects the country context (social, environmental and political) and is based on an implicit or explicit national vision of sustainable development.

The issues, themes and priority areas vary significantly across countries. Most issues, themes and priority areas entail social, economic or environmental aspects or dimensions²³. For the convenience of description, issues, themes and priority areas have been grouped into broad categories²⁴ according to whether they pertain more or less directly to one dimension or combine different social, environmental and economic aspects:

- Protection and management of natural capital and ecosystems;
- Management of environmental flows;
- Production and consumption in a globalized market economy;
- Protection and development of human capital.

These categories, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, are presented in Table 3 on *Themes and Priority Areas of SD Related Strategic Frameworks*.

²³ However, one cannot say that all dimensions are "covered". In a SD sense. Also from a SD perspective, interactions between the different dimensions are often more important than the dimensions themselves..

²⁴ However, some themes and priority areas do not fall into this classification. They include international action (Croatia, France) often based on the bilateral or international legally binding agreements (UNCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, etc.); foreign aid and solidarity (OECD countries); and follow-up to WSSD.

Observations on dimensions in existing strategies

Issues, themes and priority areas with environmental focus or connotation (categories 1 and 2) are prevailing and usually more precise or specific than others. Most frameworks, NEAPs²⁵ in particular, remain largely environment-oriented and emphasize the protection of the environmental resource capital. The prevalence of environmental issues may be explained by the fact that strategies are often prepared by Ministries of Environment or because environmental issues are more visible and easily observed. Whatever the reason, environmental issues appear to be the most common entry points to sustainable development strategy formulation and implementation.

The dimensions are often considered independently. The strategies seldom consider synergies between the different dimensions as part of the problem/issue and part of the solution. Issues, themes and priority areas merging the economic and environmental dimensions are more widespread than those combining other dimensions. Issues, themes and priority areas where social and environmental dimensions are integrated are conspicuously absent (e.g. addressing environmental issues due to social constraints, or vice versa).

Issues, themes and priority areas pertain to one or several sectors, or can be non-sector specific.

By addressing independently the different dimensions or having separate objectives for each of them, the inter linkages are skipped and the necessary trade-offs are masked.

Most countries face the challenge to anchor the different dimensions of sustainable development into their institutional reality, namely the different governmental sectors of government.

Identifying integrative themes, clustering priorities or specifying objectives according to dimensions are ways to address the various challenges. As a consequence to the diversity of context and institutional set-ups, countries have structured their strategy in many different ways, based on either SD dimensions, their integration or linkages to sectors.

Examples of different clustering follow:

Greece's NSDS adopts a two-pronged approach (reduction of pressures on the environment and promotion of social solidarity).

Some themes offer more prospects for integration than other. For example, in **France**, the theme "Economic activities, enterprises and consumers" in the NSDS proposes the following priority actions:

- Encourage industries to engage in sustainable development (e.g. through voluntary agreements).
- Integrate sustainable development in production and consumption patterns (e.g. through labelling system).
- Encourage industrial innovations

²⁵ Whereas first generation NEAPs were purely environmental, most environmentally focused strategies evolved after UNCSD to consider, at least partly, economic growth and poverty alleviation.

- Develop the social and environmental responsibility of businesses through the provision of a national framework for dialogue between industries and other social actors.
- Create financial incentives for change in production and consumption (e.g. use of certification procedures, eco-labels and socially responsible investments, fiscal reforms and financial incentives).

Source: http://www.environnement.gouv.fr/actua/com2003/developpement_durable

In **Tunisia**, the National Agenda 21 addresses themes and issues that cut across different sectors: equity and poverty alleviation, change in consumption and production patterns, promotion of health and land use planning. Other priorities include tools and instruments such as international cooperation, indicators, economic instruments and environmental accounting, education and awareness raising, information building and management for decision making.

The Agenda also considers specific sectors as priorities (agricultural and rural development, tourism, industrial development, urbanization and management of human settlements, energy and pollution control).

A section is devoted to the integrated management of natural resources: management of water, land, and biodiversity, management of seas and marine biological resources, management of islands and coastal zones.

Source: Ministry of Environment and Land Management (1995). National Agenda 21. MEAT, Tunis.

Spain's NSDS identifies inter sectoral and sectoral priority areas and specifies objectives according to different dimensions:

Inter-sectoral

Economic growth, employment and competitiveness
Natural resources management and conservation
Training, research and technological innovation
Social and land cohesion
Climate change and air pollution
Sustainable tourism
Management and reduction of waste

Sectoral

Agriculture, Forest and Fishery
Energy
Transport
Tourism
Industrial Production
Consumption
Social cohesion and integration
Education
Research and technological development
Land management
International cooperation for development

Environmental objectives

Transport: promote the improvement of public transport
Natural Resources: make prudent and rational use of resources applying the Precautionary Principle
Urban and Rural Strategies: introduce rural development strategies aimed at specific target zones and promote functional diversity. Reduce regional

and urban disparities.

Biodiversity: reduce biodiversity loss

Noise and Water: combat noise and water pollution

Climate Change: support the Kyoto Protocol

Economic objectives

R&D, Innovation, Education: improve population education, enhance R&D, exploit scientific and technical innovation

Tourism: rationalize tourism supply towards sustainable tourism

Eco-efficiency: support eco-efficiency

Industries: increase the efficiency and competitiveness of industrial production by supporting small and medium scale enterprises

Non-Renewable Resources: internalize costs and benefits through correct pricing;

Introduce new consumption patterns emphasizing savings of non renewable natural resources.

Local and International Cooperation: internationally cooperate towards the NSDS of each Member State and solicited the contribution of key sectors (agriculture, fisheries, food) towards sustainable development.

Social objectives

Combat Poverty

Enhance Social Welfare: develop support programs for immigrants, guarantee stable financial pension system for the elderly

Disease Prevention: Introduce national Health Plan approved by the Central Administration and the Autonomous Spanish Communities

Promote Equity

Reconcile family and work life

Enhance cultural diversity

Source: Estrategia Española de Desarrollo Sostenible. Documento de Consulta 2002

<http://www.esp-sostenible.org/eeds/contenidos.htm>

2.2. SD related processes and mechanisms: countries' experience and practices

2.2.1. Achieving integration and convergence

Achieving integration and increasing convergence toward sustainable development call for:

- striking the balance between social, environmental and economic perspectives and action (systemic integration);
- increasing the convergence of different sector and overall policies and programmes towards sustainable development;
- incorporating concerns/actions of local, regional or global levels into national decision/implementation (vertical integration); and,
- combining a long term perspective with short term targets.

Integration and convergence can be promoted at different levels through a variety of mechanisms: policies and policy instruments, organisation and procedures, decision-making, planning and monitoring.

A sense of integration can already surface from the strategy documents when they enunciate multi dimensional principles and identify cross cutting priority areas (see section 2.1.2). This section examines some aspects of integration and convergence²⁶ in policies formulation and implementation (horizontal and vertical integration), in the utilization of planning and economic instruments, and through organisational arrangement (particularly decentralised initiatives).

More specifically, the section first describes how sustainable development concerns are embedded into different sectors and overall national policy. Then, the section considers what linkages or coordination exist between different sectors and between different strategic planning frameworks. The section continues with the description of local initiatives that contribute to vertical integration. Further, the section presents the utilisation in the Region of some planning and economic instruments that serve to combine different SD dimensions. Finally, the section briefly reflects on how different planning documents Interrelate in terms of time horizon.

Embedding sustainable development in different sectors (convergence)

In most countries, sector Ministries have integrated SD phraseology in their policy and programme documents. However this does not necessarily translate into actual approaches, objectives and programmes in sector-wide strategies, plans or budgets. Only few countries in the region systematically pursue the introduction of SD considerations into sector policies objectives and programmes for instance by providing specific guidance and guidelines to different line agencies. Greece and Israel illustrate these government efforts:

In **Greece**, integration of sustainable development into sector policies is being pursued on different fronts. The NSSD document indicates ways towards integration of the sustainable development into specific sector policies:

- Spatial policies based in particular on the General Framework for Physical Planning and Sustainable Development: regional restructuring, support to

²⁶ Other aspects such as financing and financial flows for sustainable development are particularly important to integration and convergence. While most countries recognize that investments and budget ought to reflect SD considerations, this is not here due to time constraint and the lack of information. In spite of UDESA information available on investment patterns, it was not possible to examine consistently whether and how budget processes link to SD strategies. Although

- multi centred urban structure and metropolitan centres, land use planning and urban development, strengthening governance of urban centres.
- Energy sector: decoupling energy intensity from economic growth through economic instruments and cost internalisation, polluter pay principle, stimulation of private investment, use of renewable energy and cleaner fuels.
 - Transport sector: decoupling transport emission from economic growth, development of public transport infrastructure, traffic flow management.
 - Agriculture and fisheries: rational use of natural resources.
 - Industrial sector: proactive measures and voluntary agreements.
 - Tourism sector: special directives and programs for the sustainable development of Greek coastal zones and islands, promotion of alternative tourism.

The Ministries of Agriculture, of the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works and of National Economy have prepared a manual setting out Greece's approach to poverty reduction, gender equality and the environment.

New integrated policies have been prepared in particular: Policy for regional development and strategic physical planning (including Regional and general spatial plans), Policy for urban development (including Schema for sustainable development of urban centres and consideration for urban governance, land use plans for urban areas over 2000 inhabitants.) Land policy, General framework for physical planning and sustainable development. Sustainable development of towns and settlements (1997) and Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development (1999) address the different sustainable development dimensions, and provide guidelines for integration and coordination of sector policies.

At the implementation level, the NSDS is implemented through an overall Operational Programme for sustainable development. This is made of Sector (environment, competitiveness, transport, agriculture and rural development, education and labour) and Regional Operational Programmes. Environmental concern has been integrated into Operational Programmes on Transport, Energy and Industry. SD concerns are also addressed in Management plans for the Protection of National Parks, Wetlands, Marine Parks, Coasts and Monuments of nature, and Sensitive Areas. According to OECD27, "good integration has taken place in the energy sector and satisfactory integration in areas under the responsibility of the Ministry (physical planning, and housing policy) in other sectors efforts have remained ad-hoc".

Source: Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works (2002). National Strategy for Sustainable Development . (MEPPPW), Athens.

In **Israel**, sustainable development considerations and principles are systematically built into national, regional or local master plans for particular sectors (e.g. power stations, airports, sewage, roads, quarries and railways) as well as into cross sector master plans (e.g. Master Plans for nature protection, for coastal areas and for tourism, Integrated National Master Plan on Planning, Building and Conservation). Guidelines have been prepared and specific indications given to the different Ministries on which aspects of their mandate are particularly relevant to sustainable development. Accordingly, the Planning, the Finance and other sector Ministries have to draft Strategic Plans for Sustainable Development to be presented to the general public, finalized and endorsed by the Government.

The policy guidelines of the Ministry of Finance's SD strategy include: internalizing the external price of product; encouraging consumers to use eco-efficiency products; internalizing environmental risk in insurance; accountability of environmental risks in

²⁷ OECD (2000). *Environmental Performance Review (1st Cycle) Conclusions and Recommendations 32 Countries (1993-2000)*. OECD, Paris.

the business sector; “greening government” (sustainable building example set by government). An additional example can be found in the policy guidelines for the SD strategy of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Employment, which includes: assistance for environmental technologies development; incentive to industry that contributes to growth without causing environmental damage.

Source: Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development in Israel. Government Decision no.246, May 2003.

NEAPs’ efforts to integrate environment into sector policies through various committees and technical boards could also well serve as examples:

In order to coordinate and stimulate the national integration process, **Albania** has established a Ministry of Integration as well as integration units in all ministries. Several decision-making inter-ministerial structures (e.g. National Council of Territory Regulation, the local Councils of Territory Regulation, National Committee of Waters, National Committee of Energy, Committee of Tourism Policies, etc) involve, by a legal decision, experts and dignitaries of environmental institutions. The sectors of economy, tourism, territory regulation are represented in different environmental project boards and representatives of institutions concerned with the environment participate in the boards of infrastructure projects.

In **Egypt**, Environmental Units are established in sector ministries and at the local government level.

Streamlining sustainable development into overall national planning and policy documents²⁸ (overall coherence).

In the Region, most countries prepare periodic national economic development plans. Usually, the line ministries prepare sector chapter - often based on their sector plan- following guidance issued by a national planning commission or equivalent coordinating entity. These sector plans tend to be linked into the annual budgets or to the medium term expenditure framework.

While economic concerns remain predominant, national economic development plans are increasingly incorporating social and environmental considerations. In some countries, sustainable development is directly factored into periodic national plans, by grounding and sourcing their periodic formulation on the very strategy document itself. Tunisia is an example:

In **Tunisia**, the Agenda 21 has guided the preparation of the last three Five-Year Plans. The concern for regional needs, the adoption of a long time perspective and the integration of Agenda 21 priorities in a special chapter of the 10th Social and Economic Development Plan (2002-2006) indicate a strong linkages and continuing commitment.

The systematic involvement of ministries responsible for finance and for economic planning in the preparation and implementation of SD strategies also contribute to integration. Unfortunately this is not the usual practice and often national agencies that tend to take major development decisions may feel excluded. Exceptions include, France, Greece and Cyprus, where the Planning Bureau is actively involved in various committees.

²⁸ Linkages between strategies and overall planning frames are indicated in Table 1. *SD related Strategic Initiatives and Frameworks*.

Promoting linkages and coordination between different strategic planning frames and between different sectors (horizontal integration)

Assessing the linkages between different planning frames (strategic frameworks, cross sector or sector-wide strategies and plans) proves to be difficult on the basis of existing documents.

Concerning linkages between different strategic frameworks, documents often limit themselves to mentioning the presence of other SD related frameworks without establishing structural links. There is a general dearth of overall policy assessments and strategic sustainability assessment that could help to scrutinize potential overlap, identify cross cutting objectives, or leverage complementarity.

Linking different sectors in a sustainable development perspective can be achieved by ways of logical articulation, coordination arrangements, and individual exposure.

In general, specific sector policies do not reflect objectives and priority areas in National Sustainable Development Strategies. By definition, a sector policy does not go beyond the domains of expertise and responsibility attributed to the concerned line agency. Moreover, because they utilize different paradigms, logics and jargons, sector planning frames do not easily articulate one with the other. The lack of structural linkages hampers synergies at the implementation level.

Organisational arrangements for strategy formulation and implementation exist throughout the Region. Table 4. *Examples of some Mechanisms for vertical and horizontal Integration* indicates that most countries in the Region have set up inter ministerial bodies that provide for coordination and linkages between sectors in the formulation and implementation of SD strategies.

In addition to these, the participation of the same sector representatives in various mechanisms primarily destined to obtain stakeholder inputs and foster participation²⁹ also facilitates linkages between sectors. Indeed, the representatives of line agencies there get the opportunity to be exposed to sustainable development concerns and exchange with colleagues from other sectors, and eventually echo this concern into the planning and implementation sector work of their respective agencies.

With the view to foster convergence and horizontal integration, some countries have also set up a formal network of sustainable development focal points in the different sector agencies. Few examples follow:

In **France**, the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Sustainable development (CIDD) is responsible for the definition, coordination and follow-up of the Government's sustainable development policy. It adopted the national strategy and is responsible for its implementation and regular update. It examines the coherence of the actions of all Ministries with the Government's sustainable development policy and France's commitments at the European or international levels. The ICS is chaired by the Prime Minister and the Minister in charge of sustainable development. It includes all other relevant Ministers. A representative of the President also joins the working group. The ICS meets at least once in a year.

The CIDD is supported by the permanent Committee on Sustainable Development involving Senior Civil Servants designated in each Ministry to make proposals (e.g. on how to integrate sustainable development concerns into sector policies), give impulse

²⁹ see section 2.2.2.

and coordinate the preparation of action plans in each Ministry, and monitor the implementation of the Strategy in the Directorates and at a decentralized level.

There also exist other inter ministerial committees that provide for horizontal integration. The Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Environment (CIEN) and the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Land Management and Development (CIADT).

In **Morocco**, the National Action Plan for the Environment (PANE) strives not to duplicate what objectives and contents already exist in other sector strategies, cross-sector planning frameworks (National Scheme for Land Management and Sustainable Development, the National Plan for Economic and Social Development Plan PDSE 1999-2003) or national initiatives in the context of international commitments (e.g. National action plan to combat desertification in the context of UNCCD). Harmonization of actions is the results of consultation with all concerned stakeholders through thematic workshops. Some PANE specific actions (Program of Clean Cities, EIA Capacity building, awareness raising, market-based instruments, education, information base on NGOs) have been inserted in the National Plan for Economic and Social Development Plan.

Note on horizontal coordination and integration

As indicated in Table 5. *Examples of Mechanisms for Stakeholder Involvement* in section 2.2.2, responsibility for sustainable development is usually assigned to environment ministries which have limited influence in government. Consequently, sustainable development strategies may not be seen as relevant to other sectors. As noted by the OECD, the weak integration in other sectors has undermined progress towards sustainable development: notwithstanding promising experience, “the degree of horizontal coordination and institutional integration could be significantly improved in most countries. There is a relatively large number of public institutions and government agencies with environmental, social and economic responsibilities. The dearth of formal integration mechanisms and the strong hierarchical nature of administrations make it difficult to formulate and implement sustainable development policies. There is little culture of joint problem solving”³⁰.

Decentralization and Local level initiatives

National sustainable development strategies need to distinguish issues that can only be addressed centrally from those that are better addressed at a local level (*i.e.* subsidiary principle). Linking national and local priorities and actions is one key principle for the preparation and implementation of sustainable development strategies. Decentralised decision-making offers such opportunity to link national strategy processes to local sustainable development initiatives. The convergence of top-down and bottom-up approaches ensures policy integration and consolidates implementation. Whereas strategic principles and directions should be set at the national level, detailed planning, implementation and monitoring should take place at local levels. It should be borne in mind that the appropriate transfer of resources and authorities is essential to establishing two-way iterative processes between national and decentralized levels³¹.

Follow-up measures to UNCED have spurred the development of Local Agenda 21 by local governments such as municipalities. As a consequence, in addition to national

³⁰ OECD (2000). *Environmental Performance Review (1st Cycle) Conclusions and Recommendations 32 Countries (1993-2000)*. OECD, Paris.

³¹ UN DESA (2002) *Guidance in Preparing a National Sustainable Development Strategy: Managing Sustainable Development in the New Millennium*. Background Paper No.13. (DESA/DSD/PC2/BP13).

level frameworks, local sustainable initiatives have cropped up in most countries of the Region, particularly where decentralization is a major thrust in government policy.

In many cases, the central authorities have supported local initiatives through e.g. funding, capacity building, networking, and/or the provision of guidance. Sometimes, as is the case in **France** with the establishment of "Territory contracts", specific contractual arrangements have been made between the State and the Regions or Local authorities to organize the processes. The following paragraphs give a panorama of the variety of local initiatives and related support arrangements.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the preparation of Local Environmental Plans (LEAP) was one of the NEAP priorities. Local Environmental Plans (LEAP) mostly coordinated by NGO have been elaborated by municipal authorities in two Mediterranean municipalities (Apljina and Jablanica). In addition to LEAPs, the cantonal or municipal level authorities have been responsible for the preparation of Local Agenda 21. The local communities from the cities of Tuzla and Bijeljina adopted Local Agenda 21. The city of Banjaluka, in cooperation with the cities from the Federal Republic of Germany, has drafted a Local Agenda. The Austrian Government and SIDA are financing the preparation of two Local Agendas (Sarajevo Old Town Municipality and Srbac Municipality). Recently the Sarajevo Canton has enacted the decision on elaboration of Local Agendas Municipals and Cantonal.

In **Italy**, the competences in the environment field have been progressively transferred from national to regional and local levels. The national level is responsible for the definitions of environmental quality objectives and the general criteria of sector policies. The regions are responsible for strategic planning and the provinces and municipalities for the control and implementation of plans and programs. In line with the National SDS and the objectives of the State-Region Permanent Conference, sub national planning and policy processes have developed into local Agendas 21 (co-financed by the Ministry of Environment) and regional sustainable development strategies (at the moment only one). Approximately 140 local public administrations have joined the Italian Local Agenda 21 Network.

In **Malta**, the Environment and Planning Authority is supporting the development of Agenda 21 in schools. A number of schools are members of an Eco-Schools project that aims to empower school children to participate, act and be responsible for their school's environment in line with Local Agenda 21 principles. This aim also extends to encouraging environmental responsibility both at home and in the wider community.

In **Slovenia**, some local authorities have already prepared or are preparing Local or Regional Agenda 21 or Environmental Action Program (e.g. Ljubljana, Maribor region, Coastal region). Key focus areas are all major environmental issues, depending on the problems of the region and sectors that affect the environment (industry and mining, the energy sector, agriculture and forestry, traffic and tourism). The Ministry of the Environment supports the preparation of the Local Agenda 21 technically and financially.

In **Spain**, decentralization is a major feature of government policy. According to the devolution of environmental decision-making, autonomous regions and municipalities have the responsibility to implement environmental policies. Regional authorities also have a key role in the development of their programs and initiatives for sustainability. There exist several local Agendas 21 at the regional or municipal levels. Many sustainable development initiatives take place at this level (e.g. domestic waste management, ecological footprints, demand management, voluntary initiatives, pilot projects, etc).

In **Tunisia**, the progressive delegation to the private sector and local public communities of programs development, implementation and management helps

refocusing the State's role. In the context of decentralization, local public communities are increasingly involved. The preparation of the 10th Plan was an opportunity to initiate Local and Regional Agenda 21. Training sessions and workshops were organized for the preparation of Local programmes 21, that now exist in 50 cities.

Observations and Remarks

In this section, local initiatives are described from the perspective of vertical integration. Local initiatives also play a major role in the involvement of stakeholders, which is dealt with in section 2.2.2.

In developing countries the preparation of local sustainable development agendas has been supported by donor agencies, UNDP in particular.

Locally driven and implemented initiatives have gained recognition and are internationally networked.

In countries with a tradition of decentralisation and environmental activism, local initiatives have tended to develop independently from central authorities, which may hamper convergence between top-down and bottom-up visions.

The devolution of authorities to regional or entities does not necessarily lead to integration of SD considerations at local levels. When local sustainable development initiatives exist in different places, they are not necessarily coordinated and do not converge systematically. In some countries, local Agenda 21 do not clearly plug into the national strategic framework and the national sustainable development strategy does not incorporate local level initiatives. Linkages are weak. Although some sort of reporting mechanisms exist in some countries, for instance Spain, for a majority, there does not seem to be a central level entity to ensure that bottom-up and top down approaches effectively converge.

Utilization of Planning tools and instruments that promote integration

Most countries in the region are using planning tools and instruments that offer prospects for integration of sustainable development.

Whether at the strategic or project level, environmental assessment analysis (SEA or EIA) are particularly useful to promote sustainable development considerations as they bring together several dimensions of sustainable development; foster the understanding of underlying causes of unsustainable development and are amenable to participation of, or information to a wide group of 'non-expert' stakeholders.

Economic approaches and instruments that internalise social and environmental costs (e.g. environmental accounting, "getting prices right", environmental taxes) or foster stakeholders' sustainable development behaviour (e.g. incentive systems, eco labelling, voluntary agreements, green plans) also present potential for assimilating different aspects of sustainable development.

Other tools like SWOT analysis or Spatial Planning instruments that offer opportunities to account for and interweave different aspects and dimensions of sustainable development are not considered here.

By way of examples, this section illustrates what instruments are used, and indicates the arrangements and legal provisions made to enforce them:

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the Environmental Law, prepared in compliance with EU Environment Policy, was passed in 2004 in both entities. It consists of sets of laws as follows: Framework Environment Law, Law on Water Protection, Law on Waste, Law on Protection of Environment, Law on Protection of Air and Law on Eco Fund.

The legislation prescribes the following instruments:

- EIA procedures
- Integral Environment Permit (EIP)
- SIA
- Eco labeling

The use of environment-related economic instruments is limited to water fees.

The implementation of all these instruments is still constrained by the lack of institutional capacity and resources.

In **Croatia**, EIA was introduced in 1984. Existing and new environment related laws are progressively aligning with the standards of the European Union. Environmental taxes are not widespread but exist in e.g. water management sector. The Government intends to introduce incentives for ecologically oriented businesses. Incentive measures are expected to increase the share of renewable sources of energy, to promote ecologically friendly technology, and to reduce waste. An Environmental labelling system has been established to promote the use of environmentally acceptable products and manufacturing procedures.

In **Greece**, the legal base of the *Operational environmental program* is the National Law for the protection of environment, the EC environmental regulations, and the directives and obligations with respect to international environmental agreements and conventions. The bulk of environmental legislation in Greece results directly from the transfer of European Community directives into the national legislation. The NSSD document recognizes the importance of assessment tools (EIA³², 1990, and SIA) as well as economic instruments.

The Council of State (High Court) has played an important role in defining the content of framework environmental legislation and providing a practical interpretation of the term "sustainable development" in case law. Legislation conducive to SD integration include: a Law on Spatial Planning and sustainable development (1999), a Law on Economic Development Incentives (1998) and a Law on Sustainable development of towns and settlements (1997).

The utilization of economic instruments in specific sectors (water, waste management, air quality, natural resources management) is encouraged. Costs internalisation and pricing, and incentives for emission trading in the context of Kyoto implementation are also fostered. Voluntary agreements and the development of eco labelling schema, cleaner production and green plans are encouraged.

In **Italy**, the NSSD envisages different tools: enforcement of environmental legislation, integration of the environment factor in the market, environmental fiscal reform, internalization of environmental costs, development of new environmental quality indicators and finalization of the Framework Act on Environmental Accounting.

The integration of environmental policies appears to be a major thrust. Several measures are already in place:

EIA and SEI of Plans and Programs (Strategic Environmental Impact is being used to promote sustainable development e.g. in General Transport Plan).

³² . OECD "The practice of EIA has contributed to integration and has worked better in some areas than others: in tourism, aquaculture, roads and major infrastructures, projects, the influence has been noticeable, but less so in other sectors (e.g. licensing of quarries)."

Quality and environmental certification through different schemes e.g. extension of Eco-Management Audit Scheme (EMAS) to all sectors, eco auditing and eco labelling, promotion of voluntary agreements.

Ecological taxation and subsidies reform to take into account environmental externalities: Italy relies increasingly on environmental taxes and charges: e.g. carbon taxes on fossil fuels, tax on pesticides, water and waste charges, vehicle taxation reformed to take greater account of environmental impacts, increased water and waste charges, etc).

In **Malta**, EIA and SEA procedures are in place in accordance with EU and national legislation. Malta's national land-use planning system strives to internalize social and environmental costs through mitigation of impact and planning agreements. The merger between the Environment Protection Department and the Planning Authority in 2002 ensured a closer coordination between spatial and environmental planning.

Various fiscal instruments are in place. Malta currently uses taxes, fees, subsidies, performance bonds, grants, and a form of tradable permits (to control off-road recreational driving). Recent developments in the field of economic instruments include the introduction of a new 'eco-contribution' introduced on several products, particularly plastic bags. Malta operates a successful bottle return scheme for soft drinks, beer and bottled water. The water pricing regime was also adjusted to reflect more closely the actual cost of water production during the last years. In addition, for a wide range of environmentally sensitive activities, an Environmental Permitting Strategy is under preparation, which will introduce a new regime for Environmental Permit fees based on risk. Recognizing the potential for further application of the Polluter Pays principle through economic instruments, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority will shortly embark on a project assisted by the EU entitled "Building Capacity to introduce the Polluter Pays Principle through the use Economic Instruments to Implement the Environmental Acquis".

The Malta Tourism Authority operates a tourism eco-labelling scheme, introduced in 2002 during Eco-Tourism year, and Government has set up a Green Leader network with green contact points in all government departments. Together with a programme to promote green public procurement, this process will initially target the areas of waste and energy.

In **Spain** the NSDS document promotes to possible policy tools to support implementation: evaluation of market based instruments and public intervention, voluntary agreements, and fiscal and monetary instruments. Environmental laws and legislation are in line with EU directives. In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee of Aid to Development (1985 OECD) and the Law of Cooperation, Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Assessment are integral parts of major programs and projects. Spain applies the Polluters pays and User pays principles. Voluntary agreement, Eco labelling and environmental taxes are developed at the provincial level.

Remark

Until recently, in most Environmental Impact Assessments and Strategic Environmental Impact analysis, the environmental dimension prevailed over the others. Practitioners and agencies are striving to broaden the scope of these widely used tools³³.

³³ Philippe Alirol (2003). *Linkages and Coordination between Environmental Assessments and Social Assessments*. Draft report for the World Bank

Linkages between different planning horizons

At the country level, there are often different types of planning frameworks, strategies and/or plans and programmes to address a sustainable development concerns. On the one hand, a strategy would convey a long-term vision and sets out policy directions and principles for future action and strategic objectives. On the other hand, plans and programmes usually would propose shorter term, concrete measures and activities.

All strategy documents in the Region acknowledge the intergenerational dimension of sustainable development. Beyond this, linkages and synergies between policies and planning frames with different time horizons (long-, mid-, and short-term) ought to be established to guarantee continuity. In addition to lasting commitment and smooth implementation, linkages between immediate action and long term perspective will help to anchor in the reality of measurable time-bound targets the work on sustainable development indicators undertaken by all countries under auspices of the CSD.

In most countries, the long-term vision contained in the strategy document does not clearly connect to short-term actions and targets in plans. Only few countries have strived to link different time perspectives. Their strategies comprise or are complemented by separate, more detailed, sector action plans and programmes. For instance, in **Morocco**, the strategy serves as a basis for the National Action Plan for the Environment and a Priority Action Plan, and the **Italian** and **Greek** Strategies propose quantitative targets (often based on EC directives) for some areas of action and sectors.

Table 4 on the next page gives examples of mechanisms that promote vertical and horizontal integration.

Table 4. *Examples of Mechanisms for vertical and horizontal integration*

	Coordination between sectors	Local level initiatives	Promotion of integrating tools and instruments
Albania	Various decision-making and implementation inter-ministerial structures (committees, board), Ministry of Integration integration units in concerned ministries,	Local Environmental Action Plans	SEA and EIA (drafted), Environment Taxes Environmental permits Law on environmental protection
Algeria			EIA (1990) Environment Taxes, polluter pays Framework legislation on environmental protection in a SD context, specific legislation (waste, energy, air quality)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Environmental Steering Committee	Local Environmental Action Plans and Local Agendas 21	EIA Environment Taxes, (water, waste), economic instruments *
Croatia		Local Agendas 21	EIA (1984) Environment Taxes *
Cyprus	Environmental Committee		EIA (1991) Fiscal tools
Egypt	Environment units in sector ministries and in local governments	Governorate Environmental Action Plans	EIA Polluter pays
France	Inter-ministerial committee, SD focal points in concerned ministries	"Contrats-pays" Local Agendas 21	EIA (1977), Environment taxes
Greece	Inter-ministerial coordination committee	Local Agendas 21	SIA and EIA, various economic instruments
Israel	Inter-ministerial committee, SD focal points from concerned ministries	Local Agendas 21	EIA Polluter pays principle, eco labeling, voluntary initiatives
Italy		Regional SDS and Local Agenda 21	SEA and EIA, Framework Act on environmental Accounting, ecotaxes and eco labeling, etc.
Lebanon		Local Agendas 21	
Lybia			
Malta	NCS Green Leaders Scheme	Eco-schools	SEA and EIA , various instruments*
Monaco			
Morocco			EIA (drafted)
Montenegro		Local Environmental Action Plans	EIA (1997), environmental taxes and users fees, polluter pays
Slovenia		Local Agendas 21	EIA and SIA Polluter pays
Spain	Inter-ministerial commission for coordination	Municipal and regional Agendas 21	EIA and SEA, various instruments*
Syria			EIA
Tunisia		Local Agendas 21	EIA (1997)
Turkey		Local Agendas 21	EIA

* see details in main text

2.2.2. Stakeholders involvement

A balanced representation of civil society, stakeholder groups, business as well as government, is fundamental to sustainable development. Effective participation is a key principle of sustainable development strategies. It develops a sense of common ownership among stakeholders at central and local levels.

Stakeholders can be involved at different stages of the strategy preparation-implementation process: developing a vision, goals, and principles; establishing priorities, defining system components, pilot activities, targets and responsibilities; implementing and monitoring.

Stakeholders involvement helps to open up debate to new perceptions, ideas and sources of information; expose issues that need to be addressed; enable problems, needs and preferences to be expressed; identify the capabilities required to address them; develop consensus on the needs for action that leads to partnership and better implementation; and obtain feedback.

Governments have a key role to play in creating an enabling environment and organizing participation. Under legal and policy frameworks, governments can provide leadership, incentives and financial resources facilitate participation.

There exist different levels and forms of involvement into policy processes. On the one hand, a representative multi-stakeholder body is often necessary to ensure governance of the strategy, make the key policy decisions and engage partners who are indispensable for effective implementation of changes and reforms. On the other hand, a broad public participation³⁴, based on interests and roles, in multi-layered and inclusive consultative events, builds up legitimacy and strengthen governance.

Other essential mechanisms include: institutionalised public communication and awareness raising (e.g. through media, websites) with a premium placed on transparency and accountability; and, strategic partnerships to share opportunities and responsibilities³⁵.

This section first describes different multi stakeholder entities established in the countries of the region, their composition, mandate and organisational structure. In order to give a sense of stakeholder involvement processes, the section then focuses on the preparation of national strategy document (who was in charge, who contributed, who was consulted and who approved) that is usually well documented³⁶. Finally, consultative events and communication are only briefly mentioned, due to limited information availability.

³⁴UN DESA (2002) Guidance in Preparing a National Sustainable Development Strategy: Managing Sustainable Development in the New Millennium. Background Paper No.13. (DESA/DSD/PC2/BP13).

Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book. IIED 2002*. Compiled by Bary Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass for OECD and UNDP.

³⁵ Promoting and building partnerships with the civil society, business, community and interest groups as well as government is seen as a major mechanism to involve a variety of stakeholders (UNDESA, 2001). Due to resource and time constraints, the Review does not consider this aspect.

³⁶ Often, implementation mechanisms are not specified in the strategy documents. This leads to assume that as far as stakeholder involvement is concerned, implementation is carried out under the same organizational set-up as preparation.

Multi stakeholder steering entities

Under various names (e.g. national council³⁷, commission, steering committee, assembly for sustainable development), multi stakeholder structures have proved useful in bringing various groups together for the formulation and implementation of the strategy. They are the key to good governance. They are essential to participation and contribute to integration. Both UNDSA and OECD Guidelines stress that multi stakeholder structures, like national commissions or steering committees, should have overall responsibility for the strategy processes.

As indicated in Table 5 *Examples of Mechanisms for Stakeholder Involvement*, most countries in the Region have established a multi stakeholder steering body. Whereas the composition of these structures is similar across the countries, the mandate, degree of authority and chairmanship, as well as organization vary from country to country.

Composition

Multi stakeholder structures have been established by legislation or government decree. Throughout the region, stakeholder groups that are represented comprise government, civil society, private sector and academia. The selection procedures for representatives are not always documented. Usually, governments appoint their representatives and decide which other major groups ought to be involved. Depending on countries, participants of non-governmental sectors may be personalities nominated by government, or representatives appointed by their constituencies.

Mandate

Whereas some multi stakeholder structures have initially been set up to look at the national implications of global agreements such as Agenda 21 and other international SD related conventions, most mandates now include the following common terms:

Providing forums for regular debate on sustainable development issues across sectors and between levels;

Rendering advice and making recommendations to governments for decision-making as well as policy and plan formulation;

Harmonizing policies and plans towards sustainable development;

Overseeing and sometimes contributing to implementation;

Building capacity for sustainable development;

Monitoring overall progress towards sustainable development;

Raising public awareness through different constituencies.

³⁷ Over the past decade, the Earth Council has supported the creation of National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDD) National Council or Commission? in many countries. According to various reviews, their success is rather mixed. Source: Earth Council 2002.

Chairmanship and degree of authority

According to most guidelines, a multi stakeholder entity makes key decisions. It needs to be seen both to have and to be able to exercise the powers required to formulate a strategy, achieve consensus on its scope and content, and monitor its implementation and impacts. When supervisory functions are emphasized and pertain to coordination, multi stakeholder structures are usually more effective if chaired at high political level. In the region, the chairmen are often the Prime Ministers, some times the Head of State, more rarely a Minister with central authority such as the finance of the economic planning ministry. The degree of political clout and influence a multi stakeholder structure depends on the chairmanship and the composition but also on the organizational structure and the relation to other government coordinating entities, particularly inter-ministerial committees.

Organisation structure of multi stakeholder entities

The most common component of multi stakeholder structures is the assembly that, in theory, should meet at regular intervals. Whereas assembly meetings for strategy preparation are well documented, little information is available on subsequent implementation meetings. Most countries have established technical committees or working groups, based on themes or sector to undertake technical work such as preparing documents and reports for consideration of the assembly. Sometimes, outside (i.e. not directly involved in the multi stakeholder structure itself) experts are employed on an ad-hoc basis. A Secretariat usually exists to provide continuing administrative support. Often the Secretariat functions³⁸ are performed by a government unit placed in the lead ministry.

The following examples illustrate the variety of situations in the region:

In **Slovenia**, the Slovenian Council for Sustainable Development (1997) is a consultative body to the Government. In addition to ministers from all relevant sectors of public administration, it involves interest groups through their representatives: environmental NGOs, economic chambers, private sector, science, academia and local communities, NGOs, trade unions. The Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy acts as secretariat. The Council prepares and adopts guidelines and recommendations for sustainable development in the Republic of Slovenia; assesses documents related to sustainable development; and provides advice on the National Environment Action Program and other sector strategies.

The Council operates through thematic working groups: Integration of sustainable development into sector policies and programs; Monitoring and evaluation ,formulation of sustainable development indicators; Cooperation with the UN CSD;

³⁸ The role of the Secretariat is briefly evoked in section 2.2.4.

Green tax reform and environmental reform of public finance; Education promotion, institutional consolidation and research.

In **France**, the National Commission for Sustainable development (CNDD) is an independent consultative body under the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development. It involves personalities from partner organisations (representatives from: politically elected representatives, NGO's, employers associations, enterprises, labour unions, the media and scientists) appointed by the Prime Minister. The NCS provides advice and submit proposals to the Government for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the sustainable development policy. The NCS is placed under the authority of the Prime Minister.

Stakeholders from government are involved in the earlier mentioned Inter-Ministerial Committee for Sustainable development (ICS) that is responsible for the definition, coordination and follow-up of the Government's sustainable development policy. It adopted the national strategy and is responsible for its implementation and regular update. It examines the coherence of the actions of all Ministries with the Government's sustainable development policy and France's commitments at the European or international levels. The ICS is chaired by the Prime Minister and the Minister in charge of sustainable development. It includes all other relevant Ministers. A representative of the President also joins the working group. The ICS meets at least once in a year. It is supported by the permanent Committee on Sustainable Development,

In **Tunisia**, the National Commission for Sustainable Development (CNDD), chaired by the Prime Minister was created in 1993 to conceive and ensure the systematic integration of sustainable development concern in sector policies and programs. It involves all stakeholders in the implementation of a sustainable development policy. The Tunisian Observatory of the environment and sustainable development (OTTED) in the National Agency for Environmental Protection (ANPE) acts as a permanent Secretariat and is in charge of monitoring the implementation. The Commission is assisted by a technical committee, various sector committees and national committees under different international Conventions. Achievements include the formulation of Agenda 21 and a Priority Program for Sustainable Development in the 10th Plan, the elaboration of environment and sustainable development indicators, the National Action Program to Combat Desertification, and the National Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Management of Biological Diversity were also prepared by the CNDD.

In **Malta**, the National Commission on Sustainable Development (2001) is chaired by the Prime Minister is composed of:

- all Ministers ex officio or their representatives;
- two members of the House of Representatives, one appointed by the Prime Minister and the other by the Leader of the Opposition;
- a representative of the Malta Environment and Planning Authority;
- the Chairman of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development *ex officio*;
- representatives of such public entities as in the opinion of the Prime Minister are relevant to the functions of the Commission;
- a representative of the association of local councils;
- representatives of organizations which represent or have an interest in business, industry and/or industrial relations, scientific and academic bodies, the media, and other non-governmental organizations, which, in the opinion of the Prime Minister, are relevant to the functions of the Commission.

The tasks of the national commission are:

- to advocate sustainable development across all sectors of Malta, review progress in the achievement of such sustainable development and to build consensus on action needed to achieve further progress;
- to identify any relevant process or policy which may be undermining sustainable development and propose alternative processes or policies to the Government for adoption;
- to identify trends which may significantly give rise to unsustainable development and which will not be reversed on the basis of current or planned action, and recommend action to reverse such trends;
- to increase awareness of the need that development must be sustainable;
- to encourage and stimulate good practice in the use and management of natural resources, in particular their minimal use and maximum reuse by recycling in an environmentally sustainable manner;
- to prepare a National Strategy for Sustainable Development; and,
- to carry out such other functions in relation to sustainable development as may be assigned to it by the Prime Minister.

Through its composition the NCSD has links to the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development, and the Malta Environmental and Planning Authority, which prepares national spatial and environmental plans. Linkages between the National Action Plans for Employment and Social Inclusion are being established. However links to the overall National Development Plan/Structural Funding process have not yet been developed.

The local councils, private sector and NGOs are represented in the NCSD. Specific funds are allocated to NGOs by the government. All sectors are represented on the NCSD and have been invited to provide comments on the draft NSSD. The Strategy was launched for public consultation during a National Conference in April 2004. Consultation meetings on the Strategy were set up to provide major groups such as industry, women, local authorities, science, youths, the transport, energy and construction sectors and unions with the chance to give detailed reactions to the document. In addition, with a view to understanding the opinions, concerns and perspectives of the grassroots, focus groups were held with members of the public from different backgrounds, including village band club members, young mothers, law students and agriculture school students.

A NCSD website has been set up to support the NSSD consultation process. The other formal communications tools have been the national conference, radio programmes and consultation discussion meetings with major groups.

Source: <http://home.um.edu.mt/islands/ncsd/>.

Table 5. *Examples of Mechanisms of stakeholder involvement: coordination, participation, consultation, communication*

	Framework type (adoption date)	Lead Organisation	Multi stakeholder Steering Body	Sector involvement and coordination	Substantive Inputs during preparation	Stakeholder Consultation events during preparation
Albania	NEAP (2001)	Ministry of the Environment. Dept for Economic Development and Foreign Aid coordination (DEDAC)		Various decision-making and implementation inter-ministerial structures (committees, board), inter sector working groups	Expert consultations	Workshops and National meeting with stakeholders. National conference on environment and sustainable development (2002)
Algeria	National Action Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development (NAPE-SD, 2002)	Ministry of Land Management and Environment	High council of Environment and Sustainable Development (1994)			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	NEAP (2002)	NEAP Directorate	National Steering Committee for Environment and Sustainable Development (2002)	Environmental Steering Committee	NEAP Steering Committees	Workshops with stakeholders
Croatia	NEAP (2002)	Strategic Planning Office				Workshop with stakeholders. Public hearings on EIA
Cyprus	EAP (1996) Action Plan for the Protection of the Environment	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment	Council for the Environment	Environmental Committee		
Egypt	NEAP (1999) National Agenda 21	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency		EEAA Board of Directorates; Environment units in sector ministries and in local governments	EEAA Board of directorates include representatives from the line ministries headed by the minister of state for environmental affairs .	consultation and participatory process with all relevant stakeholders, including the NGOs, local community
France	NSSD (2003)	Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development	French Commission of Sustainable Development (CFDD)	Inter ministerial Committee of Environment (CIEN) Inter ministerial Committee of land planning and management (CIADT), SD focal points in concerned ministries	National Council	Meetings with stakeholders, Parliament, Economic & Social Council. Meetings to discuss the Environmental Charter
Greece	NSSD (2002)	Ministry of Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works	Coordination Group for Sustainable Development	Coordination Group for SD	Inter-ministerial Committee	Workshop
Israel	Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development	Ministry of the Environment	Expanded Inter ministerial Committee		Expert consultation	Expanded Inter ministerial Committee

	Framework type (adoption date)	Lead Organisation	Multi stakeholder Steering Body	Sector involvement and coordination	Substantive Inputs during preparation	Stakeholder Consultation events during preparation
Italy	Environmental Strategy for Sustainable development (2002)	Ministry of Environment and Land Protection, Dept of Sustainable Development	Committee for Agenda 21 implementation			Workshop with stakeholders
Lebanon						
Lybia						
Malta	NSSD being prepared	Ministry of the Environment, Environmental protection dept.	National Commission for Sustainable Development (2001)	Through NCSD	National Commission for Sustainable Development (2001)	Conference, sectoral, stakeholder and regional seminars, focus groups
Monaco						
Morocco	National Strategy for Environment and Sustainable Development (1995) National Action Plan for Environ.(1998)	Ministry of Land Management, Water and Environment, State Secretariat for the Environment	National Council of Environment (1995)			
Montenegro	Sustainable Strategy of the Ecological State of Montenegro (1996)	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning	National Council for Sustainable Development (2002)		Expert consultation National Council of Environment	
Slovenia	NEAP (1999)	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy	Slovenian Council for Sustainable Development		Slovenian Council for Sustainable Development (1997)	
Spain	Draft NSSD (2002)	Ministry of Environment	National Council for Climate Environmental sector conference Council for Environmental evaluation	Inter-ministerial commission for coordination Network of environmental authorities (1997)	Inter Ministerial Commission	Territorial Administrations, Economic & Social Council
Syria	NEAP (2001)	Ministry of Environment				Workshops with stakeholders
Tunisia	National Agenda 21 (1995)	Ministry of Environment and Land Planning	National Commission of Sustainable Development (1993)			Workshop with stakeholders
Turkey	NEAP (1998)	National Committee	Higher Council for Environment, Environment National Council			Workshop with stakeholders

Involving stakeholders in strategy formulation

In most countries, the Prime Minister holds overall responsibility for the preparation of the Strategy. However, the actual overall coordination is rarely directly under the Prime Minister's Office, but rather the designated lead government agency.

A majority of the national strategies has been prepared under the leadership of Ministries of the Environment. This partly explains the emphasis on environmental issues in most strategies. National Planning Agencies or Finance Ministries rarely play a central role. Exceptions include Croatia where the Strategic Planning Office lead the preparation.

The main substantive contribution is made by the Ministries of Environment that usually prepare the draft strategy³⁹. In most cases, different sector ministries contribute to the preparation process. According to countries, this involvement varies significantly, from a mere consultation through inter-ministerial commissions, to substantial contributions from technical committees (e.g. in Spain, the inter-ministerial Commission coordinated the inputs from 12 Ministries) or individual experts (e.g. expert consultations organized for the preparation of the Sustainable Strategy of the Ecological State of Montenegro). When the strategy has been prepared with external support (e.g. the World Bank supported NEAP in Bosnia and Herzegovina), the contribution of expatriate consultants may have been significant.

The involvement of stakeholders varies significantly across countries in terms of intensity (from consultation, to substantial contribution and to effective validation) and timing (often a one off consultation at the end of the preparation process, more rarely regular consultations). In general, the creation of a national commission, committee, or council (e.g. Turkey, France, Morocco, Malta) and/or the organisation of workshop provide for the ad-hoc consultation of major groups, including the private sector, academia and NGOs. This consultation may be thematic and take place before the preparation of a draft, or be organized to obtain reactions and feedback on a draft strategy. In only few cases is this consultation systematic and built into a preparation process merging top-down and bottom up approaches. Except in few cases (e.g. in Tunisia and Turkey where regional workshops were organized to review the draft strategy), the preparation is not systematically decentralised. Beyond the formal participation of stakeholder groups, the interface with the general public is limited to the organization of public hearings and the provision of information on the government's intention.

Across countries, the preparation process follows the same overall pattern of participation. However, the depth, timing, objectives and breadth of stakeholder involvement vary significantly as illustrated by the Tunisian and French examples:

In **Tunisia**, the Ministry of Environment and Land Use Planning (MEAT) was the lead institution in charge of the preparation of the National Agenda 21. It was assisted by the National Commission for Sustainable Development, supported by a Technical Committee and various sector committees. The preparation and updating of the National Agenda 21 were largely based on wide ranging consultations with different stakeholders at the national and local levels.

Source: Ministry of Environment and Land Management (1995). National Agenda 21. MEAT, Tunis

³⁹ NEAPs for instance are prepared and implemented by Ministries of Environment and often become the MoEs Plan, thus limiting broad ownership.

In **France**, by the Prime Minister's decision, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development had the responsibility to prepare the strategy and to give impetus and coordinate the preparation process. All concerned government institutions made their contribution, and were informed and guided by an initial government workshop.

A wide participation of actors in the elaboration of the strategy was a central concern of the Government. The National Council for Sustainable development (NCS) was created to involve representatives from civil society and territorial authorities. It provides advice and submits proposals for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of the sustainable development policy. It is made up of representatives from politically elected representatives, NGO's, employers associations, enterprises, labour unions, the media and scientists. The NCS is placed under the authority of the Prime Minister.

A number of meetings to discuss the Environmental Charter were organized where stakeholders could express their thoughts about environmental matters. These were also taken into account in the drafting of the national strategy for sustainable development. Finally, at the end of the preparatory process, the Economic and Social Council as well as the Parliament were consulted.

The Strategy was adopted by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development.

Source: http://www.environnement.gouv.fr/actua/com2003/developpement_durable

Remarks and Observations on stakeholder involvement

Qualitative information on stakeholder involvement is conspicuously missing. Consequently, it is difficult to gauge how and how far the consultation mechanisms have effectively influenced the preparation of strategies.

Except in few cases (e.g. in Tunisia and Turkey, regional workshops were organized to review the draft strategy), the preparation has not been nurtured by decentralized processes. Local initiatives (section 2.2.1) that constitute opportunities to involve a variety of stakeholders are not systematically merged into national strategies.

Stakeholder involvement requires a good understanding of who are the stakeholders, their responsibilities, rights and relations. Often strategic documents limit themselves to a mere enumeration of "usual" stakeholders. Criteria for involvement are not always clear which can lead to questioning representativeness.

Stakeholder involvement is often one-off. Mechanisms for a continued involvement that can be refined overtime seldom exist. For instance in many cases, the NCSD have only met once since establishment.

The involvement of stakeholders from government has been partly addressed in section 2.2.1. Stakeholders outside government may be involved in either an independent structure (e.g. NCSD) or inter-ministerial working bodies. In both cases, their degree of influence remain uncertain. The arrangements to tackle the issue of arbitration and trade-offs that is central to consensus building are seldom documented.

Participation is built into most SD related international obligations and most EC members have ratified the Aarhus convention that binds member states to enshrine participation in domestic legislation.

Consultation events and communication

Multi-layered and inclusive events at national or decentralised levels are opportunities to inform the general public, sometimes to obtain feed back, more rarely to reach or improve consensus⁴⁰. The previous description of preparation processes indicates that, in the region, these events have taken various forms: national conferences, workshops, forums, roundtables, public hearings, thematic or sector workshop, e-consultation to provide comments on drafts, etc.

Communication and wide information dissemination is key for effective participation. They ensure regular flows of information between stakeholders and between various forums. National and local media play vital roles in the strategy process by keeping stakeholders informed on progress made, expressing consensus reached, generating wider understanding of sustainable development, and encouraging participation. Information and Communication Technologies are increasingly becoming important. As illustrated in Table 6. *Available Websites on National Sustainable Development Strategies*, most countries in the region have developed a website.

Examples of consultation events and communication follow:

In **Greece**, the key objectives set out in the NSSD include the promotion of transparent and participatory processes involving all stakeholders and the implementation of Aarhus Convention principles. The National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (2001) was created to collect, organize and disseminate environmental information and data, raise environmental awareness, contribute scientifically to government policies and programmes concerning environment and sustainable development.

A Committee for the free access to environmental information has been established (1995). The Panhellenic Network of Ecological Organizations is mainly active in education and public awareness

In **Albania**, one priority of the National Environmental Action Plan is the “development of environmental knowledge and increased public participation in environmental issues”. The participation of non-government organizations as foreseen in NEAP aims at increasing public awareness of environmental issues through the mass media, seminars and conferences, and also through policies that enable public participation in decision-making and the development of environmental standards.

Albania signed the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, commonly known as the Aarhus Convention, on 25 June 1998 and ratified it on 27 June 2001. This was a significant accomplishment in public information and participation.

Environmental information is mainly disseminated through electronic and print media. A considerable number of information leaflets, posters and fact sheets on the environment have been produced and distributed. The regular publications include the Environmental Bulletin of the Ministry of Environment, the State of the Environment Reports, the REC Daily Environmental news. The 2002 Law on Environmental Protection stipulates that the National Environmental Information System is open to the public.

Information about the MoE is available through the Internet (<http://www.nea.gov.al>) and some environmental information is disseminated through TV and Radio or press conference.

⁴⁰ In general, representative multi stakeholder entities like NCSD lend themselves better to obtaining feed back and consensus than larger, less formal structures.

Table 6. Available Websites on National Sustainable Development Strategies

Albania	http://www.nea.gov.al
Algeria	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	http://www.neapbih.ba/ http://www.bih.prsp.info/
Croatia	http://www.mzopu.hr/default.aspx?lang=en http://www.vlada.hr/default.asp?ru=2
Cyprus	
Egypt	
France	http://www1.environnement.gouv.fr/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=9 http://www.environnement.gouv.fr/actua/com2003/developpement_durable/dossiersnd0
Greece	http://www.minenv.gr/1/18/e1802.html
Israel	www.environment.gov.il
Italy	http://www.minambiente.it/sito/news/strategie_sostenibilita.asp http://192.107.79.251/nuovo/home.htm
Lebanon	
Lybia	
Malta	http://home.um.edu.mt/islands/ncsd/
Monaco	
Morocco	http://www.matee.gov.ma/DAT/chart.htm http://www.minenv.gov.ma/
Montenegro	www.mepp.cg.yu
Slovenia	http://www.sigov.si/cgi-bin/wpl/mop/en/meni3.htm http://www.gov.si/mop/en/kdosmo/delovnatelesa_workprogramme.htm
Spain	http://www.esp-sostenible.org/eeds/contenidos.htm
Syria	
Tunisia	http://www.environnement.nat.tn/commission.htm http://www.environnement.nat.tn/observatoire.htm
Turkey	

2.2.3. Using and Building up Knowledge

In the formulation of strategies for sustainable development, a key principle is the identification of priorities based on a comprehensive and reliable analysis of the present situation⁴¹. This requires credible information on changing environmental, social and economic conditions, trends, pressures and responses, and their interactions, at, and between, local, national and global levels.

Although the Review did not look into the details of all strategies in the Region, the analysis carried out on few examples meets assessment made elsewhere⁴²: strategies are often based on a very weak analysis. Most often, strategies are built on sector or discipline-related information and knowledge that already exist. A fresh look at issues from the perspective of the interactions between the different dimensions, between local, national and global challenges or between long and short term horizon is often missing⁴³. Another shortcoming of the strategy development is the lack of stocktaking exercise and analysis of current strategies performance (e.g. stakeholder analysis, sustainability analysis, SD process and mechanisms analysis), including specific reviews of laws and regulations to check potential conflict with sustainable development.

Evaluating and managing the complex interrelationships between social, environmental and economic issues and objectives is always constrained by limited skill and capacity. It has to be recognised as well that sustainable development is complex and difficult and that scientific and technical experts will never achieve the comprehensive understanding of issues that could lead to undisputable solutions. While specialist expertise is needed, other types of knowledge from other levels need to be brought into perspective. Analytical tasks cannot be separated from stakeholder inputs and development. Except in few countries, the Review did not find any documented experience of leveraging stakeholders' knowledge.

In general, there is very little information on the knowledge base for sustainable development⁴⁴, although some national websites and reports do mention institutions involved in environmental or sustainable development information collection and analysis. To various degree of sophistication, most countries have established environmental information systems and comprehensive tools (e.g. GIS). Institutions responsible for coordination, collection, processing and dissemination of environmental and SD information are usually attached to environmental ministries. Very few countries have established a specific entity like in Greece. Finally, one should mention that, as a follow-up to UNCED and at the CSD request, all countries are engaged in the development of national indicators for sustainable development that will improve the knowledge and information base.

The following examples illustrate the variety of situations:

⁴¹ See OECD Key Principles for sustainable development strategies Annex www

⁴² Recent reviews by UNDSA, OECD, IISD, etc.

⁴³ OECD DAC (2001). The DAC Guidelines. Strategies for Sustainable Development. Guidance for Development Cooperation. Development Cooperation Committee : "Technical capacity and methodological skills are required for such analysis, and for long-term planning. In practice, these skills tend to be lacking and many existing strategies are based on incomplete or weak analysis"

⁴⁴ In the Country Profile 2002 UNCED DESA. Chapter 35 *Science for Sustainable development* and Chapter 40 *Information for decision-making* do not give much information on the comprehensiveness and reliability of information and knowledge available.

In **Israel**, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Environment are developing sustainability indicators to communicate environmental information to the public and decision-makers. Within the framework of a MAP/Blue Plan regional project, Israel has taken part in the development of some 130 indicators on sustainable development in the Mediterranean area. It has already prepared dozens of indicators with the assistance of the Central Bureau of Statistics which has set up an environmental unit to compile, collate and analyze data on the state of the environment and on environmental resources. Publication of sustainable development indicators in the Statistical Yearbook is expected to increase awareness of both the public and policy-makers on the state of the environment and sustainable development trends. An initial booklet of 11 indicators in the areas of legislation and enforcement, research, hazardous waste, energy production and consumption, transportation, river quality, air pollution, solid waste, and wastewater has been published.

In **Malta** the main comprehensive tool used to monitor the state of resources and the pressures on them is the State of the Environment Report, which is published in accordance with the Environment Protection Act, every three years. The next State of the Environment report will be published in 2005.

One of the most important avenues for knowledge sharing is the statutory public consultation process embedded with the environmental and spatial planning systems. In the spatial planning context, citizens are alerted to development proposals through site notices and newspaper advertisements, and they have the opportunity to make written submissions on projects. Opportunities to voice opinions are given during decision-making meetings, during reconsideration meetings, and during appeals, which can also be launched by third parties. For larger developments, public involvement in EIA processes is also provided for. When the SEA Directive comes into force plans and programmes will also be subject to extensive public consultation.

The Aarhus Convention and related EU Directive also provide for public involvement in decision-making and Maltese law transposes this in accordance with these international commitments.

One tool used to assess the outcomes of sustainable development processes is the sustainability indicators set prepared by Sustainability Indicators – Malta Observatory (SI-MO). This Observatory was established in November 2000 to meet the requirements of the MED-ERMIS (Malta) project.

The MED-ERMIS project involved the computation of 100 indicators based on the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) methodology (3 out of the 130 indicators were not applicable for Malta). This exercise was carried out in collaboration with the National Statistics Office. The work was disseminated as follows: a book was published with the data sheets for each of the 100 indicators, containing data and main trends over the 1995-2000 or 1995-2001 periods, and useful information about 27 indicators for which data could not be obtained. An interactive compact disc, with an accompanying manual, containing all the research output of SI-MO was produced and disseminated. A press conference was organised during which the press was briefed on the meaning and importance of these indicators.

Another initiative that SI-MO (Malta) took in order to increase public awareness on issues of sustainable development and sustainability indicators was the production of a fast paced 25-minute video. This video was aimed at the general public and it explained the need for sustainable development and how sustainability indicators can be used to gauge a country's performance in this respect.

With respect to the preparation of the NSSD, through the process of wide public consultation, at national, regional, sector and grassroots levels, a broad range of perspectives on sustainable development have been elicited. These views will be woven together to update the

draft NSSD and identify priorities. Otherwise the wide membership of the NCSO helps to ensure that knowledge diversity is incorporated into the sustainable development policy processes.

Stakeholders present on the NCSO have numerous opportunities to learn more about sustainable development policymaking, and the consultation process itself is educational in that it helps citizens and organisations to think strategically and prioritise what they consider important sustainable development issues. Communications tools such as the MRAE and MEPA websites also build up the knowledge and capacity of stakeholders, but ongoing media awareness campaigns such as the MRAE Xummiemu campaign (<http://www.xummiemu.gov.mt/multi/graphics/index.html>) and the MEPA Saving Rinu campaign (<http://www.mepa.org.mt/index.htm?WED2004/RINU.htm&1>) also reach a wide audience and raise awareness to increase the capacity of stakeholders. The Maltese environmental sector is currently benefiting from a number of EU-funded capacity building projects related to the transposition of the EU environmental acquis, including a twinning project with the Austrian and UK environment agencies.

In **Morocco**, under the State Secretariat of the Environment, the National Laboratory of the Environment (ONEM) maintains an Information and data system on the environment (SIDE) including national and regional GIS (SIGER) information and sustainable development indicators. A Sustainable development network is envisaged to facilitate the access and exchange of information between all stakeholders.

Under the Land Management Department, the National Center for Land Management and Sustainable Development (CNATDD) and Regional Observatories for Land Management and Sustainable Development collect and analyze data, assess EIA studies, and support local authorities in developing their sector or development plans. The National Observatory of Migrations maintains a data base on migration.

In **Tunisia**, the Tunisian Office for Environment and Development (OTED) plays a central role in managing knowledge on sustainable development. OTED collects from existing thematic networks, produces, disseminates and analyses SD information. It services the different partners. It has developed a system to help planners making decisions (decision-making support for natural resource management and the environment, SAIDE). OTED is in charge of monitoring SD indicators. Another important component of knowledge management is the Sustainable development network (RDD) which involves the different actors.

Other institutions involved in knowledge management activities comprise the State Secretariat for Scientific Research and Technology established in 1991 and the Center for Environmental Technology (CITET). Tunisia is active in regional networks and partnership aiming at increasing knowledge and scientific bases: LIFE, CIHEAM, MEDURBS, MEDCAMPUS, MEDSPA, and METAP.

2.2.4. Organisational Arrangements

An effective strategy for sustainable development requires good management that provides leadership, organizes, coordinates and administers the different processes, harnesses the human and financial capacities and potential, and monitors achievements. These functions are best performed by some form of coordinating body that acts as a small secretariat.

Theoretically, the secretariat is not politically responsible for the strategy and does not make strategic decisions as is the role of the multi stakeholder entity.

In practice, most secretariats are placed within the lead Ministry and *de facto* primarily responsible to it. As evidenced by many examples in the region, the administrative and political roles of secretariats are not always well delineated. The linkages between secretariats and multi stakeholder steering entities are not clearly formalised.

While a detailed description of the situation at the Region level could not be made⁴⁵, the following are examples of how secretariats articulate with other entities:

In **Tunisia**, The Ministry of Environment and Land Use Planning (MEAT) is the lead institution in charge of coordination of the implementation of Agenda 21. It is supported by the specialized public agencies such as the National Environment Protection Agency (ANPE) and the Tunisian Observatory for Environment and Sustainable development (OTED).

The Tunisian Observatory of the environment and sustainable development (OTTED) in the ANPE act as a permanent Secretariat to the National Commission for Sustainable Development. OTTED is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Strategy.

In **Italy**, the Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection is the lead agency for implementation. In addition to environmental functions, the Department for Sustainable Development (SVS 1999) of the Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection is responsible for the promotion and coordination of programs and projects for sustainable development, updating and management of the National Plan for Sustainable Development. It is also in charge of promoting voluntary agreements, environmental tax regulations and tariffs mechanisms.

One of the six Commissions of the Inter-ministerial Committee for Economic Planning (CIPE) is devoted to sustainable development. Through a Technical Board of its Commission for Sustainable Development, CIPE identifies the structures and bodies that should monitor and evaluate implementation. The board consists of representatives from the Ministry of Economy, the Regions and other Ministry representatives competent on the treated subject. The Board includes representatives from the main technical national bodies responsible for providing information (i.e. APAT: National Environmental Protection Agency and ENEA: National Institute for Energy, Environment and New Technologies). The Technical Board, in cooperation with the Minister of Environment, prepares annual assessment reports on the Strategy's State of implementation, based on 10 priority indicators.

Whereas the Ministry of Environment is politically responsible, other Ministries, Environmental NGOs, Trade Unions, Enterprises, local authorities (region) are all involved in the implementation of the Strategy.

Some Observations

There is little information on the human and financial resources of the secretariats existing in different countries.

Further data collection and analysis would be necessary to describe the functioning of these secretariats in the different countries of the Region.

3. KEY ASPECTS AND PRACTICES

This section presents in a matrix form a recapitulation of the previous sections on two major processes: "Policy integration and convergence" and "Stakeholders involvement"

The components are listed with the main mechanisms, tools and examples of countries where they have been established.

⁴⁵ annex 5 outlines in a matrix form the elements that could be used for such description of established management systems, or candidate elements for system establishment: coordination body and leadership; Monitoring and indicators; Reporting and feed back systems, Conflict management and arbitration; Financial resources including ODA; Skills and Capacity; Planning, milestones, duration, timeframe; Public communication.

Table 7. *Process: Policy integration and convergence*

Component	Mechanisms and Tools	Examples
SD concern in sector vision	Guidelines and guidance to sectors Sector programmes for SD implementation SD Focal Points in sector ministries Harmonization workshops Inter ministerial committees, inter sector working groups	Greece, Israel Greece France Morocco Most countries
SD concern in overall national planning and budget	Planning commission and economic ministry representatives in coordinating or steering entities SD principles in periodic national economic development plans National environmental accounting	Croatia, Cyprus Most countries Italy
Local level initiatives	Local Agendas 21 Lower level initiative (e.g. eco schools) Global and regional and national networks of local initiatives Voluntary initiatives at municipal levels	Most countries Malta Italy Spain
Planning and economic tools	EIA, SEA, Polluter pays principle, environmental taxes Spatial Planning Eco management audit schemes	Most countries Quite few countries France, Morocco, Tunisia Italy
Linking different planning horizon	Overall goals linked to immediate targets Strategy contains implementation provisions and plan	Italy Tunisia

Table 8. *Process: Stakeholders involvement*

Component	Mechanisms and Tools	Examples
Engaging government sectors	Inter-ministerial committees and working groups	All countries
Steering preparation and implementation	National council, commission, steering committee Expanded inter-ministerial committee	Most countries
Consultation	Forum, national conference e-consultation, expert consultation, Public hearings Decentralised events Network	France, Malta, Israel Montenegro Croatia, Malta Malta Spain
Communication and Awareness raising	Media	Morocco

4. SOME CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section highlights some aspects and implications of current practices in the Region.

4.1. Country ownership and commitment

Most countries in the region have taken the initiative to develop their own strategies.

The strategy development process is in general backed by a strong political commitment from some influential individuals at high government level. It is not clear whether this commitment is effectively shared by various sectors of government machinery and across levels of government. Cross-government and local level institutional support do exist in places but the sense of ownership cannot be easily documented.

It is premature to say that the commitment is there on a continuous, long-term basis. However, because in particular of international commitments, a sense of urgency is maintained by governments despite the long-term nature of SD related issues.

Political commitment to sustainable development has not yet fully translated into financial resources that are affected to the strategy preparation and earmarked for implementation by different stakeholders, including government line agencies.

Some mechanisms are in place to foster multi stakeholder ownership and governance. They will necessitate continuous attention and efforts to ensure that there is a share vision of what needs to be done in the future, and an agreement on the courses of actions and responsibilities.

Although there is a huge variety of country situations, most often, a single government institution coordinates the process. When, this institution is a line agency or has limited influence at various administrative levels then its coordination capacity and technical leadership have to be built up.

In most countries of the Region, decentralization is a key dimension of government policies. Institutions and non-government stakeholders at the local level have shown their commitment to sustainable development process through various initiatives. Support to and coordination of these initiatives will contribute to forge national commitment.

4.2. Integration and Coherence

Most countries strive to foster integration and improve coherence.

Non-environmental sectors are progressively integrating the notion of sustainable development and its three traditional pillars in their policies. This does not automatically translate into sector strategies and programmes that are formatted in conformity with overall sustainable development objectives⁴⁶. It has to be recognized that this is not always possible for all sectors. Often the environment-economic interface is at least considered and at best accommodated. Addressing the environment-social or economic-social interfaces appears unusual.

As is often the case when planning horizons and government mandates are mid-term, the time dimension appears to be most difficult to factor into the policy processes. At the

⁴⁶ neither are SD priorities reflected in sector budget priorities and nor fully internalized by monitoring mechanisms that would be grounded on the set of national SD indicators recently formulated.

planning and programming levels, the establishment of strong linkages between immediate and mid-term undertakings and their monitoring and evaluation remains a challenge.

With decentralization processes, local initiatives have gained momentum and recognition. However, these need to be consolidated and mainstreamed into national efforts. Linking national and local priorities and actions in a two-way iterative process will call for departing from natural inclinations towards top-down exercises.

From the point of view of the planning tools used, most countries now display a set of methods, instruments and legislation that bring together different aspects of sustainable development. Following environmental analysis that are now anchored in legislation and routinely performed (at least at a project level), economic instruments have become popular among policy makers. Although striving to incorporate different dimensions, the utilization of these instruments tends to remain the domain of specialists, environmentalists or economists. Methodological development and multidisciplinary capacity-building will be necessary to guarantee their acceptance and appropriation by a larger audience of institutional and individual stakeholders.

4.3. Stakeholder involvement

All countries strive to involve the different stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of their strategies. National steering committees or forums are the most common consultation mechanisms. Mandate and composition are broadly similar. The roles and responsibilities of different key participants are not always clearly defined and the level of stakeholders' engagement and appropriation varies significantly across countries.

The political influence of these mechanisms on the decision-making process is difficult to assess. Most often the relationships between the multi stakeholder entities, the lead government institution, and the secretariat are not specified. In particular, there does not seem to exist clear guidelines on when, with whom and how consultations should be carried out, as well as on how to arbitrate and make trade-offs between conflicting visions and interests. Effectively reaching a consensus remains a major challenge.

In general, legal frameworks have not been reviewed and adapted to provide specifically for stakeholder involvement in strategy preparation and implementation. Although exceptions exist in countries that have acceded to the Aarhus Convention or where EIA procedures traditionally leave room to public consultation.

The Review was not able to trace the existence of mechanisms in place for the evaluation of and feedback on consultation events or mechanisms.

In most countries, modern information and communication technologies are being used by responsible government agencies to foster communication and information dissemination. National media and NGOs are also playing a significant role in spreading the sustainable development concept. The extent to which they have contributed to raise awareness, alter behaviour, influence governance and engage responsibility is not known.

4.4. Management Systems

Most secretariats established to coordinate the formulation and implementation of the strategy are facing the dilemma of providing leadership and impetus, while remaining politically neutral and arbitrating conflicting interests between and within major groups.

Secretariats are placed in the lead agencies (e.g. Ministries of environment), and do not always possess the specific skills (e.g. coordination of multi stakeholder processes, strategic analysis, communication, conflict management, etc.) or cannot easily obtain the additional financial and human resources that are needed to perform their functions.

5. DIRECTIONS FOR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide additional comprehensive guidelines or precepts but rather to highlight important features of the preparation and implementation of NSDS. This can help a country to place the process in its overall institutional and administrative setting and to identify appropriate arrangements and mechanisms. By proposing a common language to the diversity of participants of the national process, it may also support them in structuring their national dialogue towards a country-specific approach. The indications here can also help in the analysis of what has already been done and achieved, and what is the quality of national efforts towards sustainable development. Finally, the systematic use of this generic frame by practitioners may facilitate the feed-back to international levels as well as improve horizontal dialogue and exchange of experience.

Based on the current countries experience reviewed in the preceding, this chapter first recapitulates the definition, the characteristics, the structure and the constituting elements of national sustainable development strategies as found in the work of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the guidance developed by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)⁴⁷. The section then gives examples of mechanisms or arrangements to activate or manage the different processes. Finally, some operational guidance are proposed for the practitioners to develop terms of reference for the preparation, implementation and improvement of the national sustainable development strategies.

5.1. Recapitulation

Definition

A strategy for sustainable development comprises: " A coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and investment, which seek to integrate the short and long term economic, social and environmental objectives of society- through mutually supportive approaches wherever possible- and manages, trade-offs where this is not possible".

*Characteristics and Principles*⁴⁸

A national sustainable development strategy exhibits the following characteristics and principles:

⁴⁷ Essential references for those involved in the preparation and implementation of NSDS include: OECD DAC (2001). *The DAC Guidelines. Strategies for Sustainable Development. Guidance for Development Cooperation*. Development Cooperation Committee, OECD, Paris. UN DESA (2002) *Guidance in Preparing a National Sustainable Development Strategy: Managing Sustainable Development in the New Millennium*. Background Paper No.13. (DESA/DSD/PC2/BP13).

Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. IIED 2002. Compiled by Barry Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass for OECD and UNDP .

⁴⁸ Source: adapted from OECD DAC (2001), UN DESA (2002), and Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002).

Integration and Coherence: integration of economic, social and environmental objectives and action; synergies and convergence between sector and thematic strategies and between different levels; inter generational perspective

- linking social, environmental and economic issues and actions;
- linking different sectors;
- linking local, national, regional and global priorities and actions;
- linking the long to the medium and short terms.

Broad participation and effective partnerships

- people centred;
- consensus on long-term vision, and well-defined, differentiated and agreed implementation responsibilities;
- transparency and accountability;
- access to information for all stakeholders and effective networking;
- formalised channels for communication;
- partnerships among government, civil society, private sector and external institutions.

Country ownership and commitment

- political will and leadership;
- strong institution or group of institutions spearheading the process;
- strong and continuous stakeholders commitment;
- good governance;
- shared strategic vision and agreed timeframe.

Developing capacity and enabling environment

- building on and expanding existing knowledge and expertise of different stakeholders;
- building on and complementing existing processes and strategies.

Focus on outcomes and coherent means of implementation

- based on comprehensive reliable social, environmental and economic analysis;
- realistic, flexible targets linked to overall vision;
- mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and feedback;
- linkages with budget and investment processes.

Structuring blocks

The key components to prepare and implement a sustainable development strategy comprise:

- a long term vision with principles and priorities;
- a set of inter related processes;
- a combination of different mechanisms and tools;
- a system to manage the process, providing for momentum, overall coherence and coordination.

Steps and Elements for preparing, managing and continually improving a strategy for sustainable development⁴⁹

Steps and elements comprise continuing, regular and one-off activities, operational tasks, decisions, etc. The following can be considered:

- Seek or improve political commitment to the strategy preparation and implementation process from the highest as well as all other levels.
- Estimate the benefits that might derive from developing and implementing a strategy.
- Secure or confirm a mandate for the strategy from the highest as well as all other levels.
- Identify the stakeholders in the preparation and implementation, and outline their responsibilities, rights and relations in the process;
- Seek agreement on the roles of stakeholders (private sector, civil society including NGOs, local communities, donors, national and local government, etc.)
- Ensure broad-based ownership by stakeholders of the process, particularly a vision, principles and priorities;
- Establish or strengthen a steering committee or equivalent multi-stakeholder forum (e.g. National Council for Sustainable Development) with a broad balance of representation from government, the private sector and civil society acceptable to stakeholders;
- Establish or strengthen a secretariat or coordinating body acceptable to stakeholders, with sufficient authority and resources to coordinate and manage the process;
- Mobilize the required resources. Identify, secure, and allocate in a timely and accountable manner, the required:
 - o skills, and sources of knowledge and learning;
 - o management, legal and institutional support;
 - o financial resources.
- Take stock of existing processes and mechanisms:
 - o catalogue the range of existing strategies related to sustainable development;
 - o identify the issues covered, vision, goals and responsibilities;
 - o identify mechanisms and processes used by existing strategies;
 - o review achievements of these mechanisms in terms of synergies, clashes and gaps, and their outcomes;
 - o determine the existence/extent of sector policy conflicts and inconsistencies, and the work necessary to resolve them;
 - o identify what is required to improve synergies and bridge gaps.
- Develop or improve coherence and coordination between strategy frameworks at all levels from international to local; and between and within sectors.
- Establish or improve the ground rules governing the strategy process:
 - o debate and agree how all decisions will be made and agreed, and uncertainty dealt with;
 - o coordinate means for negotiation of trade-offs and conflict management.
- Establish and promote a schedule or broad calendar for the strategy process – determine activities, responsibilities, capabilities and resources needed, and their timing.
- Communicate and Promote the strategy as a unified concept.
- Establish or improve provisions for regular analysis, debate, communication, planning, implementation, monitoring and review; to ensure that all stakeholders are

⁴⁹ Source: Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002) modified from OECD DAC (2001)

- best able to play their part in the strategy. They will involve establishing or improving:
- means for analysing sustainability, stakeholders, mechanisms and processes, and scenarios;
 - regular stakeholder fora and other means for participation (thematic, national, decentralized and local) to reach and improve consensus on basic vision, goals, principles, system components, pilot activities, targets and responsibilities, and to review progress;
 - communication and information systems to ensure regular flows of information concerning both the strategy and sustainable development between stakeholders and between fora. This will include development of key information products to improve awareness and stimulate action, and the establishment of knowledge management systems to ensure sharing of experience and facilitate collective learning;
 - major decision-making arrangements, notably: structures and roles; handling global and local values and risk; means of delivering consensus and handling negotiations; and ways of linking those involved;
 - implementation services and control mechanisms – means for selecting policy implementation instruments (regulations, incentives and voluntary mechanisms) and applying them;
 - means for planning investments – tasks involved in making the case to different investment sources, and the criteria that should be used;
 - monitoring and accountability mechanisms to assess both strategy processes and their results. These will include: developing and reviewing sustainability indicators, baselines, standards and codes of practice; identifying and encouraging innovative processes to promote the culture of action-learning;
 - independent monitoring; and feedback to decision-making.

5.2. Examples of arrangements and mechanisms for major processes

*Stakeholders involvement and Partnerships: Establishing or strengthening a strategy entity*⁵⁰

A multi-stakeholder steering entity, comprising representatives of the private sector and civil society as well as government, has generally been found necessary to ensure equitable governance of the strategy processes and to make the key decisions. This body needs to be seen both to have, and to be able to exercise the powers required to formulate a strategy, achieve consensus on its scope and content, and monitor its development, implementation and impacts.

Its *key tasks* include:

- promoting acceptance (in political circles) of the need for, and benefits of, the participation of stakeholders in the strategy process;
- encouraging the sustained participation of key stakeholder groups in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy, its outcomes and impacts;
- providing general oversight of the strategy process, and particularly representation of stakeholders within it;
- taking responsibility for the appointment and conduct of the secretariat;
- approving process design and revisions;
- reviewing major evidence on sustainable development problems and potentials;
- reviewing technical and policy options;
- making policy decisions (or recommendations to higher authorities where needed);

⁵⁰ Source: Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002) modified from OECD DAC (2001)

- obtaining (when required) timely decisions from higher authorities that enable strategic planning and implementation processes;
- reviewing and approving major strategy documents and progress reports, and formal submission of such documents to government, where needed;
- providing appropriate advocacy for the process among respective constituencies (government, private sector, civil society and, where appropriate, the donor community) to engender confidence;
- stimulating partnership building for implementation.

It is the membership and procedures of this entity that form the 'heart' of the strategy process. As such, they will largely determine the credibility of the strategy. It is preferable for the chairperson to be an independent, eminent person not beholden to any particular interest group. The steering entity needs to meet regularly.

Coordination and Management systems: Establishment of a Secretariat⁵¹

Recent assessments indicate that an effective strategy for sustainable development requires good management that provides leadership, organizes, coordinates and administers the different processes, harnesses the human and financial capacities and potential, and monitors achievements. These functions are better performed by some form of coordinating body (e.g. a small Secretariat).

Its *key tasks* include:

- Organizing and coordinating the overall strategy processes.
- Gaining confidence and support for the process from key political groups, statutory bodies and (where needed) donor organizations.
- Planning specific activities, meetings and events.
- Facilitating the setting of agendas at all stages of the strategy process, and follow-up of decisions/agreements.
- Budgeting for and procuring expertise and resources.
- Ensuring that the roles of participants in strategy processes are clearly established.
- Supporting working groups and other committees.
- Acting as a communications focal point for information and enquiries.
- Ensuring adherence to timetables.

Thus the secretariat does not make the key decisions on strategy goals, policies, and so on, nor is it expected to undertake everything itself, but to fulfill an organizing, anchoring and support role to provide day-to-day coordination on a continuing basis within a broadly agreed timescale. The secretariat needs to command the respect and trust of stakeholders and to discharge its functions in an open and neutral way. Past experience shows that a secretariat works best if it is located centrally within government; for example, within the office of the president or prime minister or within a body which has recognized authority for cross-government and cross-sector coordination such as the ministry of finance and development planning or a national planning commission (often the latter are directly responsible to the president or prime minister). Where a secretariat is placed within a line ministry, there is the danger that the strategy will become, and be seen as, an activity of that ministry and will cease to command the wider acceptance and support that is needed.

Policy integration and convergence: Local Agenda 21⁵²

⁵¹ Source: Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002) modified from OECD DAC (2001)

⁵² Source: Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2002) modified from OECD DAC (2001)

National sustainable development strategies need to distinguish issues that can only be addressed centrally from those that are better addressed at a local level (e.g. subsidiary principle). The convergence of top-down and bottom-up approaches ensures policy integration and consolidates implementation. Decentralised decision-making offers such opportunity to link national strategy processes to local sustainable development initiatives. The formulation of Local Agenda 21 allows detailed planning that translates strategic visions into practice.

Following UNCED, local and national governments have promoted Local Agendas 21. In developing countries these agendas were supported by donor agencies, UNDP in particular. Various assessments indicate that Local Agendas have increased the willingness of citizens, community organizations and NGOs to 'buy in' 21s planning and environmental management where they are organized in such a way as to encourage and support their participation. Local Agenda 21 represent a major innovation in local planning for sustainable development. At their best, Local Agenda 21:

- are grounded in a broad inclusive process of consultation, coordinated by a local authority and drawing in local key stakeholders;
- ensure that sustainable development local concerns, from the very localized feed into higher level planning and initiatives;
- provide an efficient and equitable means of identifying common goals, reconciling conflicting interests and creating working partnerships between government agencies, private enterprises and civil society groups.

Their effectiveness depends on the accountability, transparency and capacity of local government, although they can also become a means for promoting these qualities. Thus, most examples of successful and influential Local Agendas 21 come from cities where there have been major improvements in the quality of local government, only a few of which can be ascribed to the process itself. Similarly, the capacity and incentives for Local Agendas 21 to integrate global environmental concerns into local plans depends on supportive national and international networks, although conversely Local Agendas can also help to strengthen such networks.

The most successful Local Agenda 21s can provide a source of inspiration for strategic planning for sustainable development, not only at the local level, but also at the national and international levels, where the establishment of associations of local authorities can help to provide collective voice and influence. They have helped to create new and better ways of managing local environments, and engaged a wide range of stakeholders in the process.

The most important challenges for effectiveness has been harmonizing national and local regulations and standards. Unless local actions and regulations are supported by national policy and regulatory frameworks, they cannot be effective. The establishment of a national association of local authorities can help to provide a collective voice and influence.

Local Agenda 21 has actively encouraged city governments to share their experiences. This led practitioners to identify key factors for success – which also accord with the principles and elements of strategies for sustainable development:

- Multi-sector engagement in the planning process, through a local stakeholder group which serves as the coordination and policy body for preparing a local sustainable development action plan.
- Consultation with community groups, NGOs, business, churches, government agencies, professional groups and unions, in order to create a shared vision and to identify proposals and priorities for action.
- Participatory assessment of local social, economic and environmental conditions and needs.

- Monitoring and reporting procedures, including local indicators, to track progress and to allow participants to hold each other accountable to the action plan.

5.3. Terms of Reference for a strategic process

While the general definition, characteristics and structure of national sustainable development strategies are broadly accepted and applied, the elements of strategy will vary across countries.

Using the proposed elements and examples, country practitioners may want to develop Terms of Reference for the preparation, management and/or continuous improvement of their own sustainable development strategy.

It should not be assumed that all previously mentioned elements are necessary and have to be addressed in a rigid sequence. Moreover, many of them will need to be pursued in parallel and some might not be anticipated until opportunities arise for them. Therefore, the Terms of Reference will have to select and organise the elements that apply to a specific country's situation, building on what already exists, making new arrangements when appropriate. A flexible, incremental approach is indispensable.

For the retained elements, the Terms of Reference would have to pay particular attention to the level of intervention, the assessment of existing efforts, the identification of entry points and specific actions, as well as the responsibilities and resources. A work plan with steps and milestones would be included.

6. ANNEXES

Annex 1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire on National initiatives and strategies for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region

Strategic Frameworks

- What are the major strategic frameworks relating to sustainable development?
- What are the focus, principles and priority areas?
- What are the institutional arrangements and procedures for preparation, implementation and monitoring?
- Are there links between different strategic frameworks and linkages to the overall national decision-making and planning?

Processes and Mechanisms

(i) Achieving Policy Integration and Convergence.

- How are sustainable development concerns streamlined into sector policies and central planning and budgeting?
- What regulatory and fiscal instruments provide for integration?
- Do decentralization mechanisms foster the preparation of Local Agenda 21?
- How do national frameworks take regional initiatives and international agreements into account?

(ii) Stakeholder involvement in decision-making and partnerships

- What steering mechanism exists to represent stakeholders in the development or/and implementation of the strategic framework?
- What regular consultation forms have been used to engage the different stakeholders across sectors and between levels?
- What communication and information systems are being used to inform and raise awareness on sustainable development?
- What partnerships have been established?

(iii) Managing and Building up the Knowledge base

- What comprehensive tools or systems exist to understand the state of resources, trends in their quality and quantity, and the pressure upon them?
- How does the diversity of knowledge among stakeholders feed into policy decisions?
- What systems are in place to assess the outcomes of the sustainable development process?
- What measures are taken to build up the knowledge and capacity of different stakeholders?

Management systems

- Is there an institutional catalyst in charge of coordination?
- What are the mandates, organizational structures and membership (and chairmanship)?

Annex 2 Management system (formalized or when not formalized candidate elements of.)

	Coordination body and Leadership	Monitoring and indicators reporting feed back	Conflict management, arbitration	Financial resources including ODA	Capacity	Planning milestones duration timeframe	Public communication
Albania							
Algeria							
Bosnia and Herzegovina							
Croatia							
Cyprus							
Egypt							
France							
Greece							
Israel							
Italy							
Lebanon							
Lybian Arab Jamahirrya							
Malta							
Monaco							
Morocco							
Serbia and Montenegro							
Slovenia							
Spain							
Syrian Arab Republic							
Tunisia							
Turkey							

Annex 3. Example of Country Profile. Malta.

**Country Profile: Malta
(situation as of December 2004)**

Context

1. Strategic Frameworks

1.1. Major Strategic Framework relating to sustainable development

A first draft of Malta's National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) has been prepared by the National Commission for Sustainable Development (NCSD) and extensive public consultation with major groups based on the Agenda 21 model has been completed. The final draft is being prepared.

1.2. Focus, Principles and Priority Areas

The Malta statement at the World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg identifies the priority areas on which projects are focused: Marine and coastal areas of Northwest Malta, Solid waste management strategy, the Regeneration of Valletta and the development of a Sustainable transport system.

Priorities for the National Strategy for Sustainable Development are currently being identified through a series of public consultation meetings.

1.3. Preparation aspects (Organization, Institutional and procedural settings, participation)

The body responsible for preparing the NSSD is the NCSD. The legal framework for this body is provided in the Environment Protection Act (Act XX of 2001, Cap 435). The Commission is chaired by the Prime Minister or the Minister in his absence, and is composed of:

- (a) all Ministers ex officio or their representatives;
- (b) two members of the House of Representatives, one appointed by the Prime Minister and the other by the Leader of the Opposition;
- (c) a representative of the (Malta Environment and Planning) Authority;
- (d) the Chairman of the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development *ex officio*;
- (e) Representatives of such public entities as in the opinion of the Prime Minister are relevant to the functions of the Commission;
- (f) a representative of the association of local councils;
- (g) Representatives of organizations which represent or have an interest in business, industry and/or industrial relations, scientific and academic bodies, the media, and other non-governmental organizations, which in the opinion of the Prime Minister are relevant to the functions of the Commission.

The Commission has the following functions:

- (a) to advocate sustainable development across all sectors of Malta, review progress in the achievement of such sustainable development and to build consensus on action needed to achieve further progress;
- (b) to identify any relevant process or policy which may be undermining sustainable development and propose alternative processes or policies to the Government for adoption;
- (c) to identify trends which may significantly give rise to unsustainable development and which will not be reversed on the basis of current or planned action, and recommend action to reverse such trends;
- (d) to increase awareness of the need that development must be sustainable;
- (e) to encourage and stimulate good practice in the use and management of natural resources, in particular their minimal use and maximum reuse by recycling in an environmentally sustainable manner;
- (f) to prepare a National Strategy for Sustainable Development; and
- (g) to carry out such other functions in relation to sustainable development as may be assigned to it by the Prime Minister:

1.4. Other relevant Frameworks and Linkages

Through its composition the NCSD has links to the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development, and the Malta Environmental and Planning Authority, which prepares national spatial and environmental plans. Linkages between the National Action Plans for Employment and Social Inclusion are being established. However links to the overall National Development Plan/Structural Funding process have not yet been developed.

2. Processes and Mechanisms

2.1. Policy integration and convergence

2.1.1. Sector and institutional integration

This is carried out through work of the National Commission for Sustainable Development, particularly through the National Strategy for Sustainable Development process, and through consultations that regularly take place within government. Through the budget process, Malta has recently adopted an eco-contribution system targeting the costs of waste management and disposal.

2.1.2. Regulatory and economic instruments

EIA and SEA procedures are in place in accordance with EU and national legislation. Malta's national land-use planning system takes environmental concerns into account, such that it attempts to internalise social and environmental costs through mitigation of impact and planning agreements. The merger between the Environment Protection Department and the Planning Authority in 2002 ensured a closer coordination between spatial and environmental planning.

Various fiscal instruments are in place, and Malta currently uses taxes, fees, subsidies, performance bonds, grants, and a form of tradable permits (to control off-road recreational driving). Recent developments in the field of economic instruments include the introduction of a new 'eco-contribution' introduced on several products. Malta operates a successful bottle return scheme for soft drinks, beer and bottled water. The water pricing regime was also adjusted to reflect more closely the actual cost of water production during the last years. In addition, for a wide range of environmentally sensitive activities, an Environmental Permitting

Strategy is under preparation, which will introduce a new regime for Environmental Permit fees based on risk. Recognizing the potential for further application of the Polluter Pays principle through economic instruments, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority will shortly embark on a project assisted by the EU entitled "Building Capacity to introduce the Polluter Pays Principle through the use Economic Instruments to Implement the Environmental Acquis".

The Malta Tourism Authority operates a tourism eco-labelling scheme, introduced in 2002 during Eco-Tourism year, and Government is in the process of setting up a Green Leader network with green contact points in all government departments. Together with a programme to promote green public procurement, this process will initially target the areas of waste and energy.

2.1.3. Decentralisation and Local level initiatives

Malta's experience with Agenda 21 so far has been limited to schools. A number of schools are members of an Eco-Schools project that aims to empower school children to participate, act and be responsible for their school's environment in line with Local Agenda 21 principles. This aim also extends to encouraging environmental responsibility both at home and in the wider community. For more information on this project contact the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.

2.1.4. Relation to regional and global initiatives

The NSSD takes into account the obligations entered into by Malta, both at Mediterranean, EU and UN level.

2.2. Stakeholders involvement in decision-making and Partnership

2.2.1. Actors and Steering Mechanism

The local councils, private sector and NGOs are represented in the NCSD. Specific funds are allocated to NGOs by the government. The NCSD was set up on the basis of the Environmental Protection Act XX of 2001. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and is composed of all ministers, Representatives of Parliament, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority, the Council for Economic and Social Development, other public entities, local authorities as well as representatives of academia and NGOs. The NCSD's tasks are to advocate sustainable development across sectors, review progress, and build consensus on actions (see extracts from legislation above). Its role is to identify problem areas and unsustainable trends and make recommendations, answering to the Prime Minister. It also has the task of preparing the NSSD.

2.2.2. Consultation

All sectors are represented on the NCSD and have been invited to provide comments on the draft NSSD. The Strategy was launched for public consultation during a National Conference in April 2004. Consultation meetings on the Strategy were set up to provide major groups such as industry, women, local authorities, science, youths, the transport, energy and construction sectors and unions with the chance to give detailed reactions to the document. In addition, with a view to understanding the opinions, concerns and perspectives of the grassroots, focus groups were held with members of the public from different backgrounds,

including village band club members, young mothers, law students and agriculture school students.

2.2.3. Communication and Awareness-raising

An NCSD website is being set up to support the NSSD consultation process (see <http://home.um.edu.mt/islands/ncsd/>). The other formal communications tools have been the national conference, radio programmes and consultation discussion meetings with major groups (see above).

2.2.4. Partnerships

The main partnerships to be established have been through the NCSD. For example, after a presentation by the Employment Training Cooperation (ETC) of the Malta National Action Plan for Employment, it was decided to organise a Conference on Green Jobs Creation in cooperation with the Employment Training Corporation and Malta Enterprise.

Malta has also launched an international partnership called SUSTIS with a view to carrying out research on tools for implementing sustainable development in small islands.

2.3. Knowledge management

2.3.1. Comprehensive tools

The main comprehensive tool used to monitor the state of resources and the pressures on them is the State of the Environment Report, which is published in accordance with the Environment Protection Act, every three years. The next State of the Environment report will be published in 2005.

One of the most important avenues for knowledge sharing is the statutory public consultation process embedded with the environmental and spatial planning systems. In the spatial planning context, citizens are alerted to development proposals through site notices and newspaper advertisements, and they have the opportunity to make written submissions on projects. Opportunities to voice opinions are given during decision-making meetings, during reconsideration meetings, and during appeals, which can also be launched by third parties. For larger developments, public involvement in EIA processes is also provided for. When the SEA Directive comes into force plans and programmes will also be subject to extensive public consultation.

The Aarhus Convention and related EU Directive also provide for public involvement in decision-making and Maltese law transposes this in accordance with these international commitments.

2.3.2. Indicators for sustainable development

One tool used to assess the outcomes of sustainable development processes is the sustainability indicators set prepared by Sustainability Indicators – Malta Observatory (SI-MO). This Observatory was established in November 2000 to meet the requirements of the MED-ERMIS (Malta) project.

The MED-ERMIS project involved the computation of 100 indicators based on the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) methodology (3 out of the 130 indicators were not applicable for Malta). This exercise was carried out in collaboration with the National Statistics Office. The work was disseminated as follows: a book was published with the data sheets for each of the 100 indicators, containing data and main

trends over the 1995-2000 or 1995-2001 periods, and useful information about 27 indicators for which data could not be obtained. An interactive compact disc, with an accompanying manual, containing all the research output of SI-MO was produced and disseminated. A press conference was organised during which the press was briefed on the meaning and importance of these indicators.

Another initiative that SI-MO (Malta) took in order to increase public awareness on issues of sustainable development and sustainability indicators was the production of a fast paced 25-minute video. This video was aimed at the general public and it explained the need for sustainable development and how sustainability indicators can be used to gauge a country's performance in this respect.

2.3.3. Leveraging the stakeholders' knowledge diversity

With respect to the preparation of the NSSD, through the process of wide public consultation, at national, regional, sectoral and grassroots levels, a broad range of perspectives on sustainable development have been elicited. These views will be woven together to update the draft NSSD and identify priorities. Otherwise the wide membership of the NCSD helps to ensure that knowledge diversity is incorporated into the sustainable development policy processes.

2.3.4. Capacity development

Stakeholders present on the NCSD have numerous opportunities to learn more about sustainable development policymaking, and the consultation process itself is educational in that it helps citizens and organisations to think strategically and prioritise what they consider important sustainable development issues. Communications tools such as the MRAE and MEPA websites also build up the knowledge and capacity of stakeholders, but ongoing media awareness campaigns such as the MRAE *Xummiemu* campaign (<http://www.xummiemu.gov.mt/malti/graphics/index.html>) and the MEPA Saving Rinu campaign (<http://www.mepa.org.mt/index.htm?WED2004/RINU.htm&1>) also reach a wide audience and raise awareness to increase the capacity of stakeholders. The Maltese environmental sector is currently benefiting from a number of EU-funded capacity building projects related to the transposition of the EU environmental *acquis* including twinning projects.

3. Coordination and Management System

3.1. Mandate, Chairmanship, Membership and Organizational structure

The National Commission for Sustainable Development is the institutional catalyst responsible for promoting sustainable development. The NCSD Secretariat is located within the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment (MRAE). This Ministry is responsible for national issues related to environmental protection, as well as spatial planning and rural affairs (agriculture and fisheries). The Malta Environment and Planning Authority, which falls under this Ministry, is the competent authority for environmental protection under the 2001 Environment Protection Act (Cap. 435), and for land-use planning under the 1992 Development Planning Act (Cap. 356). For more details regarding membership see item 1.3 above, or the MRAE or MEPA websites (see below). The Malta Resources Authority is responsible for the policy areas of water, energy and mineral resources.

3.2. Human and financial resources

The NCSD is supported by a Secretary and administrative assistant within the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment. The annual NCSD budget is approximately Lm 7,000 (16,000 Euros). MEPA employs 416 staff persons and has an annual expenditure of some Lm 5 million (11.5 million Euros).

4. Sources

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