

The EU SDS process

by [Ursula Kopp](#)

This report gives a basic introduction to the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS) process launched in 2001, its connections to the related Cardiff and Lisbon processes and the revision of the EU SDS between 2004 and 2006. Since the renewed EU SDS has been adopted by the Brussels European Council at June 15-16, 2006, this updated report also summarizes some key features of the renewed EU SDS mainly focussing on those parts in which the EU SDS refers explicitly to policy making at the Member State (MS) level. Reactions of important stakeholder groups and links to relevant documents and events (such as public hearings on the EU SDS) are provided at the end of the report.

Renewed EU SDS for download (en)

[Final version June 26, 2006](#)

Renewed EU SDS (adopted version June 9) in all EU languages

http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/sds2005/index_en.htm

Contents

Development of the EU SDS

[The Cardiff process: A short history of environmental policy integration at the EU level](#)
[The EU SDS](#)
[Lisbon Process](#)

Reviewing the EU SDS (2004–2006)

[Public consultation](#)
[European Commission documents on reviewing the EU SDS](#)
[The Austrian Presidency and the Friends of the Presidency Group \(FoP\)](#)
[Comments on the review of the EU SDS](#)
[Events and public hearings](#)

Update (in late June 2006)

The renewed EU SDS – summary of key objectives and challenges

The renewed EU SDS and references to Member States (MS)

Comments on the EU SDS

Links

Development of the EU SDS

The Cardiff process: A short history of environmental policy integration at the EU level

Following the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the European Commission made a few attempts to foster the integration of environmental concerns into other policy fields. In 1993, for example, the Commission issued an internal communication on mechanisms to ensure the integration of the environment into the definition and implementation of policies, legislative acts and funding schemes. In 1997, when environmental policy integration (EPI) was enshrined as legal requirement in [Article 6 of the Amsterdam Treaty](#), the Commission reviewed its 1993 communication and suggested new steps towards EPI in another communication.

Article 6 of the European Community Treaty states that "environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies [...] in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development".

In 1998, the various EPI activities at the EU level were consolidated in the so-called "Cardiff Process". The Cardiff European Council invited all relevant Council formations to establish strategies for the integration of environmental concerns into their sectoral policies, starting with energy, agriculture and transport. The process was later extended to the sectors of industry, internal market and development, fisheries, general affairs and financial affairs ([Vienna European Council 1998](#) and [Cologne European Council 1999](#))

Based on the existing EPI strategies and progress reports delivered by some Council formations, the Helsinki European Council (December 1999) took stock of the Cardiff Process and asked the European Commission to develop a comprehensive strategy. In addition, the Commission was invited to prepare a long-term EU strategy for sustainable development, later known as the EU SDS.

The EU SDS

At the 2001 Gothenburg European Council, the European Commission presented its communication “[A sustainable Europe for a better world](#)” as the proposal for “a European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development”. It was a delayed response to the request of the Helsinki European Council in December 1999. Since some member states objected to parts of the proposal, the Council members “welcomed” the draft but did not approve it as official EU strategy. Instead, they included 14 modestly ambitious paragraphs on SD in Europe in the [Presidency Conclusions](#). Among public administrators, these paragraphs are widely regarded as temporary EU SDS.

The key components of the [2001 EU SDS](#) are:

- The global dimension
- Targeting environmental priorities for sustainability
- Combating climate change
- Ensuring sustainable transport
- Addressing threats to public health
- Managing natural resources more responsibly
- Integrating environment into Community policies

In the run-up to the [Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development \(WSSD\)](#), the EU SDS was complemented by a [communication on the external dimension of sustainable development \(COM\(2002\)82 final of 13 February 2002\)](#) at the Barcelona Summit in early 2002.

Lisbon Process

In March 2000, the European heads of state launched the so-called Lisbon Process at the [Lisbon European Council](#). A key objective of this process is that the European Union should become “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustaining growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” by 2010. Since various actors criticized the Lisbon Process repeatedly for its focus on growth and employment and the weak linkage to the EU SDS, the European heads of state complemented it with an environmental dimension at the Gothenburg European Council, and it reaffirmed that the [Lisbon Strategy](#) should be seen in the wider context of SD. However, in the 2004 mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy for economic, social and environmental renewal, the focus on growth and employment was reiterated.

Current documents and notes on the Lisbon Strategy can be found at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lex/en/dossier/dossier_13.htm

The link of the EU SDS and the Lisbon Strategy was also a major issue of a [public consultation](#) on the EU SDS launched by the European Commission in July 2004 (for further details see below). The consultation showed that “Most contributions voice concerns about the way the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Lisbon Strategy complement each other. Many contributions indicate that the two strategies could not be in harmony, while others stress the need to bring them more into line with each other.” ([Summary of the Public Consultation for the Review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy 2001, SEC \(2005\) 451 of 31 March 2005](#))

Reviewing the EU SDS (2004–2006)

The review of the EU SDS is a lengthy process that began in early 2004 and that is expected to be finalized with the adoption of the renewed EU SDS at the Brussels European Council in June 2006.

Public consultation

The key purpose of the 2004 public consultation on the EU SDS was to prepare the review of the strategy. It was open for three months for stakeholders from all over the world and provided the following two options:

- A short online questionnaire addressing mainly the general public was issued at “[Your voice in Europe](#)”.
- A long questionnaire, also open to public but mainly directed to the main stakeholders and experts, was available at the [SD website of the Secretary-General](#). It contained detailed background information on each topic of the strategy and 65 questions, many of them open free-text questions.

In total, the Commission received around 1100 responses from the EU and third countries. Among them were 153 organisations with various backgrounds (such as environmental and social NGOs, think tanks, associations, companies, ministries, national, local and regional agencies). A look at the regional coverage of the predominantly very detailed responses from organisations shows that 70% came from six EU Member State, namely the United Kingdom (19%), Germany (17.2%), Italy (13.8%), Belgium (7.5%), France (6.3%) and Austria (6%).

A Commission staff working document, issued in March 2005, gives a very detailed [Summary of the Public Consultation for the Review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy 2001 \(SEC \(2005\) 451 of 31 March 2005\)](#).

In order to prepare the review of the EU SDS, the new Commission consulted not only the public, but it also asked the [European Economic and Social Committee for its exploratory opinion](#). The committee issued its statement in April 2004.

European Commission documents on reviewing the EU SDS

Based on the results of the public consultation and on the work of the European Economic and Social Committee, the Commission presented the communication "[The 2005 Review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy: Initial stock-taking and future orientations](#)" In February 2005.

In May 2005, the Commission published a "[Draft Declaration on Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development](#)". The Guiding Principles were adopted by the [Brussels European Council in June 2005](#). The "[Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development](#)" serve as a conceptual basis for the renewed EU SDS, and they will most be part of the strategy document.

In December 2005, the European Commission finally presented its draft for the renewed EU SDS entitled "[On the review of the Sustainable Development Strategy - A platform for action](#)". It describes some achievements of the last few years and "sets out further concrete actions for the coming years."

The Austrian Presidency and the Friends of the Presidency Group (FoP)

The final phase of the revision of the EU SDS falls into the Austrian EU presidency. For revising the Commission's "Platform for action", the Austrian Presidency worked closely together with the "Friends of the Presidency Group", a group that consists of representatives from all Member States and the European Commission and that can be brought to life whenever a Presidency needs help with a specific issue. The Austrian Presidency also tried to stimulate a broad political discussion, for example by involving all major Council formations in the review process. Between March and early June 2006, ten Council formations (for details see the box below) reported to the FoP group on the following three issues :

- The adequateness of the objectives, targets, key actions and the implied mix of policy instruments proposed in the renewed EU SDS.
- The contribution of each Council formation and the possibilities to enhance synergies and coherence across policies and processes.
- Ways of how to ensure coherence between EU internal policies and its international commitments from the viewpoint of each Council formation

The involved Council formations were:

Environment:	9 March 2006
Agriculture/Fish:	20 March 2006
TTE - Transport:	27/28 March 2006
GAERC – External Relations:	10 April 2006
ECOFIN:	5 May 2006
EJC - Education:	18 May 2006
Competitiveness:	29/30 May 2005
EPSCO/Employment and Social Affairs:	1 June 2006
EPSCO/Health and Consumer protection:	2 June 2006
TTE - Energy:	8/9 June 2006

The statements of the ten Council formations are working documents for the FoP that are not disclosed to the public.

Comments on the review of the EU SDS

In the first half of 2006, a number of stakeholder organisations and expert groups issued statements and studies related to the review of the EU SDS. A selection is listed here. Further contributions to the review of the EU SDS by various organisations can be found at the [European Commission's website](#):

- **The German Council for Sustainable Development - Der Rat für Nachhaltige Entwicklung**
„[Important, overdue and to be revised](#)”, Comments submitted by the German Council for Sustainable Development on the review of the European Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Forum Sustainable Austria - Forum Nachhaltiges Österreich**
[Comments on the draft review of the EU-SDS](#)
The Forum is an independent panel of experts established in September 2002 in accordance the development of the Austrian Sustainability Strategy.
- **Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency**
[EU SDS: ingredients for the 2006 revision](#)
- **The G-10**

The G-10 are:
BirdLife International
CEE Bankwatch Network
Climate Action Network Europe
European Environmental Bureau
European Federation for Transport & Environment
European Public Health Alliance-Environment Network
Friends of the Earth Europe
Greenpeace

A programme for Sustainable Development for the European Union

Proposals from Environmental Organisations for a realistic and ambitious Sustainable Development Strategy – to be adopted by the June 2006 European Summit

- **Platform of European Social NGOs**

[SOCIAL PLATFORM RESOLUTION for the Spring European Council 2006](#)

- **‘genanet’ and the Working Group ‘Women’ at the German NGO ‘Forum on Environment and Development’**

[Review of the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy \(EU SDS\)](#)

- **EEAC Working Group on Sustainable Development**

[Getting it straight and keeping up the pressure. A Dialogue Paper](#)

[The Revised Draft of the European Sustainable Development Strategy. Intervention on behalf of the EEAC Working Group on Sustainable Development](#) (at the ESDN Conference 2006 in Salzburg on June 1-2, 2006)

Events and public hearings

The review of the EU SDS was subject of several public hearings and informative events. A selection of events that took place in 2006 are listed here. The links to the events provide further information on the revision of the EU SDS.

- **Conference "The EU Sustainable Development Strategy: an environmental response"**

by the EEB on January 20, 2006 in Brussels

“The objectives of the event were: to exchange views with representatives of the European institutions about the new Sustainable Development Strategy, as well as new Thematic Strategy on Resource Use, both published by the European Commission in December 2005; to contribute to the finalisation of a position on the EU Sustainable Development Strategy by the [Green 10](#); to set up a strategy to give input into the discussions in the Ministerial Councils, the European Parliament, and the outcome of the June Summit; to discuss the content of the Thematic Strategy on Sustainable Resource Use, and to prepare and prioritise input for the discussions the European Parliament and the Commission will have on this.”

The [conference report](#) gives a summary of the presentations and discussions of the conference.

- **Public Hearing on the "Review of the Sustainable Development Strategy"**

by the European Economic and Social Committee on March 20-21, 2006 in Brussels

With contributions by the European Commission Vice-President, Margot Wallström, the Austrian Presidency representative, Minister Josef Pröll, and the European Commission Secretary General, Catherine Day.

- **Conference "Review and outlook: The potential of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy"**

by the EU-Umweltbüro on April 3, 2006 in Vienna

Although the summary is in German only, all speeches and slides can be downloaded in English from: http://www.umweltverband.at/eu-umweltbuero/termine/index_news.htm

- **Symposium "Civil Society – Monitoring the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development - From Commenting to shared ownership"**

by the The Brussels-EU Chapter and the European Support Centre of the Club of Rome and the Austrian Presidency on April 5, 2006

Conference proceedings: <http://esc.clubofrome.org/sharing/files/proceedings.pdf>

ESDN Quarterly Report - Update

The following part of the Quarterly Report was updated after the adoption of the renewed EU SDS by the Brussels European Council at June 15-16, 2006, summarizes those key features of the renewed EU SDS which refer explicitly to policy making in the Member States and lists reactions of important stakeholder groups.

The renewed EU SDS – summary of key objectives and challenges

After an intensive negotiation process under the Austrian Presidency the Brussels European Council adopted the [renewed EU SDS](#) on June 15-16, 2006. Paragraph 17 of the [Presidency Conclusions](#) states, “While positive achievements have been made since the Gothenburg European Council, many challenges remain. The European Council therefore adopts an ambitious and comprehensive renewed EU Strategy for Sustainable Development (doc. 10117/06). The implementation of this Strategy will be closely monitored and followed up by the European Council on a regular basis.”

With the [renewed EU SDS](#) the EU sets itself the overall goal to “identify and develop actions to enable the EU to achieve continuous improvement of quality of life both for current and for future generations, through the creation of sustainable communities able to manage and use resources efficiently and to tap the ecological and social innovation potential of the economy, ensuring prosperity, environmental protection and social cohesion.” (p. 3).

In order to achieve this overall goal, the EU SDS states [four key objectives](#), [ten policy guiding principles](#), and [seven key challenges](#). Moreover it addresses the linkage between the EU SDS and the Lisbon Strategy, and cross cutting issues such as education and research, communication of SD, financial policies, and follow-up and monitoring mechanisms.

The **four key objectives** (p. 3-4) of the EU SDS are:

- ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
- SOCIAL EQUITY AND COHESION
- ECONOMIC PROSPERITY
- MEETING OUR INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The **policy guiding principles** stated in the renewed EU SDS are the following (p. 4-5):

- PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS
- SOLIDARITY WITHIN AND BETWEEN GENERATIONS
- OPEN AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY
- INVOLVEMENT OF CITIZENS
- INVOLVEMENT OF BUSINESSES AND SOCIAL PARTNERS
- POLICY COHERENCE AND GOVERNANCE
- POLICY INTEGRATION
- USE BEST AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE
- PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE
- MAKE POLLUTERS PAY

These principles are not new. They have been proposed by a [European Commission's Communication in May 2005](#) which has been adopted by the [European Council in June 2005](#). However, since the EU SDS is supposed to be a comprehensive EU document on SD, it reiterates the principles.

The **seven key challenges** stated in the EU SDS which account for about two thirds of the document are the following

1. To limit climate change and its costs and negative effects to society and the environment (p. 7)
2. To ensure that our transport systems meet society's economic, social and environmental needs whilst minimising their undesirable impacts on the economy, society and the environment (p. 10)
3. To promote sustainable consumption and production patterns (p. 12)
4. To improve management and avoid overexploitation of natural resources, recognising the value of ecosystem services (p. 13)
5. To promote good public health on equal conditions and improve protection against health threats (p. 15)
6. To create a socially inclusive society by taking into account solidarity between and within generations and to secure and increase the quality of life of citizens as a precondition for lasting individual well-being (p. 17)
7. To actively promote sustainable development worldwide and ensure that the European Union's internal and external policies are consistent with global sustainable development and its international commitments (p. 20)

The ESDN in the renewed EU SDS

Paragraph 42 (p. 28) in the renewed EU SDS refers explicitly to the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN). It states that MS "could make use of the existing European Sustainable Development Network with the aim of facilitating the exchange of good practices and experiences. It could gather views on specific priority themes and issues to be discussed by Member States in order to exemplify and document good policies and practices. This network could also be used to enhance the mainstreaming of sustainable development issues, vertical integration and coherence between the EU, national and sub-national levels of policy-making." This paragraph outlines the mission of the ESDN that will be elaborated in the forthcoming "ESDN Joint Understanding" in more detail.

The renewed EU SDS and references to Member States (MS)

This section highlights passages in which the EU SDS refers explicitly to policy making at the Member State (MS) level. It gives national and sub-national SD coordinators an overview of what the [policy guiding principles](#), the [key challenges](#) and the [cross-cutting issues](#) outlined in the EU SDS may imply for their work.

EU SDS policy guiding principles and MS (p. 6ff)

Although all ten policy guiding principles outlined in the EU SDS are relevant for the MS, one addresses the MS level of governance explicitly. Under the heading of "better policy making", the strategy states that "the principle that sustainable development is to be integrated into policy-making at all levels. This requires all levels of government to support, and to cooperate with, each other, taking into account the different institutional settings, cultures and specific circumstances in Member States."

The quest for better policy-making implies that all policy decisions should undergo assessments considering all three plus the external dimensions of SD, and the costs of inaction. MS should make wide use of the tools impact assessment, ex-post-assessment of policy impact and public or stakeholder participation. Impact assessments should be conducted in particular when MS allocate public funds and develop strategies, programmes and projects.

EU SDS key challenges and MS

Climate Change (p. 9)

This key challenge refers to Kyoto Protocol commitments of the EU and contains detailed aims regarding

- the use of renewable sources of energy (“by 2010 12% of energy consumption, on average, and 21% of electricity consumption”)
- the share of biofuels (“by 2010 5,75% of transport fuel should consist of biofuels”)
- the saving of energy consumption (“reaching an overall saving of 9% of final energy consumption over 9 years until 2017”)

It further states that the Commission and MS “will prioritise new actions to systematically exploit cost-effective emission reduction options for cars and aviation. In this context carbon sequestration and storage will be explored as mitigation options”.

The Commission and MS will also adopt and implement an “Action Plan on Energy Efficiency bearing in mind the EU energy saving potential of 20% by 2020 [...] taking into account measures already implemented by Member States”. Furthermore, MS should promote the use of biomass “by taking forward proposals in the Biomass Action Plan in all of its three sectors: heating and cooling, electricity and transport. This should be developed in the framework of a long-term strategy for bio-energy beyond 2010. Furthermore, MS should “enhance the efficiency of power stations in particular by further promoting the use of combined heat and power”.

Sustainable Transport (p. 10-11)

Regarding environmental impact one key aim is the decoupling of economic growth and the demand for transport.

The Commission and MS should aim at reducing noise, pollutant emissions as well as greenhouse gas emissions from transport. Furthermore the EU and MS will take “measures to improve the economic and environmental performance of all modes of transport”, to less harmful means of transportation both through logistic, behavioural and technical changes and to “improve energy efficiency in the transport sector by making use of cost-effective instruments”.

Both the EU and MS “should focus on possible alternatives to road transport for freight and passengers” and should “strive to make progress towards effective global solutions for the reduction of harmful impacts of international maritime and air traffic.” A long term and coherent fuel strategy will be developed.

Concerning urban transportation, the local authorities in MS “should develop and implement urban transport plans and systems taking into account technical guidance provided by the Commission in 2006 and considering closer co-operation between cities and surrounding regions”.

Sustainable Consumption and Production (p. 12-13)

The Commission and MS will

- “explore specific actions to bring about more sustainable consumption and production patterns”
- “promote and disseminate social and eco-innovations and environmental technologies”
- “engage in a dialogue with business and relevant stakeholders aiming at setting environmental and social performance targets for products and processes”

MS should “support information campaigns with retailers and other organisations to promote **sustainable products**” (such as products from organic farming and fair trade and environmentally sound products).

Another aim in this field is to “achieve by 2010 an EU average level of **Green Public Procurement (GPP)** equal to that currently achieved by the best performing Member States” in a structured process and by promoting GPP at the local level.

In order to increase the EU global market share in the field of **environmental technologies** and eco-innovations the Commission and MS will “step up efforts to promote and disseminate social and eco-innovations and environmental technologies, *inter alia* through effective implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP)”.

Conservation and management of natural resources (p. 13-14)

This chapter deals with renewable natural resources, resource efficiency, agriculture, water resource management, biodiversity, and the protection of nature. Concerning nature protection, the EU SDS is relatively detailed regarding the role of MS in the following two points:

- By 2015 degraded **marine ecosystems** shall be restored „ in line with the Johannesburg Plan (2002) including achievement of the Maximum Yield in Fisheries”. Furthermore the Common Fisheries Policy shall be reformed and the Commission and MS should “work towards improving integrated **water resources management**, the marine environment and promoting integrated coastal zone management”.
- In the field of **agriculture** MS and the Commission will make “further efforts through the new programmes for rural development, the new legislative frameworks for organic farming and animal welfare as well as the biomass action plan”.
- Concerning the **protection of nature** the following steps are expected:
 - MS should “complete the Natura 2000 network, including designation of marine areas.” Particular attention should be paid to the protection of species and to management policies.
 - MS should “implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy in both its EU and its global dimensions (Convention on Biological Diversity)” and take measures to “achieve the objective of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 and beyond”.

Public health (p. 15-17)

This key challenge includes both human health issues as well as “high animal health and welfare standards in the EU and internationally”.

Concerning **human health**,

- Health inequalities within and between MS shall be reduced “by addressing the wider determinants of health and appropriate health promotion and disease prevention strategies”.
- Chemicals, including pesticides shall be „produced, handled and used in ways that do not pose significant threats to human health and the environment” by 2020. To reach this target, the Regulation for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH) shall be adopted quickly”.
- MS` health policies should aim at helping “women and men in achieving and maintaining positive emotional states”, thus reducing suicide risks and supporting an overall better quality of life.

Social inclusion, demography and migration (p. 17-19)

This section of the EU SDS deals with migration and integration, with employment, poverty and modernisation of social protection. Some of the objectives and measures that address a direct involvement of the MS level of governance are the following:

By 2010 the **labour market participation** of women, older workers, young people, migrants and disabled persons shall be increased significantly. At the same time the negative effects of globalisation on employees as well as families shall be reduced. Regarding **young people**, the EU SDS strives to reduce the number of people leaving school early to 10%, and “at least 85% of 22 year olds should have completed upper secondary education”. By the end of 2007, every young unemployed should be offered adequate employment or training within six months (four months after 2010). The MS will “continue implementation of the European Pact for Youth” and will support structured dialogues between youth and governments. In the dialogues held so far, the European Youth Forum has played an important role (for a comment of the European Youth Forum on the renewed EU SDS, [click here](#)).

Based on new objectives for **social protection and social inclusion** (endorsed by the European Council in March 2006), MS and the Commission “will continue their cooperation using the open method of coordination (OMC)”. In this context, the EU and MS will also take measures to “rapidly and significantly reduce child poverty and will work towards giving all children equal opportunities, regardless of their social background, gender or disabilities”.

Taking into account the **demographic change** MS should analyse its implications “for land use and resource and energy consumption as well as mobility, and take them into account in planning and investment at all levels”.

Global poverty and sustainable development challenges (p. 20-21)

A key objective of this challenge is to “raise the volume of aid to 0,7% of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015 with an intermediate target of 0,56% in 2010”, whereas MS who are far behind the target are given the freedom to aim at reduced, but clearly defined targets.

CROSS CUTTING POLICIES CONTRIBUTING TO THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY (p. 22-23)

Education is considered as one of the main prerequisites for the responsible implementation of sustainable development. **High quality education** must be ensured on all levels, special attention should be devoted to teachers training. In the context of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) all MS should further develop their national action plans with regards to the 'Education and training 2010' work programme. Furthermore, MS should develop “education for sustainable development and targeted training for professions in key sectors such as construction, energy and transport”. Based on the Communication “i2010 - A European Information Society for Growth and Employment”, the Commission and MS “should address issues such as equal opportunities, ICT skills and regional divides”.

Further research on the interplay between social, economic and ecological systems giving both short term answers and long-term visions for problems on regional and global scale, is needed. Methodologies and instruments for risk analysis, back- and forecasting and prevention systems need to be developed further.

It is also suggested that, “for better understanding of interlinkages between the three dimensions of SD”, the system of **national income accounting** could be extended by elements representing e.g. environmental expenditures, material flows, non-market work.

FINANCING AND ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS (p. 24)

Regarding environmental tax reforms, the EU SDS encourages MS to “consider further steps to shift taxation from labour to resource and energy consumption and/or pollution”. This should help to increase employment and to reduce negative environmental impacts.

In order to ensure that EU funding supports sustainable developments in an optimum way, MS and the Commission should “co-ordinate to enhance complementarities and synergies between various strands of Community and other cofinancing mechanisms”. A roadmap for a reform of subsidies shall follow in 2008.

COMMUNICATION, MOBILISING ACTORS AND MULTIPLYING SUCCESS (p. 25-26)

An objective relevant for SD coordinators at the sub-national levels is the following: The EU wants to promote the “European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign which provides an exchange of good practice including the elaboration of quality criteria, indicators and instruments like impact assessment.” The best sustainable development initiatives taken by regional and local authorities will be awarded prizes on an annual basis.

At the national level, the **Aalborg Charta** should be adopted and implemented, and local and regional initiatives, such as LA 21 should further be promoted.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP (p. 26-29)

Starting in 2007, the European Commission will submit a progress report on the implementation of the SDS in the EU and the MS every two years. The bi-annual progress reports will also include "future priorities, orientations and actions", and will be developed with regard to a set of SD indicators. A limited set of indicators for monitoring and for communication purposes should to be agreed on in 2007.

Regarding the implementation of National SD Strategies (NSDS), the EU SDS points out that MS should

- Finalise their National SD Strategies (NSDS) until June 2007 in case they do not have one in place already;
- Undertake future reviews of their NSDS "in the light of the revised EU SDS, to ensure consistency, coherence and mutual supportiveness, bearing in mind specific circumstances in the Member States."
- Appoint a national representative as SDS focal point until June 2007. The representative is expected to provide input for the implementation of the NSDS and deliver data to the Commission every two years.
- Gain results for their NSDS progress reports from peer reviews that can be supported by external evaluations. The first group of MS should start with peer reviews in 2006, followed by a second group in 2007.
- Consider strengthening or setting up "multi-stakeholder national advisory councils on sustainable development to stimulate informed debate, assist in the preparation of NSDSs and/or contribute to national and EU progress reviews".

According to the [EEAC Network of European Environmental and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils](#), "National sustainable development councils are meant to increase the involvement of civil society in sustainable development matters and contribute to better linking different policies and policy levels, also by using their network".

Comments on the EU SDS

The following agencies, stakeholder groups and NGOs have commented on the renewed EU SDS and its adoption by the Brussels European Council in mid June 2006 (for more information click on the provided links):

CER - The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies: "[CER welcomes the Council's renewed Sustainable Development Strategy](#)", (16 June 2006)

EEAC: In the course of the review process of the EU SDS the EEAC working group on Sustainable Development issued several studies and statements. For details, see <http://www.eeac-net.org/workgroups/sustdev.htm>

- [The Revised Draft of the European Sustainable Development Strategy. Intervention on behalf of the EEAC Working Group on Sustainable Development](#) (at the ESDN Conference 2006 in Salzburg on June 1-2, 2006)

EEB Press release "[Not a bad start': EEB gives cautious welcome to EU Sustainable Development Strategy](#)" (16 June 2006)

EEB-ETUC-Social Platform: [Open letter to the Heads of States "The renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy: the EU needs to adopt a strong common vision and powerful instruments to face the challenges ahead."](#) (June 2006)

EEB-ETUC-Social Platform: [Joint Declaration "Move up a gear for sustainable development"](#)

ETUC – European Trade Union Confederation: Press release "[The new EU Sustainable Development Strategy: A step forward in the right direction](#)" (19 June 2006)


The **European Youth Forum** issued a [Policy Paper on Sustainable Development \(April 2006\)](#)

The **Platform of European Social NGOs** strongly criticises the content of the renewed EU SDS a few days before its adoption

- Social Platform Resolution for June European Council 2006: "[Sustainable development: the EU needs a strategy not a catalogue of existing policies](#)"
- Social Platform [Press release 6 June 2006](#)

Links

Renewed EU SDS for download (en)

 [Final version June 26, 2006](#)

Renewed EU SDS (adopted version June 9) in all EU languages

http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/sds2005/index_en.htm

Commission's website on Sustainable Development

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/sustainable/pages/links_en.htm

Presidency Conclusions Brussels European Council 15/16 June 2006

 [PDF](#)

The conclusions of all European Councils in Brussels can be found on the website of the Council of the European Union:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.asp?id=432&lang=en&mode=g>

All European Council summits since 1985, including presidency conclusions and speeches
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/>

Motion for a Resolution on the revised sustainable development strategy
 [EP Session Document June 7, 2006](#)

European Parliament
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

European Commission's Communication in May 2005
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2005/com2005_0218en01.pdf

Presidency Conclusions Brussels European Council 16/17 June 2005
http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/85349.pdf

The history of environmental integration at the EU level
http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/integration/integration_history.htm

Article 6 of the Amsterdam Treaty
<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/a10000.htm>

"Partnership for integration – A strategy for integrating Environment into EU policies"
Cardiff 1998, Commission Communication to the European Council, COM (98)333
<http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/docum/pdf/98333en.pdf>

European Commission communication "[A sustainable Europe for a better world](#)" as proposal for "a European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development"
http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0264en01.pdf

Presidency Conclusions Gothenburg European Council 2001
http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00200-r1.en1.pdf

Communication on the external dimension of sustainable development (COM(2002)82 final of 13 February 2002)
http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0082en01.pdf

Lisbon European Council (March 2000)
<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c10241.htm>

Lisbon Strategy
http://www.europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/COM2005_330_en.pdf

EurActiv.com - EU Policy News and Links - Section Sustainable Development
<http://www.euractiv.com/EN/sustainability>

"Wie Nachhaltig ist die EU? - Überprüfung der EU-Strategie für Nachhaltige Entwicklung"
Abschlussdokumentation der Europäischen Vertretung in Deutschland
<http://www.perglobal.org/uploads/NachhaltigesEuropa.pdf>

EEAC Network of European Environmental and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils
<http://www.eeac-net.org>

European Sustainable Development Network

