
Annex III

SUMMARY OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SDG MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM TO THE REFLECTION PAPER “TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE BY 2030”



Europe moving towards a sustainable future

SUMMARY OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE SDG MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM TO THE REFLECTION PAPER “TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE BY 2030”



Platform members: Birdlife; BusinessEurope; Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR); COFACE Families Europe; European Committee of the Regions; CONCORD Europe; COPA-COGECA; CSR Europe; EUROCITIES; European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); ENEL; European Public Health Alliance (EPHA); ESADE Business School; European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE); European University Association (EUA); European Environmental Bureau (EEB); European Youth Forum (YFJ); International Integrated Reporting Council (IIRC); FoodDrinkEurope; Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO); Social platform; SDG Watch Europe; Transparency International; Unilever; World Wide Fund for nature (WWF); Ms Vandinika Shukla; Mr Christian Thimann; Mr Wiebe Draijer; Mr Janez Potocnik

Platform observers: European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC); European Investment Bank (EIB); European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN); International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Organisation for economic cooperation and development (OECD); United Nations (UN); World Bank (WB)

Letter by the members of the platform

Brussels, 11 October 2018

To the present and future leaders of the European Commission and other EU Institutions,

To all players having a strong stake in people's sustainable living, and in the environmental, social, economic and governance developments of Europe,

To the people and voters in Europe,

Through this new Platform and with our Report, we want to send a vibrant signal to the leaders, actors and people within and outside the European Union: time has come – more than ever – to develop and implement a visionary and ambitious Strategy for a Sustainable Europe 2030.

It is important to note that none of the members of the Platform is expected to endorse every recommendation or view entailed in this Report and each has the right to take a different view on the issues covered.

However, within a short period of time, we have strived to build upon and respect our diverse backgrounds and opinions, with the aim of pulling in the same direction for a better, sustainable Europe.

Through strong common values, structural policy improvements and innovative action proposals, we ground our recommendations in the experience and efforts of thousands of men and women in the public sector, civil society and private sector. They have a common ambition to transform the Sustainable Development Goals into practical solutions for the well-being of citizens and the protection of our environment for present and future generations.

Our report highlights different perspectives and addresses some challenging trade-offs between the environmental, economic, social and governance dimensions of sustainable development, some of which we have been able to negotiate, others which need more clarification and consensus-building.

We are confident that the trust and engagement of people and leaders in a continuous transformation of Europe will bear fruit. It requires a fair and equitable culture of dialogue and partnership on all levels, in which each partner can become, and trust the others to be, co-designers of a Europe that cares and works for all. It also involves an overarching strategy for a Sustainable Europe to guide all European policies and programmes that will accelerate our individual and collective endowments in order to yield sustainable security, prosperity and dignity for all.

We are proud of the work achieved so far, while at the same time we feel the urgency to do much more. So, might the sustainability dialogue and collaboration within this Platform – both between the stakeholders and with the EU institutions – rapidly improve and grow.

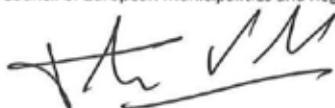
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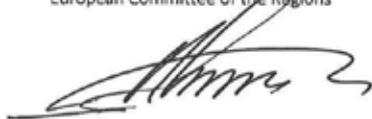
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European Committee of the Regions



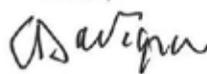
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LIISA PIETOLA
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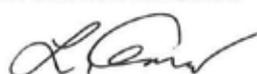
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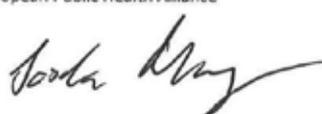
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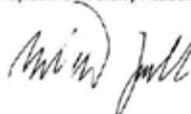
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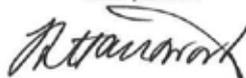
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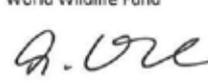
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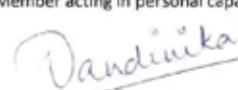
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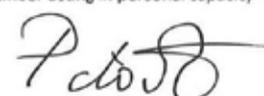
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Executive Summary

EUROPE MOVING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Summary of the contribution of the SDG Multi-Stakeholder Platform to the Reflection Paper “Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030” October 2018

The Multi-Stakeholder Platform on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the European Union – the “EU SDG multi-stakeholder platform” – was established in May 2017 to support and advise the European Commission and all stakeholders involved on the implementation of the SDGs at EU level.

Through strong common values we, as representatives of the public sector, civil society and private sector, worked diligently to make well considered recommendations on how to transform the Sustainable Development Goals into practical solutions for the wellbeing of our present and future generations in the EU and beyond. Our recommendations aim to inspire and guide the Commission’s Reflection paper “Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030”.

Given the ambitious agenda and the universal and indivisible nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, there is no single recipe for which to advocate. Achieving the Goals requires a comprehensive review, the identification of areas where changes are needed, and the development of coherent policies which produce lasting social, economic, governance and environmental co-benefits, recognising and acting on interlinkages between all goals and targets. Our recommendations provide an ambitious and consensus-based contribution to this goal.

As priority actions, we recommend that the EU develops and implements an overarching visionary and transformative Sustainable Europe 2030 strategy, guiding all EU policies and programmes. To be effective, such a strategy should include both interim and long-term targets and lay out Europe’s vision for a sustainable Europe beyond the 2030 Agenda.

When implementing the 2030 Agenda, the European Commission and all other stakeholders need to respect key principles, to fulfil existing commitments under international agreements, to commit to a transformation of our social and economic model, to prioritise and fast-track actions for the poorest and most marginalised in society (“leave no one behind”), to recognise planetary boundaries, to respect human rights and the rule of law, and ensure policy coherence for sustainable development.

We also make some cross-cutting recommendations. We advise the EU to reinvent its governance system to ensure a coherent approach to sustainable development. The Commission President, assisted by a dedicated project team, should be in charge of the 2030 Agenda, ensure effective coordination and report on its implementation during the annual State of the European Union speech. We also will need action of regions, cities, citizens, communities, businesses and civil society in its diversity to implement the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. The EU should advocate a territorial approach for the delivery of the SDGs and allow a two-way dialogue where European and national strategies associate regional and local authorities as well as civil society and professional organisations in a multi-level and multi-stakeholders governance approach. We also offer to assess the merits of this Platform - both its composition and mission - and to discuss how in the future it can best contribute to our proposal for an inclusive, participatory and transparent Sustainable Europe 2030 Strategy. Finally, additional efforts should be deployed to ensure policy coherence for sustainable development, meaning that all EU policies should contribute to sustainable development within or outside Europe.

We also have some specific recommendations on how to strengthen the EU’s existing toolbox. The Better Regulation agenda could become more powerful by fully integrating sustainable development objectives and principles in the policy-making process. EU policy-makers should better use and further improve the Impact Assessment Guidelines to mainstream sustainable development. A Sustainable Europe coordination cycle should be set up, with EU Sustainable Development Action Plans, Member State and European Commission Sustainable Development Reports and recommendations. The European Semester process should be guided by the Sustainable

Europe 2030 Strategy and include a sustainability check. EU public finances, including the Multi-annual Financial Framework, should be fully sustainable and the definition of environmental, social and governance risks embedded within financial regulations. Sustainable fiscal reforms should be carried out at Member State level, corporate tax avoidance and fiscal dumping addressed and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda fully implemented. To inform future decision makers, the EU should further develop an integrated and participatory monitoring, accountability and review framework, including a comprehensive EU SDG indicator set and qualitative analysis.

We also make sectoral specific recommendations. Sustainability should be reflected in a coherent way across all EU policies and initiatives. For the scope of this paper, however, we identified five EU policy areas with a vital role in achieving the SDGs:

(1) Sustainable Consumption and Production should be further promoted, incentivised and regulated while paying particular attention to global supply chains. We also need legal, policy and financing measures that should drive this transition. The EU's footprint needs to be reduced, a Resource Management Convention introduced and consumption based indicators developed. Sustainability should be part of the European Industry Strategy 2030.

(2) The EU should invest in research and innovation, people and human talents, employability and social inclusion. The European Pillar of Social Rights should be fully implemented. The social and solidarity economy should be promoted; investment in health and well-being scaled up and sustainability should become an interdisciplinary science. Quality education should be guaranteed, support to children and young people prioritised and a regulatory framework to ensure safe pathways for asylum seekers and migrants introduced, while strengthening integration and inclusion policy.

(3) Climate and energy policy. The EU should align its climate and energy targets with the agreed objective of limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees compared to pre-industrial levels, while increasing resilience. Fossil fuels should be progressively phased out; investments in energy efficiency and clean energy increase; the uptake of nature based solutions promoted. Traffic congestion should decrease, sustainable infrastructure and comprehensive mobility plans should be encouraged. The EU should also support developing countries in adaptation and resilience to climate change.

(4) Food, farming and land-use including Common Agricultural Policy. The EU should ensure that all EU investment into agriculture is aligned with the EU's Treaty to ensure a high level of human health protection, food security, as well as the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment. Public income support should support food production, the provision of public goods and ecosystem services, while also ensuring a fair standard of living for the agricultural community, and enabling the transition to sustainable agriculture and food systems. Investments and research into environmentally friendly and economically viable practices should be prioritised and global value chains made sustainable.

(5) Cohesion policy is a major EU investment tool to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It should strengthen the localisation of the Goals by directly supporting subnational governments, support the Urban Agenda of the EU, further promote social objectives and better encourage investments towards greener, more sustainable infrastructure, including in rural areas.

To address the urgency of action, we strongly encourage the Commission to follow up on our recommendations in a swift and timely manner so that Europe can fully and rapidly embrace the opportunity that sustainable development represents to our societies. The implementation of our requirements will require an inclusive and participatory approach and we fully commit our support. Our ultimate objective is to ensure that sustainable development becomes a permanent feature of European policy-making.

The full contribution of the SDG Multi-Stakeholder Platform to the Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030" is available at https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/sdg_multi-stakeholder_platform_input_to_reflection_paper_sustainable_europe2.pdf

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