ASSESSING THE STATUS
OF SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN
THE BALTIC SEA REGION:
A MACRO-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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A MACRO-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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AUTHORS

SAM GRÖNHOLM, LARS RYDÉN and OLGA ZUIN, Baltic University Programme
CARMEN ELRICK-BARR and NEIL POWELL, Uppsala Centre for Sustainable Development

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THE REPORT

This report was commissioned by the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) Expert Group on Sustainable Development as a background study to enable fruitful cooperation between the Baltic Sea states in implementing and pursuing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the 25th of September 2015. The CBSS Secretariat signed an agreement with Uppsala University on the project "Assessing the Status of Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea region: a macro-regional per-

spective". The Baltic University Programme (BUP) Secretariat at the Uppsala Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD) at Uppsala University has produced the report.

The report provides a background and a resource for developing governance for sustainable development in the region, outlines the conditions in the region, and relates to the UN Sustainable Development goals. The report addresses each of the nine Baltic Sea littoral states as well as Iceland and Norway. It includes a review of Sustain-

able Development Policies and Strategies in each of the countries, as well as Sustainable Development policies and activities in the macro-region especially with a view to the various stakeholders other than the national governments. Special studies were done for the sectors CLIMATE AND ENERGY and SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION. The report includes conclusions and possibilities of cooperation in the region as well as suggestions on how to organise the future work for the global SD goals, with an emphasis on indicators.

OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The general objective of this report is to serve as a knowledge platform by which governance capacity for SD can be further developed in the BSR. Ways to achieve this include increased institutional efficiency and coherence both on the macro-regional and national level in the BSR. Both governance levels are important. The macro regional level has many important functions which can be developed further. The national level has a key role as SD policy maker and coordinator of SD implementation. If the macro regional and national levels have different interests for SD it will impede overall BSR SD governance. The description and analysis of Sustainable Development governance is divided in five parts, each of them comprising a chapter in the report.

FIRST a systematic analyse of SD AS A NOTION IN THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES in the region is given. It describes how SD is understood and used across administrative governance levels, how

SD is viewed and understood on a global level and in terms of the SDGs, and on a macro-regional level. It describes similarities and divergences between the governance levels in terms of e.g. SD goals, and the impacts it may have on the implementation performance of Sustainable Development related activities. The outcome is synthesised in a set of BSR SD national governance narratives. These constitute together a SD knowledge platform, important to understand both SD activities in the region and the possibilities for the region to coherently implement the SDGs.

SECOND the BSR SD MACRO-RE-GIONAL GOVERNANCE NAR-RATIVE is described. This narrative is not as exhaustive as the national governance narrative, but still seeks to provide an overall account of engaged Sustainable Development stakeholders at a macro-regional level, both in terms of their governance role, and also in relation to their respective SD strategies.

THIRD the report includes a section on SD IMPLEMENTATION. Though national implementation is essential, implementation activity on various governance levels, including the macro-regional level, are required in order to respond to the multifaced challenges of SD. The main focus is shared national implementation procedures, but it also includes measures to respond coherently to implementing the SDGs.

FOURTH the report discusses COOPERA-TION POSSIBILITIES IN THE BSR by identifying similarities in BSR SD goals. An overlap or similarities in SD goals of the states in the region and macro-regional organisations can can serve as a platform for the development of macro-regional cooperation. The coherence between the regional goals and the UN global SDGs is viewed from a macro-regional perspective by including related EU initiatives, as the EU initiatives have a significant influence on

national policy settings. These EU initiatives are also of importance for coherent action and responses across borders.

FIFTH the report SUMMARISES THE KNOWLEDGE in relation to governance features, which are viewed as central for

enhancing SD governance capacity. Recommendations which can be utilised to further develop the governance for SD are listed.

Finally the report includes two CASE STUD-IES on specific sectors, i.e. energy and climate and sustainable consumption and production.

REVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

What emerges from the various national Sustainable Development (SD) narratives is that there is not a shared common understanding of the notion *per se* as expected by the plurality of societies. Still some common traits are visible. The social and the environmental domains constitute an imperative part of the notion of SD; however these domains and related concerns are often viewed in relation to the economies of the countries. Though the social, environmental and the economic spheres comprise the SD pillars on a national level in the BSR, these three spheres are not viewed on equal terms. Instead activities in the social and environmental spheres must adhere to the limits set by economic boundaries. As a synthesis INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH including social and environmental concerns is viewed as pivotal and what enables activities in other societal spheres.

The five Nordic countries and Germany pursue SD goals not only nationally but also with global commitments, to support sustainable growth in developing countries. SD is cross-sectorial and integrated to enable the society to achieve a development towards intergenerational equity. As a societal commitment SD is envisioned to engage various actors re-presenting the society, not only governmental or public actors, but actors at large. The three Baltic countries see SD as a way to pursue national capacity building, to develop the social and cultural capital of the society, and to become a knowledge-based society. SD policies are focused on the environment and

economic growth, to enable development on a level with other EU countries, and become internationally competitive. Poland focuses on the development of the energy sector as a means to pursue national goals especially inclusive economic growth. Russia does not see the principles of SD as independent guiding principles for future development, and have no institutional coordinated SD framework in place. Instead the principles of SD are integrated with the national general development discourse, often reduced to a few areas.

Even if the differences in national strategies are clear, some common features emerge.

1. ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE related policy goals are often perceived in the BSR SD national sphere as a basis on which a general economic development is envisaged to deliver future inclusive economic growth. These goals are generally operationalised to fundamentally transform the energy sector as energy efficiency or energy savings measures, or by developing the field of renewable energy. Innovation is often the key in particular within the energy and climate change policy sectors.

The reasons why energy policies constitute a key area for national SD strategies include 1) that most Baltic Sea States are members of the EU, and thus adhere to the EU 20-20-20 Strategy to combat climate change and pursue a low-carbon economy; 2) an expected economic benefit in terms of costs savings; 3) as a means to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

2. OTHER RECURRING NATIONAL SD GOALS in the BSR are broad societal development, welfare growth, and development of human, cultural and social capital especially via education, innovation and employment efforts. Preserving the natural capital emerges as a national goal, often in terms of protecting biodiversity, or achieving an ecological balance via an efficient use of raw materials, reduced pollution, and promoting sustainable production and consumption.

3. A majority of the Baltic Sea States have established a committee or a commission to assist the ministry in charge of IMPLEMEN-TATION. These centres are a response to the complex nature of SD, and the subsequent implementation efforts SD related activities require to ensure better cross-sectorial coordination. SD implementation is steered by national mandatory obligations, which are based on the provisions set out in law. The central government, along with affiliated Ministries and Agencies comprise one set of stakeholders, whilst other groups of stakeholders comprise regional or local authorities. Many mandatory duties of local authorities fall within the national SD sphere, e.g. land use planning. Projects and networks emerge as a form of action that enables issue-based collaboration among affiliated stakeholders. The national level often facilitates implementation actions by providing financing. Implementation actions are thus either authority guided top-down or ad hoc bottom-up initiatives.

4. The Baltic Sea States generally MONI-TOR national SD related activities by the same overall procedures. The monitoring of the national implementation progress use a set of indicators often developed by the national statistical offices or by the EU or the UN, for data sets which are coherent and assess whether countries adhere to agreed international SD targets. There are no indicators that are directly developed with a focus on the BSR *per se,* although the Nordic countries have developed a set of SD indicators in specified areas.

There are thus THREE SHARED SD GOALS to be pursued on a national and macro-regional level. Both the macro-regional and the national level pursue mechanisms that mitigate against and adapt to CLIMATE CHANGE by addressing largely the same means, especially the transformation of energy production in the region from traditional fossil fuel based production to alternative energy resource use. The goal 'SAVING THE BALTIC SEA' is answered on the national SD level by focusing on preserving the natural

capital, though the Baltic Sea is not always explicitly mentioned. Also the third SD macro-regional goal to improve the 'QUALITY OF LIFE', is also implicitly pursued on a national level, by for example by increasing prosperity and improving the wellbeing of the citizens.

BSR MACRO-REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

National policies, often advocating international commitment, rarely mention the BSR context and there are currently few monitoring systems in place for the macro-region. An exception is the work conducted by HELCOM regarding the Baltic Sea itself. A series of macro-regional stakeholders do have an SD policy, most often focusing on a specific area or goal. Important macro-regional stakeholders include three Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) as well as the European Union (EU) in terms of the implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC), two networks of local/regional authorities and a large number (estimated to be 200-300) of Civil Society Organisations. The main actors in the region however are:

➜ THE COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC SEA STATES (CBSS) contributes towards advancing SD in the BSR by coordinating goals and activities, cooperation across borders and stakeholder groups. The CBSS focuses on climate change; sustainable urban development; sustainable consumption and production; and innovation and education for SD.

➜ THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) coordinates an overarching strategy for the region, the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) which was initiated by the European Parlia-

ment, to reinforce cooperation in the BSR to face common challenges by working together and promoting a more balanced development in the area under three themes: 'Save the sea', 'Connect the region', 'Increase prosperity'.

➜ THE BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION – HELSINKI COMMISSION (HELCOM) protects the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental cooperation to achieve a good ecological status.

➜ THE NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (NCM) promotes greater knowledge and more efficient use of resources. It focuses on the Nordic welfare model, viable ecosystems, changing climate, sustainable use of the Earth's resources, and education, research and innovation.

The most active GROUP OF LOCAL/REGIONAL AUTHORITIES is the Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC), a network of local authorities in the Baltic Sea Region focusing on Sustainable urban and rural development by raising SD awareness and commitment, supporting local SD management, including the sustainable management of natural and energy resources, and promoting quality of life and equity. The Baltic Sea States Sub-regional

Co-operation (BSSSC) is one of several networks of regional authorities.

In the area of EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT most prominent is the Baltic University Programme (BUP), a network of universities and other institutions of higher education and research in the Baltic Sea Region. BUP focuses on sustainable development, environmental protection, and democracy in the Baltic Sea Region by research, education, and cooperation with authorities, municipalities and others. Secondary school networks include the Baltic Sea project, an UNESCO supported cooperation in the region, and Life-Link Friendship Schools, both with a strong emphasis on education for sustainable development. The Swedish International Centre of Education for Sustainable Development (SWEDESD) at Uppsala University works on teachers' education for ESD in the region.

Several NATURE PROTECTION organisations are very active in the region. These include the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) focusing on protecting biodiversity; the Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB), a cooperation between Nature Protection Associations in the BSR; Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) which is concerned with the Baltic Sea itself; and others, e.g. Race for the Baltic supported by the Zennström Foundation.

SECTOR STUDIES

Two of the focus areas of the CBSS were chosen for special sector studies, Energy and Climate and Sustainable Consumption and Production. An important goal was to collect relevant statistics in these two sectors to get a clear view of progress. Mainly statistics from Eurostat were used while data for Russia was either provided by the Baltic University Network in Russia or from international organisations such as the International Energy Agency and the Ecological Footprint Network. The data sets have allowed a comparison between the countries in the region, and also indicated which measures are most urgent for improving the status of SD in the region. The data sets were finally discussed in relation to the SDGs considering future indicator work.

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) concerns the wise use of resources, and minimisation of waste and pollution. Key areas include how to use renewable resources, e.g. fisheries, forests and many ecosystem products within their capacity for renewal; fuller product life-cycles and phasing out the use of non-renewable resources, in particular fossil fuels.

The comparatively far-reaching EU policies on SCP are relevant for most of the countries in the BSR. This includes the 2008 Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production; the Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan, the Eco-Design Directive for Energy-Using Products, the Energy Labelling Directive, the EU Eco-Label, the Communication on Green Public Procurement, the Integrated Product Policy, the Thematic Strategy on the Use of Natural Resources, and the Thematic Strategy on Waste Prevention and Recycling. These policy measures seek both to foster resource conservation and resource efficiency and to "decouple" economic growth from environmental degradation.

The annual use of natural resources in the world is larger than what the planet produces each year, its carrying capacity, by about 50 %, and it is even larger in the BSR. The BSR countries have footprints from 3.7 to 6.4 gha/capita[1] corresponds to the use of natural resources requiring 2 - 3.5 planets, assuming a globally equal per capita consumption, and thus sustainability requires that the resource flow is reduced to about a third. The total domestic material consumption in the BSR - which is the total of material used in the economy - was about 25 000 tonnes annually per capita, with slightly smaller values for the less advanced economies. The largest fractions in the material flows, the non-metallic materials and the fossil energy flows, are both decreasing.

Economic value per amount of material flow[2], the resource efficiency, is on average 1.52 €/kg in the Baltic Sea Region, with very large variations. In 2013 Norway had the highest value with 2.63 €/kg followed by Germany 2.17 €/kg and Sweden and Denmark 2.00 €/kg. The three Baltic States and Poland have economic values between 0,4 €/kg and 0,7 €/kg. There are thus large potentials for improvements, to decouple economic growth from material flows.

On the waste side we see a reduction of the amount of waste going to landfill, that is, the least favourable alternative of waste management, and a slow increase of recycling and composting. Data on recycling demonstrates that 30-60 % of waste is recycled in several countries.

Data on sustainable production is difficult to extract, but we see signs of improvement. Thus the number of companies which has introduced environmental management systems, especially ISO 14001, has increased by up to 80 % since 2003, and so has the land area cultivated under ecological conditions (organic farming). Other positive signs include a reduction of polluting substances, especially air pollution, per economic unit. For consumption,

good data to follow the development is mostly lacking. The largest categories of resource use in the consumption phase are caused by the house and building sector, the transport sector, and the food sector.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE

Trends in energy efficiency and progress towards the reported sustainable development indicators in the BSR are presented in three parts: energy consumption, energy productivity and performance, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Since 1990 the best performing countries (Sweden and Germany) in the BSR have reduced final energy consumption between 6% and 8%. Between 1990 and 2003, growth in relative final energy consumption was greatest in Latvia (21%), Lithuania (39%) and Estonia (40%). Between 2003 and 2013, variation in final energy consumption was small, except for the transport sector, where energy consumption increased in all BSR countries, most in Poland (35%) and Lithuania (22%). Consequently, there remains significant work to achieve the 20% reduction sought under the EU Climate and Energy Policy target. The Scientific Advisory Board for the 2009 Russian Energy Efficiency Legislation argues that delivering the 40% pledge by 2030 is very unlikely. The sources of all data are given in the full report.

Norway and Russia are net EXPORTERS OF ENERGY, while all other countries in the BSR rely on energy imports. Generally, this dependency has remained steady or declined since 1990, excluding in Lithuania and Poland, which have seen an increase in energy dependency since 2010.

Between 2004 and 2013, Denmark and Sweden had the greatest growth in the PROPORTION OF ENERGY GENERATED FROM RENEWABLE SOURCES. Estonia and Sweden have surpassed their overall

1 The global hectare (gha) is a measurement unit for quantifying both the ecological footprint of people or activities as well as the biocapacity of the earth or a certain region.
2 Economic value is a measure of the benefit provided goods or services to an economic agent. It is generally measured relative to units of currency, here in EUR (€).

renewable energy target, while Germany and Poland are the furthest from their target (5.6% and 3.7% respectively). While renewables are not well developed in Russia, at the State level, the objective of expanding renewable energy in electricity and heat production as a means to focus energy security is specified.

In the period 2004-2013, the ratio of ELECTRICITY PRODUCED FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY sources increased across the BSR. Estonia, Lithuania and Poland are the only countries not meeting the 21% target as of 2013. Hydro is the most extensively used renewable energy source in Russia, accounting for 18% of total electricity generation in 2000. Germany has significant biofuel and solar energy production.

As of 2013, Sweden had the highest proportion of RENEWABLE FUELS IN TRANSPORT (17%), followed by Finland (9%). Sweden and Finland also experienced the greatest growth in the proportion of renewable energy in transport fuel from 2004 to 2013. As of 2013, Den-

mark (51%), Latvia (38%), Lithuania (35%) and Finland (34%) had the highest proportion of ELECTRICITY FROM COMBINED HEAT AND POWER (CHP) generation in total gross electricity generation. Between 2000 and 2013, the greatest growth in CHP generation occurred in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

In terms of ENERGY PRODUCTIVITY, the greatest proportional increase in productivity during 2003-2013 was seen in Lithuania (54%), followed by Latvia (39%) and Poland (39%). Estonia and Norway experienced the lowest increase in energy productivity over this period (27% and 26% respectively). As of 2013, Denmark has the highest and Estonia the lowest energy productivity. Since 1990 there have been declines in the total GHG EMISSIONS across the BSR, excluding Norway which experienced a 5% growth. The greatest proportional reductions over this period were seen in Latvia (133%), Lithuania (125%) and Estonia (111%). Over the period 2002-2012 the greatest reductions in total GHG emissions were seen in Denmark (41%), Finland (36%) and Sweden (21%), while

Lithuania (1%), Estonia (2%), Latvia (3%), and Russia (12%) showed increased emissions. As of 2012, all BSR countries had achieved a 20% decrease of GHG emissions relative to 1990 levels, excluding Finland, Norway and Poland. Of those, only Norway has not yet met the 8% reduction, but from a very high level. The GHG emission reduction target for Russia implies growth as current levels are approximately 30% lower than 1990.

A note of criticism is needed here. The EU countries in general are increasingly outsourcing their heavy industry and replacing it by importing industrial products. Then at the same time they are increasingly importing CO_2 emissions. Including emissions in imported goods shows that Sweden is rather increasing its emissions than decreasing as reported by the Eurostat, even if it is happening somewhere else in the world. As it is still ending up in our common atmosphere it does not help but only moves the problem elsewhere.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

It is clear from the report that the Baltic Sea Region has excellent opportunities for becoming a forerunner in the transition towards a sustainable future. This is also emphasised by the fact that the BSR is the first region in the EU for which a regional strategy has been initiated. The Baltic Sea Region was also the only macro region that initiated a regional Agenda 21 – Baltic 21 – during the Visby Baltic Sea States Summit in 1996. Baltic 21 (now Baltic 2030) was established by the Prime Ministers of the BSR countries and the European Commission with the aim to to support the implementation of the Rio Declaration and the global Agenda 21, adopted in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environmental Development (UNCED). The region also has a uniquely long history of cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe exemplified

by the Convention for the Protection of the Baltic Sea initiated by Finland already in 1972, and an even further back reaching history of Nordic cooperation. The natural resource base in the region is in a global perspective rich. Thus the share of renewable energy in some of the countries is the highest in the EU and in general is increasing, with hydropower and biomass as a large resource base.

Opportunities for cooperation in the region are likewise rich. The BSR has a very large number of networks for all kinds of cooperation, such as alliances in the fields of environment, economy, social affairs, culture and research. The states with the task of governing a transition towards sustainability thus have a unique support base from other stakeholders in the region. Most of the SD activity in the region,

with the exception of national level activity, is an outcome of multi-stakeholder partnerships. The potential in terms of further enhancing SD governance is great. The regional groups often have a very large competence in their specific areas and provide opportunities for expertise, innovation and mutual learning.

Drawbacks include that operational cooperation arrangements are to an extent impeded by in-built barriers, which thus need to be eased. For this reason cross-scale cooperation is often short-term. The UN sees multi-stakeholder partnerships as key to respond rationally to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, but also as a mean to tackle systematic barriers.

Many of the shared challenges in the region are addressed via SD related activities, carried out

across the region, by stakeholders operating at the various governance levels. In general these activities are difficult to coordinate as the SD goals are set to target challenges that require integrated responses, but activities are often carried out in terms of sectorial approaches.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations intend to identify the main features of BSR governance, and point to possibilities to strengthen the capacity of SD governance.

From a BSR perspective inclusive growth, meaning that social and environmental concerns are included, is a main goal of every national government in the region. It is largely categorised by pursuing goals which aspire to fundamentally transform the energy sector in the region, either via energy efficiency or energy savings measures, or by developing the field of renewable energy. These are expected to support the creation of jobs in the environmental sectors, via e.g. new innovations enabling the emergence of 'green' technologies. The other identified macro-regional goals, 'Saving the Baltic Sea' and 'Quality of Life', are also pursued on a national level.

The relative cohesive nature of the transformation of the energy sector derives largely from EU initiatives, which constitute a significant influence in the BSR. The overarching EU policy initiative, the EU 2020 Growth Strategy, represents the main influence in relation to the transformation of the energy sector in the BSR.

THREE RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRENGTHENING THE SD GOVERNANCE IN THE BSR CAN BE HIGHLIGHTED:

1. FACILITATE SD COOPERATION FOR RESPONDING COHERENTLY IN RELATION TO THE SDGS

There is a need to strengthen BSR SD ownership. A strengthened BSR SD ownership sug-

gests that stakeholders with a macro-regional SD mandate need to be given a stronger mandate for SD in the region by the national governments. Thus, macro-regional entities need to be viewed as legitimate governance stakeholders, and their position should be acknowledged to a greater extent, especially by national SD stakeholders, as facilitators of SD action. This does not imply that macro-regional stakeholders should be part of related national SD policy processes, but rather that the added value of these stakeholders should be acknowledged to a larger extend.

Macro-regional stakeholders themselves should embrace the integrated SD view, interact more frequently with other peer macro-regional stakeholders to provide better prerequisites for an overall coordination of SD activities, reducing possible overlapping activities, and increasing the coherency of SD activities.

2. INTRODUCE BSR SD MONITORING IN SELECTED AREAS

The UN emphasises that the regional level provides a useful forum for peer review and learning, and encourages countries to work at the regional level to ensure progress on trans-boundary issues and on regionally shared targets (United Nations, 2015). The regional level could also function as a place for monitoring regionally shared SD targets, though monitoring is usually prescribed to the national level. Regional monitoring could help ensure progress on trans-boundary issues, and facilitate a coherent progress towards shared SD goals, and thus be beneficial for future SD cooperation in selected areas. The basis for monitoring

would be to utilise relevant SD indicators to follow the implementation in shared BSR SD areas. Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU could provide the base on which BSR SD monitoring could be developed. For example, Eurostat has already developed a set of Sustainable Development Indicators (SDI).

3. ESTABLISH REGIONAL PLATFORMS IN THE BSR FOR MUTUAL LEARNING

The countries in the BSR working together to implement the SDGs will have a general need for MUTUAL LEARNING, not only at a national level, the level implementing the SDGs, but also at other governance levels, in order to develop the necessary capacity. The UN encourages Member States to identify suitable regional fora in which to engage, creating useful opportunities for mutual learning, cooperation on trans-boundary issues and discussions on shared targets. The platforms for MUTUAL LEARNING COULD BE HOSTED BY RELEVANT MACRO-REGIONAL ENTITIES in the region. For example, for SDG number 13, "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact", the CBSS emerges as a rational choice. Excellent possibilities and macro-regional partners for cooperation for a more sustainable future Baltic Sea Region exist for all 17 of the SDGs to be implemented in the region.

The features of the financing available for BSR SD activity provide opportunities for just-in-time action by a variety of stakeholders. The drawback of the financing available is, besides only enabling short-term action, that the funding schemes are not necessarily aligned with the SD focal points in the BSR.

CHAPTER 1

THE BALTIC SEA REGION AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**, **SDGS**, as a central component of the global **2030 AGENDA**, has led to a renewed interest for Sustainable Development as a notion and as a political agenda in the BSR countries. This report is intended to support the development of governance capacity for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region, for the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the coordination of Sustainable Development Policies in the region.

The process of developing a new set of Sustainable Development Goals was initiated by the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, the so-called Rio+20. The outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*, established a common vision for the future by reaffirming a global commitment to the principles of SD. It reaffirmed the commitment to advance integration, implementation and coherence, to assess progress to date and to address new and emerging challenges as well as to engage major groups and stakeholders in promoting SD (United Nations, 2012).

The *Future We Want* authorised the UN to establish an 'Open Working Group' (OWG), with the task to develop a set of SDGs on a global level. The OWG was instructed to ensure that the SDGs embody a "universally shared common global vision of progress towards a safe, just and sustainable space for all human beings to thrive on the planet" (Osborn et al., 2015). At the same time, the SDGs were to be "action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, and universally applicable to all countries, while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities" (United Nations, 2012).

After the OWG's successful drafting effort, and a subsequent year of inter-governmental negotiations at the UN, a total of 17 universal goals (Box 1.1) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015 as part of a new global **2030 AGENDA**, which will be in effect from 1 January 2016 through 31 December 2030.

The SDGs were created in cooperation between a broad range of stakeholders (United Nations Development Group, 2014). The UN Development System enabled nearly 5 million people to express their priorities for the post 2015 SD Agenda (United Nations Development Group, 2014). The SDGs include 169 targets, which are to be reached, depending upon area, within a time span of 5 to 15 years. The SDGs cover all prioritised areas for the achievement of SD, ranging from ending poverty in all its forms across the globe, to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for SD.

Implementing the SDGs has significant challenges. Gaps in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda exist at all governance levels, including national, regional and international levels (United Nations, 2015). These gaps come from a number of sources, such as the notion that SD has a vague character, that many stakeholders see it differently, and that the SD Agenda is driven by markedly differently ambitions. There maybe also exist differences across governance levels in terms of implementing the global Sustainable Development Agenda. Even if the global Sustainable Development Agenda is to be guided by the SDGs, the actual implementation process is driven within national contexts and specific policies, which may not be aligned with the overall goals.

BOX 1.1 **THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

GOAL 1.
End poverty in all its forms everywhere

GOAL 2.
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

GOAL 3.
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

GOAL 4.
Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

GOAL 5.
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

GOAL 6.
Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

GOAL 7.
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

GOAL 8.
Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

GOAL 9.
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

GOAL 10.
Reduce inequality within and among countries

GOAL 11.
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

GOAL 12.
Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

GOAL 13.
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

GOAL 14.
Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

GOAL 15.
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

GOAL 16.
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

GOAL 17.
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

The SDGs underline the enhanced role of multi-stakeholder partnerships for SD as a complement to the global Sustainable Development institutional framework and inter-governmental arrangements for SD. Multi-stakeholder partnerships for SD should be viewed as a mobiliser, which shares knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support the achievement of SDGs in all countries. Institutional frameworks and intergovernmental arrangements for SD, and the means of implementation via e.g. financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building need to be strengthened (United Nations, 2012).

The new 2030 Agenda should not be limited to action on one level of governance, but rather by activities across levels to be able to deal with multidimensional issues such as energy, water management and food security (Independent Research Forum, 2013). To address development in this integrated way it needs to be aligned with current governance frameworks. These have undergone a profound shift during the last decades, especially by the increased importance of multi-level governance layers (MLGs) typical for the European Union (EU) (Rosamund, 2010; Pierre/Peters, 2000). Different levels of governance are important since the both facilitate and drive action.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda depends on combined actions taken by a variety of stakeholders. Collective action of regional and sub-regional intergovernmental partnerships along with national and sub-national action is needed. National and local level activity is judged to be a key enabler and driver for implementing the 2030 Agenda, although the governance levels ultimately are responsible for implementation (United Nations Development Group, 2014).

* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

BALTIC SEA REGION GOVERNANCE

The BSR[3], often referred to as a macro-region, is made up of a number of societies, which operate in vastly different socio-economic surroundings and with different capacities to respond to Sustainable Development related activities. As a result, the Baltic Sea states operate in very diverse Sustainable Development national governance contexts. The national SD governance contexts then operate in a wider BSR Sustainable Development governance setting. The levels involved in governing the region are, as mentioned, referred to as the Multi-Level Governance (MLG) framework. The MLG framework reflects the recent history of the societies of the region. It includes events post 1989 and the EU's 2004 enlargement which effectively turned the Baltic Sea into an internal EU sea, with the exception of the Russian coasts. Both events facilitated and increased the already existing cooperation between the Baltic Sea states. The cooperation in the BSR has primarily been geared towards the management of problems and challenges, which all neighbouring countries or communities share (Johansson, 2002).

The EU enlargement placed candidate countries under pressure; consequently the EU has strongly influenced Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in the pre-accession phase. Although financial instruments also played an important role, these countries were not allowed to join the Union before complying with the *acquis communautaire,* i.e. the entire body of EU legislation (Kern, 2011). This process of 'governance by conditionality' (Schimmelfennig/Sedelmeier, 2004) led to a relatively high degree of compliance in the area of environmental policy (Joas, 2008).

The MLG framework includes several governance levels. Each level has its own tasks and responsibilities, and serves different functions and has different agendas in relation to governing the BSR. *The macro-regional level* is represented by pan-Baltic actors, such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Helsinki Commission, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Union of the Baltic Cities, whom all have their respective strategies to work for a more sustainable BSR. These pan-Baltic actors do not as such have a direct policy influence, but can provide policy recommendations. They also contribute and participate actively in the Sustainable Development sphere by developing capacity and awareness and represent a big part of the Sustainable Development knowledge pool in the region. Further, they constitute facilitators of action in the region, by providing platforms for various Sustainable Development stakeholders to enable SD action across the region. The EU has also emerged as an essential part of the macro-regional architecture, in particular with the launch of the EU Strategy for the BSR (EUSBSR), which is viewed as the overarching paradigm in terms of governing the region.

The national level, with relevant Ministries and Government Agencies, are responsible for Sustainable Development policy development, Sustainable Development policy setting, and steering and policy coordination within their respective countries. The national level has a central role in the coordination of SD implementation policies, even if the actual implementation occurs at sub-national levels. Sub-national stakeholders include both state, regional, and local authorities, where municipalities have key roles, as they predominately implement Sustainable Development policies in the region.

The interactions among the governance levels are centred around common themes or agendas, which often cross sectors and where the traditional top-down policy development has been integrated with bottom-up approaches. It is based on networking among not only public sectors actors, but also among civil society and NGO actors as well as the private sector. The cooperation is characterised by horizontal interaction (Gehring/Oberthur, 2008; Young, 2002), whereas vertical interaction and coordination is largely lacking (Kern, 2011). Arrangements aim to utilise the specific knowledge of users and stakeholders, and are also essential for the legitimacy of decisions (Jentoft et al., 2007).

In many respects the Multi-Level Governance framework epitomises the notion of SD. To achieve sustainable development we need interaction and cooperation between all layers of government, amongst public, civil society, private stakeholders and NGOs, horizontally and vertically, across all sectors in order to create an integrated and a participatory approach. Many BSR stakeholders are directly or indirectly involved in the governance of Sustainable Development. Steering much of this process, however, are typically the various Ministry representatives, which develop National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) to promote and implement Sustainable Development activities in their respective countries.

3 This report refers to the Baltic Sea Region as comprising of 11 countries, listed here in alphabetical order: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. All riparian Baltic Sea states, with the exception of Russia are members of the European Union, and must as such adhere to, besides national policies, also to EU policies.

CHAPTER 2

NATIONAL GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION COUNTRIES

This chapter intends to give an overview of how SD is viewed and understood in the countries of the BSR. National governments are the focal interest and thus subject to the categorisation since they develop and implement the National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS). They are typically made up of Ministry representatives: the respective Ministries function as national architects of SD activities, they set the tone of how SD is viewed as a notion, and they design and set up the SD governance structures. NSDSs[4] are the main source for categorising SD, as they reflect the view of SD and how they have outlined governance for SD, in terms of stakeholder constellations, implementation models, and monitoring procedures for SD related activities.

A general framework has been created (Table 2.1) to enable a systematic categorisation of NSDSs in the BSR. It includes a GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF SD, NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND ACTION, STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES AND NATIONAL MONITORING TOOLS. Based on this general framework, a national Sustainable Development governance narrative has been created for each Baltic Sea state.

In this review important issues include: Is Sustainable Development seen holistically, crossing over sectors and governance levels, or is it viewed in a more specific manner? Are there Sustainable Development goals that are pursued in all states? Which are the key areas of focus relevant for the Baltic Sea Region states, and which are the most common mechanisms for achieving these goals? What types of stakeholder constellations characterise nationally induced SD activity? Are there any common features with regard to the national structures for implementing SD activities? Are SD activities implemented in an integrated manner, across sectors, both horizontally and vertically, with the help of various stakeholders in a participatory approach? Are there common national monitoring procedures for SD related activities and the frequency of these procedures being applied?

Synthesising national Sustainable Development governance narratives into a BSR SD governance national narrative will eventually be done by identifying similar general features in the different national NSDS. When synthesising national Sustainable Development governance narrative into a common BSR SD national governance narrative, it is important to underline that the BSR comprises of a plurality of societies, which differ significantly from each other in terms of societal preferences. For this reason a 'Sustainable Development Goal' does not necessarily imply there is a shared understanding in the BSR of that particular goal, nor does it mean that there is a shared way of dealing with issues and challenges that the goal entails.

TABLE 2.1 **FRAMEWORK FOR CATEGORISING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
The objective is to establish how national stakeholders frame the notion of Sustainable Development. How are the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects aligned? Is SD viewed holistically, crossing over both sectors and government levels, or is SD viewed in a more specific manner, focusing on some specific areas?	The objective is to describe and list the general SD goals of national stakeholders, both long-term and short-term goals. The objective is also to describe the various types of goals or focal areas, and to describe, if possible, their rationale of setting up these specific goals/areas, as well as to list the mechanisms for achieving these goals.	The objective is to list the most general stakeholders that are involved in SD related activities The objective is also to map out various types of stakeholders that are engaged in SD related activities; e.g. besides the various tiers and sectors of the public sector, also the civil society, NGOs, and the private sector .	The objective is to outline the implementation structure used for carrying out SD, to list the main actors responsible for implementation; to describe how SD is implemented; horizontally and vertically across sectors; and to establish –based on the mentioned actors– if SD is implemented in an integrated and participatory way, in accordance with the normative view.	The objective is to describe how and how often national stakeholders monitor SD related activities; also to describe how the NSDS addresses the monitoring aspect, i.e. the emphasis shown towards monitoring, if possible.

NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE STRATEGIES

In this section, Sustainable Development strategies and narratives for each of the eleven countries in the report are presented. For each of them data has been gathered from the English language homepages and summarised in tables, one for each country. The accompanying text summarises and discusses the findings for each of the countries. A weak point is that many of the strategies have more updated versions in national languages, which are unfortunately not included in the discussion.

DENMARK

Denmark has a set of rather general but ambitious objectives for Sustainable Development related activities. Denmark wants to develop a welfare society, in which economic growth is decoupled from environmental impacts, and in which all actors become committed and motivated to take responsibility for the long-term global consequences. The objective is *"to commit and motivate all actors to take responsibility for a sustainable development, develop innovative and environmentally friendly solutions, and take long-term global consequences into account."*[5] The primary focus is to enable the creation of a society where economic progress can be achieved simultaneously as the state of the environment is improved. The emphasis is consequently on economic growth, but not by neglecting the social and environmental aspects, but rather growth with respect to the environment and people's health. Growth could be achieved, e.g. via developing innovative and environmentally friendly solutions. Denmark also emphasises that Sustainable Development is a shared responsibility in which various actors representing the Danish society should commit and take ownership of this process. Denmark also puts an accent on global cooperation as an imperative and an intrinsic part of the needed work towards Sustainable Development.

Denmark recognises that SD goals should be of a cross-cutting nature, and that the actions needed to address these goals should be reached by interaction among affiliated actors, and across various sectors. Denmark lists a number of cross-cutting goals. Thus climate change is combatted through mitigation actions, e.g. within the sectors of agriculture, energy production, forestry, transport and via the reduction of industrial greenhouse gases (GHG). Biodiversity is ensured by protecting areas with a highly natural quality, engaging and enhancing local participation and by environmental monitoring. The environment and health are promoted via actions within the sectors of food production and consumption, chemical use, indoor environment and general health and safety. The cross cutting goals of resources and resource efficiency is endorsed via product-oriented environmental initiatives, green products, reducing resource consumption and waste and via a sustainable use of raw materials. Denmark's international activities are also listed as a cross-cutting goal. The mentioned goals should be addressed while the environment is taken into account in multilateral contexts, via e.g. development assistance. The Arctic region is especially mentioned as a vulnerable area where the environment needs protection. There is, however, no reference to the Baltic Sea Region.

There are a multitude of stakeholders engaged in Sustainable Development related activities. The Ministry of Environment has the main national Sustainable Development coordination responsibility, along with the Danish Government. Other Ministries have also been active within the Danish SD sphere, for example by being involved in the preparations of updating the NSDS, such as, the Ministries of Transportation, Health, Energy, Foreign Affairs, Food and Consumption and Science. Regional and local authorities are also to some extent active, mainly as tools for implementing SD related activities. The municipalities are required by the Planning Act to elaborate their own SD strategies and renew them every four years, but these strategies do not have direct linkages to the NSDS. Partnerships between national and subnational levels are established, although no strategic mechanisms for involving subnational levels in the implementation of the NSDS are mentioned in the Danish Sustainable Development Strategy.

There is no Sustainable Development National Council which would represent various stakeholder groups from various tiers of governance and who could have the overall coordination and implementation responsibility. In 2007, in conjunction with a renewal process of the NSDS, a draft proposition was published by the Government. This draft proposition was the result of a participatory process, engaging a total of 230 stakeholders, with representation from various spheres of society, including subnational authorities, the business sector, industry, NGOs as well as the financial sector.

The Danish Government is in charge of monitoring SD related activities. The basis for monitoring is a set of SD indicators, developed and frequently updated by an affiliated governmental entity. The indicator assessments are in turn the basis of various monitoring and progress reports, which are used to facilitate and update SD policies and relevant SD action programmes.

5 Danish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2009): http://eng.mst.dk/topics/sustainability/sustainable-development-in-denmark/

TABLE 2.2 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – DENMARK[6]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
The long term objective is to develop a welfare society in which economic growth is decoupled from environmental impacts, and in which all actors become committed and motivated to take responsibility for long-term global consequences. Environmental concerns must be taken into account in all sectors, and global cooperation is needed for SD. Environmentally friendly solutions should be promoted, together with a socially balanced economic development, which provides greater individual freedom of action and displays respect for the limits of nature and the environment and has no negative impacts on people's health.	The Strategy presents objectives related to cross-cutting activities, addressing the interconnections between different topics and sectors. Climate change, biodiversity, environment and health, and resource efficiency are listed as cross-cutting objectives. Denmark's international activities are also listed as a cross-cutting objective, where environmental considerations should be taken into account in multilateral contexts; the Arctic Region is mentioned as a vulnerable environment which needs protection. Furthermore, the Strategy presents an analysis of sectors and reports goals and targets that need to be reached within each sector.	The Ministry of the Environment and the Government in general has responsibility of achieving SD. Regional and local authorities are to some extent involved in SD related activities. In 2007 based on the principles of a participatory process, 230 stakeholders were involved in the Strategy's revision process in which subnational authorities, business and industry, NGOs as well as the financial sector participated. Various ministries are involved in the revisions and in the updating procedures of the NSDS.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** The Ministry of the Environment and the Government in general has the responsibility of implementing SD related activities. Other affiliated Ministries are involved, e.g. in areas that require cross-sectorial coordination. A range of different action plans has been developed in conjunction with the focal areas. **VERTICAL ACTION:** *Top down:* The national level evaluates local SD strategies, which municipalities are required by law (Planning Act) to elaborate, but these strategies do not have direct links to the NSDS. There are some partnerships in place between the central government and local authorities. *Bottom up:* No strategic mechanism has been proposed for involving subnational levels in the implementation phase.	**MONITORING:** The Government has the overall responsibility. Affiliated governmental entities develop and also update indicators on a regular basis. Based on indicator assessments, monitoring reports are produced. Monitoring reports, along with other affiliated international documents are often the basis on which e.g. the NSDS is updated.

6 The Danish Sustainable Development Strategy was compiled for the first time in 2002, and a revision was published in 2009. However, the 2009 version is available only in Danish. A new NSDS was launched in 2014, but also only available in Danish. In this study, the 2002 English version has been examined, whilst information concerning the 2009 version has been gathered from other sources, namely the European Sustainable Development Network and affiliated websites by Danish Ministries.

ESTONIA

The departure point for the Estonian NSDS is to develop Estonian society within a global competitive setting; this development should however adhere to the principles of Sustainable Development and preserve the traditional values of Estonia[7]. The NSDS's main function is hence to pursue the answer to the *"question of what should be done to ensure successful functioning of the Estonian society and state also in the longer term."*[8] The NSDS is hence based on general SD principles, viewing SD as *"a development programme covering all of societal life, not a strategy focusing on ecological issues only"*,[9] In view of this, the Sustainable Development principles are applied in Estonia with strong societal connotations. Still, this does not imply that the environment is neglected, as the development of the society should be in balance with nature.

Estonia aspires that its NSDS, along with other policy documents, will enable the country to accomplish its long-term vision of becoming a knowledge society, in order to adapt to the global competitive setting. Vital for this vision[10] is to introduce the principles of knowledge-based management into state governance, and to change the creation and use of intellectual resources, conforming the human-nature relationship with the principles of knowledge society.

Estonia has identified four long-term general goals that the NSDS focuses on. They are: viability of the Estonian cultural space, e.g. via national-language education and emphasising the functionality of Estonian culture; growth of welfare, in terms of economic growth and the level of security and diversity of opportunities; a coherent society, by emphasising social inclusion, regional bal-

ance and a strong civil society; an ecological balance by utilising natural recourses in a sustainable way, reducing pollution and preserving biodiversity. The goals are interdependent and interconnected and should not be viewed as contradictory. As stated before, the NSDS as a policy document is part of the road towards Estonia's long-term vision, and the NSDS has in particular an important role and serves as a tool for reconciling the interest of Estonian stakeholders, so that the dialogue between different parties are not a competition of interest, but rather the comparison and reconciliation of integrated ideas and visions.

Various Estonian stakeholders are engaged in SD related activities. When the NSDS was prepared and developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment, other national governmental representatives and spheres of society were involved, e.g. local authorities, local self-government unions and the general public. The first steps towards SD stakeholder engagement were taken in 1996 when a Commission for SD was created to serve as a forum for stakeholder involvement. The Commission was under the leadership of the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the Ministers of Economy and Environment. Within the Commission, various institutions are represented: the government, the parliament, academia, the business sectors and NGOs. In 2009, the functions of the Commission were reformed, it became an independent body of the Government and its composition was changed to include non-governmental stakeholders and its main task was to prepare analytic reports on different SD issues. An Inter-ministerial Working Group of various ministries and the Estonian Statistical Office has been

established in order to coordinate SD issues and the implementation of the NSDS. The Working Group also coordinates the Estonian monitoring activities, and coordinates the production of national SD progress reports. The Governmental Office of Statistics Estonia is in charge of producing progress reports, which are produced on a frequent basis. The Inter-ministerial Working Group is under the leadership of the Government Office to ensure better horizontal integration when implementing the NSDS. In Estonia, improved horizontal integration of policies is a target that is not only applied within the SD sphere, but also in a larger context. With this in mind, a National Development Network (NDN) has been established. The NDN is a politically independent body of strategic development planning, with the aim of developing long-term programmes and to harmonise the strategies of different sectors, including monitoring their implementation. The development units of ministries and local governments participate in the NDN network.

7 Estonian National Strategy on Sustainable Development Sustainable Estonia 21 (2005): p. 6

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid. p.59 *et seq.*

TABLE 2.3 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – ESTONIA[11]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
SD is perceived through the lens of developing Estonian society within a global competitive setting; whilst adhering to the principles of SD and preserving the traditional values of Estonia. Estonia is perceived sustainable when its cultural space is preserved, the overall welfare is growing; and coherence of the society and balance with nature are ensured in the long term. In order to reach a SD society, inclusive decision-making processes should be promoted. Ideas and visions linked to SD should be a result of reconciling dialogues between different parties.	Estonia has four general interconnected and interdependent SD goals: (1) Viability of the Estonian cultural space; e.g. via efforts related to promoting national identity along with enhancing the development of a European identity. (2) The growth of welfare; growing the economic base in order to reach a development that is in line with European and Nordic counterparts. (3) A coherent society; via efforts related to promoting social inclusion, regional balance and civil society (4) Ecological balance; via efforts that promote the application of a knowledge-based management of the environment There is a long-term timescale for reaching aforementioned general SD goals.	In 1996, a commission for SD was created, with a main duty to serve as a forum for stakeholder involvement. Over 50 experts, representing different spheres of society were involved in the preparation of the strategy in 2005. In 2009, the functions of the SD Commission were reformed, it became an independent body of the Government and its composition was changed to comprise of NGO stakeholders, its main task is to prepare analytical reports on different SD issues. An Inter-ministerial Working Group, comprising representatives of various ministries and the Estonian Statistical Office, has been established in order to coordinate SD issues, including implementation and producing national progress reports. The Working Group is chaired by the Strategy Director of the Government Office.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** The Inter-ministerial Working Group is in charge of implementation. The WG is under the leadership of the Government Office in order to ensure better horizontal integration whilst implementing the NSDS. **VERTICAL ACTION:** *Top down:* There is no institution directly responsible for vertical implementation. The NSDS emphasises that the different spheres of society are to be engaged in the various implementation processes Local initiatives are managed via local development strategies. *Bottom up:* Mostly based on subnational initiatives, e.g. in the forms of various programmes, or projects.	**MONITORING:** The Inter-ministerial Working Group coordinates the overall monitoring. The development of indicators and subsequent indicator reporting is the responsibility of the Estonian Statistical Office. Indicator reports have been produced on various occasions, often with two to three year time intervals.

11 The Estonian National Strategy on Sustainable Development Sustainable Estonia 21 was published in 2005. In 2013, the set of sustainable development indicators was renewed by the Government Office of Estonia, the Sustainable Development Commission and an Inter-ministerial Working Group for Sustainable Development. Compared to the previous set, there are 26 new indicators and 69 indicators altogether. These indicators also form the basis for the new publication of sustainable development indicators published in 2015.

FINLAND

Finland has set its sights on achieving a strong societal commitment in its pursuit of sustainable development. Finland's emphasis is on 'soft values' related to SD. Finland perceives Sustainable Development as a mean to safeguard citizen's wellbeing, and simultaneously, promote the uptake of individual and social responsibilities towards the environment. Sustainable Development is viewed as an *'ongoing and structured process where society undergoes change with the aim of securing desirable living conditions for the (sic!) current and future generations.'*[12] SD is interpreted as a humanity-wide learning process, which seeks to bring about a cultural change towards a sustainable future society and world. Finland emphasises also its global responsibility in terms of SD activities, and underlines that its policies are aligned to international policies, such as those of the United Nations, the European Union, the Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Finland recognises that it is pivotal in the attainment of the SD goals to understand that SD is an ongoing process, which embraces cooperation between affiliated stakeholders and cross-generational thinking, and respects the planetary boundaries. Knowledge should be used creatively and SD related policies should be characterised by coherence. The Finnish NSDS highlights four main SD goals; the well-being of citizens, a balance between the use and protection of natural resources, sustainable communities in a sustainable regional structure and Finland's' role as a global actor and bearer of responsibility. In order to work towards each goal, all thematic areas consist of a set of priorities deemed necessary to work within, in order to achieve progress. For example with regard to the well-being of citizens, the emphasis is on promotion of healthy lifestyles, quality of working life and the balance of individual and social responsibility, while within the area of

the use and protection of natural resources, the emphasis is on promoting sustainable production and the cultural significance of natural resources. Sustainable communities are promoted via the transport system and the information society service as a precondition for a functional society and interaction. Finally Finland's role as global actor and bearer of responsibility is reflected in adopting its operational principles in international cooperation.

With regard to stakeholder engagement in the field of SD, Finland has a rather long tradition of attempting to involve multiple stakeholder groups. In 1993, Finland created a National Commission on Sustainable Development (NCSD), chaired by the Prime Minister, with the view to function as a centre for both preparation processes of updating the NSDS as well as participating in the implementation phase of the SD related activities. The NCSD includes besides national level representatives, e.g. the Prime Minister's Office, also representatives of local authorities, business life, civil society, educational institutions and media. The NCSD work is facilitated and prepared by an Inter-ministerial Secretariat, which convenes eight to ten times per year. The Secretariat is situated at the Ministry of Environment and has 20 members from different ministries.

NCSD is viewed to have a central role in the implementation stages, especially concerning vertical implementation, as it holds representatives of various tiers of governance and spheres of society. The Ministry of Environment is central for the national horizontal implementation, given its role as NSDS coordinator. It has developed an Action Plan, and has a cooperation and information network with other affiliated national actors. The basis of vertical implementation activities is also focused around cooperation and information networks, connecting among other

national and local level stakeholders.

The NCSD is also engaged in monitoring SD related activities in Finland. In Finland SD related activities are monitored on a frequent basis, and the foundation of the monitoring is the set of national indicator-based assessments. It is the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office and Statistics Finland to update regularly the SD indicator sets. The indicator assessments are in turn the basis for creating progress reports, which are linked to specific goals. The progress reports constitute one of the cornerstones on which NSDS is revised and updated. The NSDS has also been the subject of an external revision, with an objective of evaluating the implementation processes of the NSDS, and the impacts of SD as a notion in national policies.

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12 Finnish Ministry of the Environment: http://www.ym.fi/en-US/The_environment/Sustainable_development

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TABLE 2.4 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – FINLAND[13]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
SD is viewed in a manner that enables Finland to become a sustainable society, where the carrying capacity of nature is not exceeded and natural resources are used in a sustainable manner. Citizens' well-being must be safeguarded, and at the same time, the uptake of individual and social responsibilities towards the environment should be promoted. SD is an ongoing societal commitment, a structured process, which should serve as a long term framework and instrument of policy coherence for administrative sectors. SD is to be achieved through cooperation between various stakeholders. The principles underlying SD are global responsibility, cross-generational thinking, limited carrying capacity of nature, cooperation, creative use of knowledge and expertise.	The Strategy lists four general targets: (1) The well-being of citizens, e.g. via cohesion between different generations, promoting civil activity, prevention of social exclusion and poverty. (2) A balance between the use and protection of natural resources, e.g. via adapting to climate change, limiting GHG, ensuring biodiversity, increase energy efficiency, changing consumption habits, improving the state of the Baltic Sea. (3) Sustainable communities in a sustainable regional structure, e.g. via ensuring vital rural regions, ensuring the availability of services, functionally diverse and structurally sound communities, good living environment. (4) Finland as a global actor and bearer of responsibility via e.g. development of neighbouring regions, international cooperation, influencing EU policy.	The basis of stakeholder engagement is the National Commission on SD, chaired by the Prime Minister. The SD Commission consists of members of the Prime Minister's Office, the Government, different Ministry representatives, various administrative sectors, local authorities, media and industry representatives, civil society, the church, trade unions, NGOs and academia. The SD Commission is central in relation to the preparation of a new strategy and in the implementation stages of a strategy. For example in the 2013 NSDS revision, companies, organisations, educational institutions and local authorities played an active part.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** The SD Commission and its Secretariat coordinates horizontal activity. The Ministry of Environment has also a central and key role, given its function as NSDS coordinator. Horizontal activity transpires via networking co-operation and programmes between various national branches of administration. **VERTICAL ACTION:** Cooperation networks between central and municipal levels, networks also include different levels of administration, other societal spheres.	**MONITORING:** The basis of SD monitoring are national indicator based assessments. The first SD indicator set was developed in 2000, and the most recent updated set originates from 2014. The development of the indicators is under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Office and Statistic Finland These indicator assessments are reported as progress reports, linked to specific goals. In addition, the NSDS has also been subject to an external review, with the objective of evaluating the implementation processes of the NSDS, and impacts of SD in national policies.

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13 The latest NSDS originates from 2009. However a revision of that strategy *The Finland we want by 2050 - Society's Commitment to Sustainability* was officially launched in 2013, but this revision is more of an update in terms of a vision, and only seven pages long. Therefore the NDSD from 2009 is used as the main source.

GERMANY

The German SD Strategy, named "Perspectives for Germany"[14] was adopted in 2002. The German SD approach is closely interlinked with the normative perception of SD. The German general perception of SD relates to an *"economic prosperity, which goes hand in hand with social cohesion and the protection of natural resources, and is committed to intergenerational equity and a peaceful coexistence of people"*[15]. For Germany *"sustainability requires responsible action – today and for future generations, both nationally and internationally. This is the aim of the National Sustainable Development Strategy"*[16]. The overall ambition with SD related efforts is to become by 2050 a low-carbon economy, by means of structural change, restructuring energy supplies, and becoming one of the most resource-efficient economies in the world. Germany wants to become the first industrialised nation to succeed in converting to a highly efficient energy system based on renewable energy sources. This can be achieved through innovation, cost-efficient measures and with market-oriented policies, which at the same time are environmentally sound and climate compatible[17].

In the pursuit of the overall long-term SD ambition, a holistic and integrated approach is emphasised. This approach must account for diversity and interdependence, which combines environmental protection, economic performance and social responsibility, trying not to lose sight of the 'whole picture'[18]. The responsibility of achieving the SD ambition is not only one that holds the Government responsible, but what is

required is societal interaction and commitment. SD must become a benchmark for the decisions to be made in business and society, and SD should be increasingly integrated in all areas of life[19]. It is emphasised that the SD approach *"does not identify a single correct path which should be followed, but it is rather a method of problem solving. It requires an ability to think in a number of different dimensions"*[20], and achieving political decisions in all areas.

The German Strategy is based on four guidelines – intergenerational equity, quality of life, social cohesion and international responsibility[21]. Germany lists three priorities in order to reach tangible progress with regard to the predefined long-term SD goal. One priority area covers activities related to the economic sphere. Key words describing this area are cross-cutting activities both within the public and the private sector. Of particular interest is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) considering aspects such as employment, demographic changes and environmental considerations including resource efficiency, environmental technology and the sustainable use of raw materials. Another priority area is climate and energy, with its outlined targets, and defined concepts, such as the Government's Energy Concept, highlighting energy-efficiency and eco-friendly economics. The third priority area addresses activities related to water, with a particular focus on the intergenerational responsibility commitments, by emphasising activities that consider e.g. dangers of natural hazards, the quality of the drinking water, agricultural and

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14 German Federal Chancelley: *Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie*: https://www.nachhaltigkeitsrat.de/fileadmin/user_upload/English/pdf/Perspectives_for_Germany.pdf

15 cf. National Sustainable Development Strategy (2012): *Progress Report*: p. 14 and 19

16 cf. National Sustainable Development Strategy (2012): *Progress Report* (German version): p. 12 (or resp. p. 1, English short version)

17 cf. National Sustainable Development Strategy (2012): *Progress Report* (English version): p. 19

18 ibid. p.24

19 ibid. p. 21

20 ibid. p. 23

21 cf. National Sustainable Development Strategy (2012): *Progress Report* (English version): p.2

TABLE 2.5 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – GERMANY[24]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
The German view of SD is closely interlinked with the normative perception of the notion; to achieve economic prosperity that considers and values social cohesion, and preserve natural resources, as well as recognizing the commitment to intergenerational equity and international responsibility. The overall ambition with SD related efforts in Germany is to achieve a low-carbon economy by 2050, by means of structural change, to restructure energy supplies, to become one of the most resource-efficient economies in the world. The four guidelines which form the framework of the strategy are intergenerational equity, quality of life, social cohesion and international responsibility. SD activities require a holistic, integrated approach, and the principles of SD need to constitute a benchmark for societal decisions. The SD related activities are not pursued through a previously pre-set single path, but rather via a method of pragmatic problem solving approach.	The Strategy comprises 38 goals and indicators. Germany lists three priorities in order to reach tangible progress with regard to the predefined long-term SD goal. They are: sustainable economic activity, climate and energy and sustainable water policy. These interconnected fields are under-pinned by a number of federal policies: • Sustainable and stable financial policy • Sustainable mobility • Sustainable consumption and sustainable production. • Preserving and managing natural resources • Health, social inclusion, demography and migration. • Global challenges in respect of poverty and SD. • Education, training and research and development	The pivot in stakeholder engagement processes with regard to general SD activity in Germany is the State Secretaries' Committee on SD. Its task is to be in charge of developing the content of the NSDS and processes of implementing it, albeit the overall control and responsibility of NSDS implementation lies with the Federal Chancellery. The Committee's work is facilitated by a number of other actors, the Federal Statistical Office, the German SD Council, the Parliamentary Advisory Council on SD, the Länder and the Municipal Umbrella Organisations. The German SD Council in particular constitutes an important actor with regard to its role as facilitating public dialogue. Also, citizens are involved in establishing priorities and objectives for policies, and play a role in promoting SD Businesses are increasingly under-standing that commitment to SD entails also economic returns.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** State Secretaries' Committee on SD is in charge for coordinating horizontal implementation, albeit the overall control and responsibility of NSDS implementation lies with the Federal Chancellery. The Committees work is facilitated by other Federal Ministries, which are to consider SD in their policies. **VERTICAL ACTION:** A number of initiatives are in place to connect the Federal Government, the *Länder* and the Municipal Umbrella Organisations. Central for implementing SD is the notion of holistic and interdisciplinary approach, which promotes cross-cutting activities. SD efforts should be implemented in a manner, which includes a broad spectrum of actors in both the public and the private sphere, and which also includes the society in general.	**MONITORING:** SD related activities and efforts are monitored on a regular basis. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on SD has the overall responsibility of monitoring the NSDS. The basis of the Federal Statistical Office's monitoring is a set of indicators. The 2002 Strategy has been reviewed in 2004, 2005, 2008 and 2012. The NSDS has also been the subject of peer review on two occasions, one in 2009 and the second in 2013. Monitoring reports are utilised by e.g. the German SD Council, which has also the task to develop the NSDS in critical dialogue with the Government and leading social institutions.

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24 Germany created its NSDS in 2002. The strategy has been reviewed on average every four years; the last version originates from 2012.

industrial activities. These interconnected priority areas are underpinned by a number of affiliated policies, which influence the SD activities of the various tiers of public sector authorities which make up the German Federal State. Examples of affiliated policy areas include financial policy, mobility, consumption and production, health, social inclusion, education, research and global challenges in respect of poverty.

In Germany, the pivot in stakeholder engagement processes with regard to general SD activity is the State Secretaries' Committee on SD. The Committee is chaired by the Head of the Federal Chancellery and includes representatives from all federal ministries. The Committee is in charge of developing the content of the NSDS and of the processes of implementing it, albeit the overall control and responsibility of NSDS implementation lies with the Federal Chancellery. The Committee also constitutes a platform for inter-ministerial work and information exchange with regard to their SD activities. The Committee's work is facilitated by a number of other affiliated bodies, each serving a different task, e.g. by the Federal Statistical Office, the German SD Council, the Parliamentary Advisory Council on SD, the *Länder* and the Municipal Umbrella Organisations. Whilst the German SD Council established in 2001 advises the Federal Government on SD matters and is at the same time an important stakeholder in the public dialogue.

The Federal Statistical Office is responsible for the technical analysis of indicators and their development and the Parliamentary Advisory Council on SD makes recom-

mendations and supports the NSDS and its European counterpart in the Parliament. The Parliamentary Advisory Council has been strengthened, e.g. through an addition to the common rules of procedure including the introduction of a sustainability assessment. Also, other affiliated stakeholders are engaged in SD related matters, though not with the regularity of federal actors. Citizens, for example are involved in establishing priorities and objectives for policies, and play a role in promoting and achieving SD. In addition, businesses are engaged in SD related activities, realising the economic potential SD related activities may provide.

The State Secretaries' Committee on SD has the overall responsibility for horizontal as well as vertical implementation of SD related efforts and activities. The State Secretaries'

Committee on SD work on implementation is facilitated by a number of other affiliated SD stakeholders. For example, all Federal Ministries are supposed to take SD as a principle into account and inform the Committee on SD of any SD related issues, although no interdepartmental coordination is required within the Ministries. Within certain policy areas, such as economy, residential development, water management, climate change and municipal sustainability[22], implementation efforts are required to be dealt with through cross-cutting activities.

Central to the notion of SD is that related activities should be implemented in a manner that cross-cuts sectors and policies. Tangible SD efforts should be implemented in a holistic and interdisciplinary manner, which includes a broad spectrum of actors in both

22 ibid. p. 231
23 ibid. p. 223

the public and the private sphere, and which also includes society in general. As a result, the German NSDS pays particular attention to those SD stakeholders which are included in implementation activities. Fundamental for SD implementation procedures are therefore the involvement of the *Länder* and municipal organisations, as well as citizens, businesses, labour unions, churches and various associations. For example, the *Länder* are responsible to translate the guiding principle of sustainability – from the abstract level into the reality of people's lives[23], whereas the civil society has been engaged via a citizens' dialogue, which encourages citizens to join the debate on sustainability issues, for example related to areas such as climate and energy, mobility, sustainability, education and consumption.

In Germany SD related activities and efforts are monitored regularly using a set of goals and indicators. The Federal Statistical Office monitors these goals and indicators and publishes the results in its biennial "Indicator Report". Furthermore, the German NSDS is regularly reviewed every four years through the so-called "progress reports". The technical monitoring and its improvement is a responsibility of the Interdepartmental Sustainability Indicators Working Group, which is chaired by the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. In addition to the numerous progress reports, the NSDS has also been the subject of peer review on two occasions, one in 2009 and the second in 2013.

ICELAND

"Iceland's National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020: Welfare for the future" (SD Strategy)[25] was adopted in 2002. This strategy is intended to create not only a framework for a necessary debate about Icelander's vision of Sustainable Development but also for future policies set by the authorities concerning this. Although being prepared by several government ministries, the comments of municipalities, various interest groups and non-governmental organisations as well as the public were sought during the elaboration process. The Strategy sets long-term goals but should not be regarded as an implementation plan. However, the Strategy can help authorities and others to prioritise projects and gauge the success of trying to promote environmental protection and the quality of life.

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25 Iceland's Sustainable Development Strategy (2002): https://eng.umhverfisraduneyti.is/publications/nr/1931 Iceland updated the original strategy already twice and will continue updating it on a regular basis until the year 2020 to specify and review its main priorities.

THE SD STRATEGY DEFINES IN THIS RESPECT 17 GOALS AS FOLLOWS:

1. CLEAN AIR: Iceland's inhabitants should be ensured to breathe clean air. The air pollution levels should be below the strictest levels. Iceland should minimise air pollution caused by traffic, industry and other activities.

2. CLEAN FRESHWATER: All inhabitants of the country should have access to abundant clean water, unpolluted by chemicals and micro-organisms, for drinking and other uses. Pollution of rivers and lakes should be non-existent or so minuscule that it does not affect freshwater ecosystems, fish migration or the recreational value of an area.

3. SAFE FOOD PRODUCTS: Consumers should always be able to trust the offered consumption products. Iceland must continue to be esteemed as a producer of healthy and safe food products made in an unpolluted environment.

4. AN ENVIRONMENT FREE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: The use of chemicals and chemical products should not threaten the environment or human health. Consumers should have access to conclusive information on how to utilise products with chemicals and to information on potential hazards that may arise from chemicals in the product. The use of biocides and pesticides should be decreased. The disposal of materials hazardous to health and the environment should be limited as much as possible.

5. OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN HARMONY WITH NATURE: The public's right to free access to common land should not be restricted unless it is vitally necessary for the purposes of nature conservation. Outdoor activities considerations should be taken into account whilst planning and deciding on land use. The growth in tourism in Iceland should be accompanied by preventive measures to protect the nature from damage caused by increased traffic.

6. PROTECTION AGAINST NATURAL DISASTERS: All inhabitants of the country should live in reasonable safety from natural disasters. The risk of natural disasters should be taken into account during planning of land use.

7. PROTECTION OF ICELAND'S BIOTA: The diversity of species and habitat types should be conserved. Further diminishing of wetlands, birch woodlands and other key ecosystems in Iceland should be avoided. Attempts to reclaim wetlands and other important ecosystems should be made wherever possible.

8. PROTECTION OF UNIQUE GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS: The diversity of geological formations should be conserved by protecting those formations which are distinct or unique regionally, nationally or globally.

9. WILDERNESS CONSERVATION: Large areas of wilderness should remain untouched in Icelandic uninhabited areas. Man-made structures should preferably be built outside of defined wilderness areas. When this is deemed impossible it should be ensured that the structures will cause minimal damage or will not interfere with the natural scenery or function as a complement to the landscape.

10. SUSTAINABLE USE OF LIVING MARINE RESOURCES: The utilisation of fish stocks and other living marine resources should remain on a sustainable basis and based on the newest scientific findings. Fishing of stocks that call for a limitation of harvesting according to scientific assessment must be managed and handled with caution to achieve the maximum yield of stocks in the long run. Methods and management for the utilisation of living marine resources should moreover take into account the diverse interplay of the marine ecosystem and should aim to minimise negative effects on other sections of the ecosystem.

11. SUSTAINABLE USE OF VEGETATION AND RECLAMATION OF LAND: The land's soil and vegetation resources - including forests - should be sustainably utilised according to the most current scientific information available. Systematic soil conservation activities should be conducted in eroded areas in accordance with policies on land use and nature conservation in the respective area. The development of farm forestry should strengthen rural settlements and employment and fit in with the country's landscape and ecosystem.

12. INCREASED UTILISATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY: Iceland's renewable sources of energy should be further utilised using economic and environmental considerations as a guiding light. The proportion of renewable energy resources in the nation's energy budget should be increased and the use of fossil fuels should fade into insignificance. The long-term objective is that transport will use energy from renewable energy resources instead. Electricity and geothermal heating systems should be managed in a way that ensures effectiveness, safety and optimum economic efficiency. Increased energy efficiency should be encouraged.

13. REDUCTION AND IMPROVED HANDLING OF WASTE: Waste generation should be reduced as much as possible and the handling of waste should cause minimal negative impact on the environment. It should be ensured that hazardous waste does not find its way into the environmental system. Current and future legislated targets for the recycling of different kinds of waste including packaging, organic waste, electronic devices and equipment, should be met. Disposal expenses should be taken into account in the pricing of goods.

14. CLEAN OCEAN: The concentration of man-made pollutants in marine products from Icelandic waters should always fall below the strictest standards of domestic and foreign health authorities. The disposal of hazardous materials into the ocean by vessels and from land should stop immediately - especially the disposal of persistent organic substances, radioactive materials and heavy metals. Iceland should remain a key player within international cooperation on marine pollution prevention.

15. LIMITATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE: Iceland should actively take part in international cooperation on climate change through reduction of emissions and increased sequestration of greenhouse gases. The use of fossil fuels should be decreased. The Icelandic expertise in the utilisation of renewable energy sources should be transferred to developing countries.

16. PROTECTION OF THE OZONE LAYER: Iceland should continue to be at the forefront in the restriction of the utilisation and emission of ozone-depleting substances.

17. PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY: Efforts should be made to conserve the biodiversity of Icelandic habitat types and ecosystems by the protection of animals, plants and other organisms, together with their genetic resources and their habitats. All utilisation of living natural resources should be sustainable. A precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach should be applied in all operations that may alter or disrupt ecosystems in order to keep negative impact to a minimum.

LATVIA

Sustainable Development has a strong sociocultural connotation in Latvia. The first SD priority is *'the development of culture space of Latvia because the identity of a strong and creative nation lies in our unique, inherited and newly created material and spiritual values'*[26]. This development is seen in a long-term perspective, with goals to be reached by 2030. The guiding principles for reaching these future goals are established in the NSDS, while the guiding principle of the NSDS is the 'capital approach'. 'Capital' in the Latvian context is understood in its widest terms, with a particular emphasis on the 'social and natural capital'. 'Social capital' refers to the interaction among people, their cultural heritage and creativity, and 'Natural capital' the environment and natural space of Latvia, which is seen as necessary for social well-being. In order to apply the 'capital approach', some underlying attributes and principles in the society are vital: creative activity, tolerance, cooperation and participation.

The overriding SD principles in Latvia build on a circular framework, which sets out particular goals and targets. These goals are dependent upon each other and need to be applied in mutual interaction. The goals reflect the priorities listed. Human capital is promoted via providing equal opportunities, by forming a middle class in society, and by providing base values via accentuating e.g. employment programmes, quality of health and reduction of population risks. A prerequisite for human capital is the development of the cultural space and changing the paradigm in education by offering a qualitative and lifelong education. Also, the economy is accentuated. The basis of economic development is eco-efficiency and innovation. Eco-efficiency is especially emphasised in the Latvian context, in particular through the key themes of renewable energy and energy safety and interdependence. There is a need to increase energy independence, and a better integration in European energy

networks is prioritised. In order to achieve this, the BSR is recognised as an area where more energy interconnections should be developed. Innovation on the other hand is promoted e.g. via enhancing the practice of open and user-driven innovation. The goal to preserve the environment or the 'natural capital' is an important precondition for safety, culture, health and personal freedom, and thus the environment can be perceived as being closely linked with the social well-being in the country. On the other hand, the economy is also related to environmental considerations, e.g. via the capitalisation of natural assets.

There is a variety of actors involved in the planning, implementation and supervision of the NSDS. These actors represent different tiers of governance, including the Cabinet, various Ministries, regions and local authorities. Local authorities in particular are expected to cooperate with social partners and representatives of society. Public participation is envisaged to underpin the development, implementation and supervision of the NSDS. As an example of public participation, during the renewal of the NSDS, more than 800 proposals were made by various affiliated and interested stakeholders of how the NSDS was supposed to be renewed. As a result of this wide interest, many national and regional forums were established to discuss SD related matters.

The Latvian model for SD stakeholder engagement and SD implementation is closely intertwined with the governance of the Latvian National Development Plan (NDP). The rationale behind this interconnection is that both policy areas are interlinked and dependent upon each other. For instance, the NDP is viewed as the mid-term Action Plan for the implementation of the NSDS. It is important to highlight however that NDP is rather strongly perceived and associated with economic considerations, which is as such driven by economic argu-

ments, and may as such not fully incorporate other societal considerations.

The overall responsibility for the NSDS lies since 2011 firstly with the Cross-sectorial Coordination Centre (CCC), directly subordinated to the Prime Minister[27]; secondly with the National Development Council, made up of the aforementioned actors plus the most influential NGOs, whom deals with NDP, and which serves as a platform for cooperation and exchange of opinions; and thirdly, the SD Institute, which is an independent research institution, mainly involved in monitoring the activities of the NSDS. Besides the monitoring responsibility, the SD Institute has also the responsibility to facilitate cooperation and analytical discussions with affiliated SD stakeholders, such as public sector representatives, professional associations and academia.

The mentioned bodies are expected to contribute to the horizontal implementation of the NSDS. However given the multitude of national actors involved in horizontal implementation, the CCC is in charge, to ensure cross-compliance of sectorial policies. The activities of the regional and the local authorities are expected to constitute a major part of the vertical interaction, as both are required to elaborate their own SD strategies, and in particular regional and local development planning documents must comply with state planning policies.

The monitoring of the NSDS is done on a regular basis and is based on indicator reporting, which should be published every second year by the SD Institute which is in charge of implementation and progress reports. One aim of the reports is to assess the compliance of governmental fiscal policies with SD principles and adopted national development planning documents. Another aim of the reports is the development of SD capacity and awareness.

26 Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy (2010): p.11
27 European Sustainable Development Network (2014): *Country Profile Latvia*: http://www.sd-network.eu/?k=country%20profiles&s=single%20country%20profile&country=Latvia

TABLE 2.6 **GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – LATVIA**[28]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
SD is applied with a strong socio-cultural connotation, while also respecting the environment. SD is to be achieved via the promotion of the Latvian 'social and natural capital' A circular framework is applied for promoting the social and natural capital: Development of culture space ↓ Investment in human capital ↓ Change of paradigm in education ↓ Innovative and eco-efficient economy ↓ Nature as future capital ↓ Perspective of spatial development ↓ Innovative government and participation of the society ↓ Development of culture space	The Strategy derives its objectives and targets from the circular framework. The circular framework outlines each goal together with priorities and long-term action directions. Most goals are set within the realm of social capital e.g. strengthening the sense of belonging to the cultural space of Latvia, access to education and child care, inclusion of the aging population into the society and combating poverty. There are also goals related to perspectives on innovative government, e.g. introducing e-government, and embracing the notion of public participation in policy processes. The spatial dimension is also listed as a goal; improvement of accessibility, settlement structure and spaces of national interest.	Stakeholder engagement is closely intertwined with the governance of the Latvian National Development Plan. From 2011, the Cross-sectorial Coordination Centre, subordinated to the Prime Minister, has the overall NSDS responsibility. The SD Institute, an independent research organisation, has the responsibility to facilitate cooperation and analytical discussions with affiliated SD stakeholders, e.g. public sector representatives, professional associations and academia. The general public is also involved, e.g. public participation contributed to the revision of the latest NSDS.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** With regard to the NSDS implementation three entities are involved; Commission of SD, the SD Institute, and the National Development Council Due to the multitude of actors involved, the Cross-Sectorial Coordination Centre has the responsibility to ensure cross-compliance of sectorial policies. **VERTICAL ACTION:** *Top down:* Regions and local governments are required to include SD strategies in their planning documents, these documents shall be developed in compliance with documents at the national levels. *Bottom up:* The general public is envisioned to be involved in the implementation, via new forms of participation, e.g. citizen panels, platform for public innovations, innovation portals.	**MONITORING:** The SD Institute has the general responsibility of monitoring the NSDS. The monitoring of the NSDS is envisioned to take place on a regular basis. The monitoring is based on indicator assessments The general intention of the monitoring reports are to assess the compliance of governmental fiscal policies with SD principles and adopted national development planning documents. They are also expected to contribute to build SD capacity and awareness.

28 The latest NSDS originates from 2010 and is a revision of the 2002 strategy. Some references will however also be made in this text to the National Development Plan (NDP) 2014-2020, published in 2012, as the NSDS is considered a part of the implementation of the NDP.

LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian vision of SD corresponds rather well with the traditional SD notion, which values and considers the environment alongside an economic development and a reliable social network. SD is viewed as *'ensuring a healthy environment, adequate use of natural and intellectual resources, a moderate yet stable economic growth, as well as public welfare and reliable social guarantees'*[29]. The tangible objective of SD is to enable societal development which is on a level with other EU countries by 2020. Progress is planned first of all in the socio-economic sphere, but progress should be done in a sustainable way, meaning that the consumption of resources should not be wasteful, and environmental pollution should adhere to the requirements of international conventions.

The SD goal setting is a reflection of the Lithuanian understanding of SD. The specific goals, and subsequent sub-goals, including short-term goals as well as long-term goals, are listed by sector. Within the environmental sector, the focus is on environmental quality, and on air and climate change. The subsequent goals are mostly linked to emissions reduction. Water is also emphasised, especially in terms of a long term target of reducing the contamination in the Baltic Sea, including pollution by hazardous substances, from land sources, ships and agricultural sources. There are a variety of goals within the economic development sector. Energy is listed as one of them, and then especially the insurance of reliable and safe energy supplies as well as to increase energy savings and efficiency, while aiming in the long term at creating a safe environmentally-friendly competitive energy sector. Other areas of action include the transport sector, the housing sector, industry, tourism and waste management. Within the social sector, development is pursued via the promotion of sustainable consumption, employment, education, pub-

lic health, and preserving cultural identity by reduction of poverty and social exclusion.

The SD stakeholder interaction and engagement is under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment, although the centre for SD stakeholder engagement coordination is the National Commission for SD, established in 2000. One of the SD Commission's tasks is also to seek cooperation among public authorities, scientific institutions, NGOs, and business to resolve fundamental human health, environmental protection and social and economic problems. The Commission, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, consists of members from various Ministries and of representatives of different NGOs and the business community. Other stakeholders are invited to take part in the Commission's work, mainly by providing their expertise. Although the National SD Commission has the overall responsibility for coordination of implementation efforts, a SD Expert Group has been created with the purpose to oversee and assess the implementation process, both horizontal and vertical level implementation activities.

National indicators constitute the basis for monitoring SD related activities. The National SD Commission is the entity in charge of monitoring SD activities in Lithuania and should submit annual SD accounts to the Government. The actual entity conducting the implementation and progress assessments is the SD Expert Group. NSDS implementation reports should be published biennially.

29 Lithuanian Sustainable Development Strategy (2011): p. 60

TABLE 2.7 **GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – LITHUANIA**[30]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS, AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
SD is viewed through a traditional lens; implying that the environment should be preserved via an adequate use of natural resources and that economic growth should be moderate and stable, with public welfare and reliable social guarantees. The tangible objective of SD is to enable a societal development on a level with other EU countries by 2020. This societal development should adhere to environmental protection by respecting an efficient use of natural resources, combating environmental pollution and considering the impact of climate change.	There are number of SD goals listed, both short- and long-term. The goals are divided by sector and fielded within the three traditional sectors: (1) In the environmental sector the focus is on e.g. reducing emissions, and ensuring the biodiversity and protection of the Baltic Sea. (2) Economic targets include the creation of an environmentally-friendly competitive energy sector, ensure reliable energy supply, and the increase of use of biofuels. (3) Social aspirations include e.g. promotion of sustainable consumption by developing policies and encourage the use of eco-labels.	The stakeholder engagement is under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment. A national SD Commission was established in 2000, the Commission comprises of national Ministry representations, NGOs and business life representatives. The Commission coordinates SD activity, and advises the Government on policy and policy recommendations. An SD Expert Group has been established to oversee and assess the progress of SD activity implementation.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** SD Commission in charge of coordinating implementation activities in general. The SD Expert Group oversees and assesses the implementation process, including horizontal and the vertical level implementation activities. **VERTICAL ACTION:** Local authorities are involved in the implementation aspects, via e.g. awareness and knowledge workshops.	**MONITORING:** The National SD Commission is in charge of monitoring SD activities in Lithuania and has as a specified task to submit annual SD accounts to the Government. National indicators constitute the basis for monitoring SD related activities. The progress reports are based on indicator reporting, which reports based on the various SD sectors. SD Expert Group conducts the implementation and progress assessments. NSDS implementation reports are envisioned to be drafted biannually.

30 Lithuania has renewed its NSDS two times. The latest version dates 2011 and contains only minor adjustments to the previous Strategy. Also insights from the Lithuania's Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030", published in 2012, have been included. Although it does not directly refer to sustainable development as such, it is believed to be important for understanding the national commitment to sustainability, especially from an implementation perspective.

NORWAY

The Norwegian NSDS has a particular strong emphasis on international activities, especially pursuing global commitments that would enable and facilitate the work on SD. Norway has decided to play a leading role in the efforts towards achieving SD on a global scale, and stresses the importance of peace and human rights. The overriding objective of the NSDS is '*for Norway and the international community to make development ecologically, economically and socially sustainable*'[31]. The basis for continued utilisation of nature and natural resources must be maintained. Within these constraints Norway will promote a stable and healthy economic development leading to a society with a high quality of life. It intends to help impoverished people of the world to achieve material welfare and a higher quality of life. The human dimension - human welfare - is important in the Norwegian SD sphere. Capital is viewed in a wide sense, meaning that it should be interlinked with the human dimension as educational attainment and know-how, and with the preservation of natural capital.

In conjunction with Norway's international focus, Norway pursues also SD efforts in multiple national domains. SD should be pursued as an integrated approach that considers economic, social and environmental issues across sectors and at several decision-making levels. SD should be integrated into all policy areas. The Norwegian Government views it important to link SD efforts to central and political processes and economic policy documents, where many of the most important priorities are determined[32].

The various Norwegian SD focal areas stretch across a number of interrelated national sectors, although one area in particular is accentuated: Norway's long-term goal to be carbon neutral by 2050. SD related activities are closely anchored and intertwined with the Norwegian Climate Policy[33]. SD activities are promoted within the field of climate change, especially in terms of emissions reduction via energy efficiency measures and by promoting the use of renewable sources. Another SD area of interest is activities related to sustainable consumption and production, and especially the need to change patterns in the field of housing, food, and transport. SD activities are also pursued in the socio-economic domain, e.g. by measures that promote economic growth, or address population trends, income equality, and poverty reduction. Also activities related to maintaining the natural resources are emphasised, via the precautionary principle, and by efforts that relate to green energy development and environmentally sound agriculture principles. Many of the aforementioned national focal areas and related activities are underpinned and linked to the overall Norwegian SD international ambitions and commitments.

SD related activities are considered a societal affair in Norway, implying that not only the public sphere, involving the entire Government and the various tiers of public governance, need to be part of the activities, but also NGOs, schools, businesses and the general public should be engaged and participate. The Ministry of Finance has, together with the Ministry of Environment, the overall practical responsibility of the SD related activities. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Prime Minister are also explicitly involved, whereas other Ministries are implicitly involved as they are required to take note of the SD principles when updating strategies that fall within their sphere of activities. The broad public has also been engaged in SD activities via broad-based public consultations, when the NSDS has been reviewed and the accompanied Action Plan has been created.

Reflective of SD stakeholder engagement, implementation procedures are coordinated by a number of Ministry representatives, of which the representatives of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Environment play a central role. Horizontal efforts are interlinked across various Ministerial activities, and horizontal activities are promoted via capacity development. The vertical interactions, in terms of advancing implementation across the various tiers of governance are considered an absolute necessity. As a result there are a number of programmes aiming at building SD capacity on the local level via various municipal networks. These networks cover areas, such as climate change, land use policy, sustainable production and consumption. The NSDS emphasise that decisions concerning SD activities should be made as close as possible to the actors who are affected by them. As a result, the NSDS regularly underline the role local authorities have, especially considering that local authorities have the responsibility of a number of environment related matters. The intent of the Government is to strengthen local democracy and reduce state control through detailed rules in order facilitate and promote SD activities on a local level[34]. The involvement of other stakeholders is also accentuated in SD implementing procedures, both in terms of pursuing the international SD ambitions, e.g. cooperating with affiliated international institutions, and in terms of national activity, e.g. by engaging with the public, the business sector and voluntary organisations.

SD activities and expected SD progress are monitored on a frequent basis in Norway. Each affiliated Ministry is responsible for producing follow-up reports. The basis for these progress reports are a set of indictors. The indicators, which are developed by Statistics Norway, are subject to updates biennially. Progress reports constitute the basis for the revision the NSDS along with SD related policies. The NSDS has also been the subject of a peer reviewed process.

31 Norway's Action Plan for Sustainable Development (2004): https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/fin/berekraftig/nat_action.pdf: p. 5

32 Ibid.

33 Norwegian Climate Policy, White Paper (2012): https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/aa70cfe177d2433192570893d72b117a/en-gb/pdfs/stm201120120021000en_pdfs.pdf

34 Norway's Action Plan for Sustainable Development (2004): p. 42

TABLE 2.8   **GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – NORWAY[35]**

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
The Norwegian view of SD has a particular strong international scope, with an emphasis on pursuing SD in a global setting, especially in the fields of peace and human rights. SD should in general be pursued by underlying the necessity for an integrated approach, which considers economic, social and environmental issues across sectors and decision-making levels. SD should be integrated into all policy areas. SD efforts should be linked to central and political processes and economic policy documents, where many of the most important priorities are determined. Equitable distribution in pursuing economic growth and increased human welfare. Embrace social responsibility, the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle.	Norway pursues SD efforts in multiple domains, effective both on an international and a national setting. Reflective of this, key SD focal areas are international cooperation that promote SD in general and combats poverty. Another key focal area is climate change and emissions policy, with a particular focus on renewable energy, energy efficiency, long-range air pollution. Area of interest includes also sustainable economic and social development. Maintaining natural resources via the precautionary principle is also of interest, as are activities that take biodiversity and cultural heritage into account.	The Ministry of Finance has together with the Ministry of Environment the overall practical responsibility of the SD related activities. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Prime Minister are also involved. Other Ministries are implicitly involved as they are required to take note of the SD principles when updating strategies that fall within their sphere of activities. The broad public has also been engaged in SD activities via broad-based public consultations, when the NSDS has been reviewed and the accompanied action plan has been created. The public consultation processes included participation by ordinary citizens, various experts, NGOs, and the business sector.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** Implementation procedures are coordinated by a number of Ministries, of which the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Environment play a central role. Horizontal efforts are interlinked across various Ministerial activities, and horizontal activities are promoted via capacity development. **VERTICAL ACTION:** *Top down:* Number of programmes aiming at building SD capacity on the local level via various municipal networks. *Bottom up:* Local authorities role is underlined in terms of SD related activities given their mandatory functions in a number of environment related matters. Other stakeholders are also accentuated in implementing procedures, e.g. cooperating with international institutions, and engaging with the public and the business sector.	**MONITORING:** Frequent monitoring based on indicator assessments. Indicators measure progress towards goals and are basis for predicting future development. Annual reports on SD and strategy reviews every four years. Ministries have a responsibility to produce follow-up papers. The NSDS has been the subject of a peer review process.

35 The NSDS was first published in 2002, has been reviewed in 2008 and in 2011. The latest version of the Strategy is not available in English. Also, considering that the 2008 Norway's Strategy for Sustainable Development has been unavailable to access online, the information amassed for this study comprises of information collected from the 2008 Strategy, when it was accessible, and additional information has been taken from the 2004 Norway's Action Plan for Sustainable Development.

→ 2.2.9

POLAND

As been noted throughout this document, the NSDSs produced by the various Baltic Sea states have been developed in different years, and most of them have been regularly updated during the years. Poland is atypical in this sense. Poland adopted its NSDS in 2000. This Strategy has now expired. Instead, the notion of SD and SD related policies in Poland constitute currently a part of the National Development Strategy (NDS), which is the guiding policy document for defining the direction of the future development of the country. As a result, the notion of SD is not understood as an independent notion in Poland, with its dedicated institutional frameworks, but rather perceived as an integrated part of the national general development policies and plans.

The vision of the NDS is to ensure a stable and sustainable development, with the general goal of a high level of quality of life, a strong and competitive economy, and an improvement of social cohesion as well as a reduction of territorial inequality. Poland has built a comprehensive system of management with regard to its long-term national development, and has adopted a total of nine integrated strategies. Each strategy is coordinated by the relevant Ministries and includes for example the focal areas of human and social capital development, transport development, energy safety and environment, regional development and sustainable development of rural areas. The Government pursues sustainable development policy in the NDS through the integration of activities in the economic, social and environmental spheres in the interests of future generations[36]. SD has been accepted as a Constitutional Principle of the Republic of Poland and has been defined in the Law on Environmental Protection as *'such socio-economic development, in which the process of integrating political, economic and social actions occurs, taking into account preserva-*

tion of the equilibrium of nature and stability of basic natural processes, to guarantee the possibility of fulfilling basic needs of societies or citizens not only of the present generation, but for future generations as well'[37].

The Polish general SD goals are pursued in multiple interlinked domains. The main ambition of the SD goals is that they are expected to underpin national development. There is no institutional SD framework *per se* for pursing these goals, with regard to general coordination and implementation efforts. Within the NDS economic sector, SD goals are set out e.g. in the areas of employment and transport, whilst within the NDS social sector e.g. in the educational, public and health safety areas, in social integration, the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns and in the NDS environmental sector, e.g. in areas linked to waste management, climate change, energy, air quality protection, land use and biodiversity. SD is also pursued in the institutional and political sphere, in terms of promoting citizen activeness via transparency and participation, and working towards policy coherence and general effectiveness.

Although there are no general systematic institutional SD frameworks in place, the lead entities in terms of SD related activities are the Council of Ministers, and the regional and local governments[38]. Reflective of the absence of an instructional SD framework there are no explicit general and coordinated implementation plans. Instead, the mechanisms of horizontal SD interaction are interlinked with the general NDP, and this process is facilitated by an advisory body to the Prime Minister – the Coordination Committee for Development Policy, headed by the minister responsible for regional development.

The Minister of Environment has established

the National Council of Environmental Protection, with the task of providing suggestions in terms of SD, e.g. dealing with environmental protection. The Ministry of the Environment is active with regard to climate change mitigation and waste treatment. However, in terms of SD vertical implementation interaction, there is no systematic system in place, but there is coordination between the national and sub-national levels, based in the provisions set out in law. The regions need to consider national environmental policy when developing environmental plans, outlining their goals and principles.

Currently the monitoring of SD related activities in Poland transpires through the procedures in place for monitoring NDS activities. Since the NDS documents define the aims and directions for SD, these documents also set the basis for choosing relevant monitoring indicators. The latest monitoring report originates from 2011, based on a range of indicators, covering the national development domains where SD as a principle is mentioned.

There is no strategic document which would set an intuitional/legal/monitoring framework for sustainable development. However, the notion of SD underpins the national development policy. The Act on Principles of Development Policy defines development policy as a set of interrelated activities undertaken and implemented in order to ensure the sustainable development of the country, socio-economic, regional and spatial cohesion, improvement of the economy competitiveness and creation of new jobs on a national, regional or local level.

In recent years the Polish Government launched a series of initiatives covering strategic programming and the creation of a comprehensive management development plan. The frame of the new order constitutes the Long-Term National Development

Strategy (until 2030) and the National Spatial Development Concept (also until 2030). This is complemented by the Medium-term National Development Strategy (2020) and the nine horizontal strategies (until 2020.).

The nine strategies contribute to the achievement of the development goals set in NDS 2020. They are as follows: Strategy for Innovation and Efficiency of the Economy; Human Capital Development Strategy; Transport Development Strategy; Strategy for Energy Security and the Environment; Efficient State Strategy; Social Capital Development Strategy; National Strategy of Regional Development 2010-2020; Regions, cities, rural areas: Strategy for Sustainable Development of Rural Areas, Agriculture and Fisheries; Strategy for Development of the National Security System.

In general, the development policy is led by the Council of Ministers and regional and local governments. In order to ensure effective coordination of development polices the Coordination Committee for Development Policy was established. Each Ministry is responsible for the implementation of development polices in the scope of their competences. Moreover, the strategic documents aim at involving in development processes not only public entities but also the civil society and the economic sector.

TABLE 2.9 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – POLAND[39]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
Sustainable Development is viewed as a part of the National Development Strategy. The general long-term aim of this Strategy is a high quality of life, measured by increase in GDP per capita, improvement of social cohesion and reduction of territorial inequality as well as strong and competitive economy. Within the NDS, SD is defined as a principle in a traditional format, interlinking the economic, social and environmental sectors. The notion of SD emerges as a principle in many strategic NDS documents, encompassing the aforementioned sectors as well as linking into the political and institutional areas.	SD goals are pursued in four different but interdependent national development domains: (1) In the social domain, goals are e.g. listed as pursuing sustainable consumption patterns, dealing with demographic changes and access to the labour market. (2) In the economic domain: generating effective economic development, e.g. in areas of transport and employment. (3) In the environmental domain: to protect and rationally shape the natural environment, and protect sea ecosystems and fresh water resources. (4) SD is also pursued in the matters involving institutional and political challenges, e.g. promoting transparency and good governance.	SD engagement transpires as a part of the national development narrative. Although there is not an actual institutional SD framework, the lead entities in terms of SD related activities are the Council of Ministers, and the regional and local governments. In order to coordinate development polices an advisory body to the Prime Minister – the Coordination Committee for Development Policy was established.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** There are no explicit co-ordinated SD implementation plans in place. Implementation activities are closely intertwined with the general National Development Strategy. The Ministry of the Environment has established a National Council of Environmental Protection, with the task of providing suggestions in terms of SD, e.g. environmental protection. The Ministry of the Environment is also active with regard to climate change mitigation and waste treatment. **VERTICAL ACTION:** Regional and local governments must develop environmental plans coherent with the National Environmental Policy.	**MONITORING:** SD monitoring transpires as a part of the NDS related activities. Monitoring based on indicator assessments. Several national development strategic documents define the aims and directions for SD, these documents are also the basis for choosing relevant monitoring indicators.

36 Central Statistical Office, Statistical Office in Katowice (2011): Sustainable Development Indicators for Poland: p. 12

37 Ibid. p. 4

38 Ibid.

39 The NSDS was adopted in 2000 (only available in Polish), but no new strategy has been produced. In this study, the report "Sustainable Development Indicators for Poland" published in 2011 has been taken into account. This report presents and describes indicators, but also offers a picture of SD in Poland.

→ 2.2.10

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Federation has never had a NSDS in place. Nonetheless, Russia has demonstrated an interest in systematic SD related activities. Russian SD interest appears predominantly to derive from Russia being part of the United Nations, which requires its members to consider the principles of SD in national policies. In 2008, Russia adopted the concept of the Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020. This document is considered a major policy document in reflecting how SD is generally viewed and conceptualised in Russia[40]. The document outlines that SD is perceived as 'sustainable well-being of Russian citizens, national security, dynamic development of the economy, and strengthening the position of Russia in the world community'[41].

In Russia, the SD principles are not applied as an independent notion, guiding other policies across a number of societally important fields. Instead, the SD principles are affiliated and applied as a part of the general national development discourse, which often has a rather strong emphasis on pursuing economic growth. In Russia's case, economic development is pursued by focusing on areas related to technological advancement and competitiveness, in order to ensure economic modernisation and innovative development. Even though the national development discourse does not accentuate environmental aspects explicitly, the national discourse acknowledges that growth should not come at any price. While the primary goal is economic growth, growth should be attained in a sustainable manner, which considers the preservation of the environment. It is the responsibility of environmental policies to seek to solve urgent problems, including quality of life assurance, long-term successful economic development, and sustainable development[42].

As the notion of SD is strongly interconnected with the general development policies, and do not as such have a policy sphere of their own, there are no explicit general SD targets or goals in Russia. Still, there are some areas where the SD principles are applied as a guiding notion. For example, SD principles are applied in national policies targeting climate change mitigation, which seeks to mitigate GHG and to reduce disaster risks, and to promote adaptation efforts related to the economy and the society. The principles of SD are also accentuated in a number of affiliated development policies. One is the National Development Policy on Energy. Within the energy field, energy efficiency is prioritised with efforts linked to energy intensity, clean energy and diversification of energy resources.

The principles of SD are also applied in efforts related to social well-being, e.g. decreasing poverty and increasing the share of people belonging to the middle class, by e.g. lowering the unemployment rate, through efforts related to health care, education and housing. Other areas include e.g. working towards achieving new patterns of consumption and production, and developing human capital. The notion of SD has been applied within the environment sphere. For example when the long-term sectorial and regional programmes were drafted in Russia, considerations, especially in the environmental field, were taken to reduce harmful effects in the environment and to ensure environmental safety, e.g. by including the principles of SD in strategies related to transport, chemical use in the industry, and the energy sector[43].

Reflective of the lack of a NSDS and explicit SD goals regular national SD stakeholder engagement is irregular. There is no specific political body or institution in place that has a general responsibility for neither coordinating national SD related efforts nor coordinating national implementation efforts. Nonetheless there are some entities which have been given a responsibility to promoting SD activities in Russia. One such entity is the Institute of SD of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, which is a public policy institute aimed to identify pathways in order to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. The purpose of the Institute is to develop the fundamentals of natural environmental policy and related SD polices. It has a focus on consolidating the efforts of the expert community in Russia, promoting the SD principles, assisting to develop and implement Governmental SD policies, encouraging civil engagement as well as establishing SD institutes on a regional level in Russia.

The Institute was established in 2009 under the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation. It comprises of public and private organisations, academic institutions and Governmental departments. The Russian civil society demonstrates a broad, multifaceted and vivid SD stakeholder engagement. There is a wealth of various SD activities by mostly NPOs in the social and environmental field. The Interagency Working Group of Experts on Russia's participation in the UN Conferences on Sustainable Development reported the existence of more than 80.000 NPOs involved in work towards SD[44].

Whilst there are as such no systematic implementation structures for explicit SD activities, SD related activities are implemented as a part of National Development Policy activities. SD related implementation efforts implemented under the umbrella of the national development activities most often occur within the energy sector, e.g. in the form of regulations addressing the topic of energy savings. Many regions in Russia have adopted regional energy efficiency programmes, and federal authorities have approved a number of sectorial energy efficiency programmes. There are also a number of public-private partnerships in place with a view to implement environmental programmes, and promote efforts that seek to raise public awareness on the environmental policy[45]. Universities and secondary schools are also carrying out relevant education, with the view in contributing to raising awareness. The civil society is also engaged in implementation activities, e.g. through a Social Forum, which convenes besides NGOs representing the civil society, also business interests and the science community. They aspire amongst others to formulate and implement proposals to enhance energy efficiency, innovations on SD, and improvement of international cooperation[46]. However, there is in general no monitoring procedure in place to assess SD related activities, explicitly or implicitly.

TABLE 2.10 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – RUSSIA[47]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
The notion of SD is generally perceived as a part of the general national development discourse. The national development discourse in turn views SD as a mean to ensure the well-being of Russian citizens, enhancing the national security, promoting a dynamic development of the economy, and strengthening the position of Russia in the world community. The principles of SD are mostly applied as a part of the national socio-economic development discourse. The notion of SD is also considered as a mean to reduce harmful effects on the environment and to ensure environmental safety.	As the principles of SD do not as such have a policy sphere of their own, there are no explicit general SD targets or goals in Russia. Instead SD principles are generally interconnected with the National Development Policies. SD principles are pursued in a number of National Development Policies, e.g. in the field of improving energy efficiency. SD principles are also applied in national policies targeting climate change mitigation, via mitigating GHG.	Reflective of the lack of a NSDS and given that the principles of SD are predominantly interwoven with the national development discourse, regular national SD stakeholder engagement is irregular. There are no specific political bodies in place that have a responsibility for neither coordinating national SD related efforts nor coordinating national implementation efforts. However, the Institute of SD of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation works on SD initiatives on a national level, with a view to unite various stakeholder efforts. A multitude of sub-national SD level initiatives, mostly work by a variety of NPOs, reported that more than 80.000 NPOs participate in SD related activities, mostly in the social and environmental sphere.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** There are no systematic implementation structures for SD activities; instead SD related activities are implemented as parts of national development activities. SD related implementation efforts carried out under the umbrella of the national development activities most often occur within the energy sector, e.g. in the form of regulations addressing the topic of energy savings. **VERTICAL ACTION:** There are a number of public-private partnerships in place with the view to implement environmental programmes, and promote efforts that seek to raise public awareness on the environmental policy. The civil society is engaged in implementation activities, e.g. though a Social Forum, they seek e.g. to implement proposals to enhance energy efficiency.	**MONITORING:** There are in general no monitoring procedures in place to assess SD related activities, explicitly nor implicitly. There are no SD indicators in place, on which to base monitoring activities.

40 Report on implementing the principles of sustainable development in the Russian Federation: Russian outlook on the new paradigm for sustainable development. Preparing for "RIO + 20" (2012): p. 43

41 Ibid.

42 Report by the Institute of Sustainable Development of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation (2010)

43 Report on implementing the principles of sustainable development in the Russian Federation. Russian outlook on the new paradigm for sustainable development. Preparing for "RIO + 20" (2012): p. 25-26

44 Report on implementing the principles of sustainable development in the Russian Federation. Russian outlook on the new paradigm for sustainable development. Preparing for "RIO + 20" (2012): p. 35

45 cf. ibid. p. 25

46 Report by the Institute of Sustainable Development of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation (2010): p. 68

47 The Russian Federation does not have a NSDS. For the purposes of this report, two documents have been taken into account: the 2010 report by the Institute of Sustainable Development of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, and the 2012 Report on implementing the principles of sustainable development in the Russian Federation, Russian outlook on the new paradigm for sustainable development. Preparing for "RIO + 20", prepared by the Interagency Working Group of Experts on Russia's participation in the UN Conference on Sustainable Development: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1043natrepeng.pdf

SWEDEN

In Sweden Sustainable Development is perceived in a classical format; Sustainable Development should encompass all layers of society, and Sustainable Development related activities should extend across all economic, social and environmental policy areas. Sweden promotes a long-term Sustainable Development vision, which besides encompassing and crossing affiliated national policy areas, also extends to the international setting, via being proactive through EU and UN related SD matters. Sweden's long-term general policy objective of the vision of a sustainable society is *"solidarity and justice in every country, among countries and among generations"*[48]. Sustainable Development related efforts should be an overall objective of Governmental policy, implying that all political decisions must take into consideration the long-term economic, social and environmental consequences.

Sweden has set four tangible goals related to Sustainable Development. The first is to build sustainable communities, by e.g. considering the local and regional differences and activities linked to the transport, communication and infrastructure sectors. The second relates to encouraging good health on equal terms, e.g. by promoting a healthy active lifestyle, and by considering the public health, both in general, but also via health measures taken at workplaces. The third goal is to meet the demographic challenge, via a multitude of policy efforts in sectors such as employment as well as policies targeting elderly, children and youth and via the social insurance system. The final goal is to encourage sustainable growth by e.g. energy policy measures, trade and international activities, and encouraging innovation measures.

Whilst the aforementioned goals are mostly of socioeconomic nature, the NSDS does

emphasise a number of environmental goals, in order to meet three environmental challenges that are deemed as particularly important, i.e. the adaptation of energy and transport systems, the creation of a non-toxic environment and efficient recycling and proper stewardship of natural resources. For example, climate change is mentioned as one of the greatest challenges of our times, as *"no other environmental issue so thoroughly encompasses all levels of society"*[49].

Within the Swedish SD stakeholder engagement and interaction sphere, there have been a number of central actors during the last decade, each serving a specific purpose and with different roles. The latest NSDS was elaborated by four working groups, with participation from different Ministries and various Government authorities and including regional and municipal county councils. Also, individual citizens were invited to contribute with their views. In the midst of the preparation of the latest NSDS, in 2005, the Government established a Council for SD, chaired by the Prime Minister and vice chaired by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Environment, and was composed by members representing national ministries and included a sub-national level representative. The Council worked from 2005 to 2007, and was replaced from 2007 to 2009 by the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Commission included representatives from the business sector, NGOs and the research community.

The NSDS foresees that all governmental authorities are involved in the implementation process, together with sub-national actors such as county administrative boards and local authorities, although the Ministry of Environment and Energy along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs constitute the coordinating

entities. The NSDS accentuates throughout the document in particular the importance of horizontal inter-sectorial approaches through cooperation, both when preparing the NSDS, but also when implementing SD activities. Other prerequisites for enabling successful implementation processes are that various stakeholders take ownership of the processes via demonstrating appropriate leadership, and through facilitating participatory approaches. Other tools used for facilitating implementation efforts are impact assessments, via economic instruments and tax policies, sustainable public procurement, and raising awareness via e.g. education.

SD activities along with the NSDS are scheduled to be monitored on a regular basis, and these reports are expected to facilitate the discussions around the progress. The monitoring transpires by the use of indicators, developed by Statistics Sweden. Regular follow-up is forecasted in the NSDS, together with a Governmental halfway plan.

48 Swedish Strategy for Sustainable Development (2006): p.9

49 ibid. p. 17

TABLE 2.11 GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – SWEDEN[50]

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
SD is perceived in a classical format, i.e. SD activities should encompass all layers of society, and SD related activities should extend across all economic, social and environmental policy areas. In order to achieve the long-term vison of SD an inter-sectorial approach is promoted. Sweden's basic SD assumption is that members of one generation should not conduct their lives in a way that prevents their children or future generations from enjoying a decent standard of living. SD is an approach that must actively inform and shape all policy areas.	The strategy lists four tangible goals: (1)Building sustainable communities, e.g. by considering local and regional differences and activities linked to the transport, communication and infrastructure sector (2)Encouraging good health on equal terms, by promoting a healthy active lifestyle, and by considering the public health. (3)Meeting the demo-graphic challenge, e.g. sectors such as employment as well as policies targeting elderly, children and youth. (4)Encouraging sustainable growth, e.g. via energy policy measures, trade and international active-ties, and encouraging innovation measures. A set of environmental goals are also listed, e.g. meeting the climate change challenge.	There has been a multitude of actors engaged in SD, representing all tiers of governance, and also the private and business sector, NGOs, and the research community. The Ministry of Environment and Energy along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs constitute currently the entities coordinating both stakeholder engagement and implementation activities. Sweden has also promoted societal engagement via public participation processes.	**HORIZONTAL ACTION:** A holistic and inter-sectorial approach is considered important The Ministry of Environment and Energy along with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are pivotal in horizontal implementation, due to their role as coordinators. **VERTICAL ACTION:** *Top down:* The government identifies agencies whose activities are relevant to a SD effort, clarifies SD responsibilities and guides agencies in the effort to attain policy objectives. *Bottom up:* Participatory approaches and democratic processes are considered fundamental prerequisites to work with SD, and bottom up methods and structures have been developed by local authorities.	**MONITORING:** Monitored through indicators (developed by the Statistics Sweden), which provide basis for progress reports and discussions. Regular follow-up is forecast in the NSDS, together with a governmental halfway plan.

50 The Swedish NSDS was first published in 1994 and reviewed in 2004. The last version of the Strategy, "Strategic Challenges – A further elaboration of the Swedish Strategy for Sustainable Development", was updated in 2006.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL GOVERNANCE NARRATIVES

The BSR Sustainable Development national governance narratives, reviewed in the previous sector, are intended to serve as platforms on which SD capacity can be developed on national levels in the BSR. These narratives will later be analysed below to see if a more coherent macro-regional SD activity can be seen whereby the Baltic Sea States can respond more coherently to the implementation of the SDGs.

What emerges from the various national SD narratives is not a shared common understanding of the notion *per se* as expected by the plurality of societies. Still some common traits are visible. The social and the environmental domains constitute an imperative part of the SD notion; however these domains and related concerns are often viewed in relation to the economies of the countries. Though the social, environmental and the economic spheres comprise the SD pillars on a national level in the BSR; these three spheres are not viewed on equal terms. Instead activities in the social and environmental spheres must adhere to the limits set by economic boundaries. As a synthesis inclusive economic growth including social and environmental concerns is viewed as pivotal and what enables activities in other societal spheres.

FIGURE 2.1 **SD DOMAINS VIEWED FROM A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE BSR**

The national narratives include a diversity of traits of the notion of SD. This diversity can in turn be clustered broadly into three general groups, and following this the Baltic Sea States can be divided into three groups. It is important to mention, however, that the three general SD traits are often interconnected, and that the groups are put together rather loosely.

> **THERE IS NO COMMON VIEW ON SD IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION. INSTEAD WE FIND THREE GROUPS WHICH BETWEEN THEMSELVES SHARE SIMILAR VIEWS OF SD.**

I. THE NORDIC COUNTRIES AND GERMANY are characterised by the view that SD principles and related activities are not only pursued within national borders, but are also driven by international or global obligations, to aid or facilitate developing countries to pursue Sustainable Development. SD is seen as a societal commitment, where SD engaged actors representing entire societies, not only governmental or public actors, take part. SD activities are cross-sectorial and integrated. SD is seen as a normative concept and refers to a development towards intergenerational equity.

FIGURE 2.2 **NATIONAL VIEWS ON SD IN THE BSR**

FIRST GENERAL SD TRAIT	**SECOND GENERAL SD TRAIT**	**THIRD GENERAL SD TRAIT**
→ SD principles are not only pursued within national borders, but they are also driven by international or global commitments → Nordic countries and Germany	→ SD principles are used to pursue national capacity building, in terms of developing the socio-economic or cultural space → Baltic countries and Poland	→ SD principles are not viewed as independent guiding principles on which policies related to future development are based upon → Russia

II. THE THREE BALTIC STATES make up a second group in which the principles of SD are rather utilised to pursue national capacity building, mostly in the socio-economic and cultural spheres. The overall goal is to strengthen social and cultural capital by developing and preserving traditional values, and enhancing the human capital by becoming a knowledge-based society. The short-term ambition is economic growth and a development on-par with other EU countries, which enables the societies to be globally competitive.

POLAND focuses on the development of the energy sector as a means to pursue national goals especially inclusive economic growth.

III. RUSSIA does not see the principles of SD as independent guiding principles for future development, and have no institutional coordinated SD framework in place. There is no anchoring of SD principles, or institutional coordinated SD framework in place. The SD principles are referred to in a few areas, and do not steer the overall national development discourses.

The NSDSs seldom consider activities for the entire macro-region. If the BSR is acknowledged, it is often in relation to environmental challenges or concerns, e.g. to improve the state of the Baltic Sea. The NSDS are primarily geared to serve national interests.

Some of them reflect international and global SD commitments. There are several reasons for this: one important aspect is that the BSR level is not a jurisdiction that the countries are obligated or expected to follow, at least not through national SD policies. Another explanation may be that the countries are already engaged on a BSR level with macro-regional intergovernmental organisations like HELCOM or the CBSS and its networks such as the CBSS EGSD - Baltic 2030, or institutions like the Nordic Council of Ministers. Thirdly the Baltic Sea States may also consider that the BSR macro-regional level cooperation is an area within the competence of the EU and that SD related activities are implemented as a part of the EU Strategy for the BSR (EUSBSR). However, matters falling within the EUSBSR field are in contrast to national policy activities, based on voluntary principles. But since the EU plays an important role in terms of shaping the development of the documents and designing the governance structure of the macro-regional organisations of concern, its effects on SD related activities in the BSR should not be underestimated.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL GOALS

When identifying SD goals When identifying SD goals - which is prominent amongst the Baltic Sea States - one particular area emerges: economic development. Economic development is then not a single unrelated goal, but rather many kinds of goals linked to a variety of sectorial objectives and policy areas. It is often seen as an enabler of inclusive growth, including social and environmental development. Economical goals are generally linked to aspirations to fundamentally transform the energy sector, either via promoting the use of energy efficiency or energy savings measures across a number of societal important fields, or by developing the field of renewable energy. Innovation is often the key word and driver that is hoped to enable these measures, in particular within the energy and climate change policy sectors. Energy and climate change are thus often perceived in the BSR SD national sphere as a fundament on which a general economic development is going to happen.

NATIONAL SD GOALS IN THE BSR ARE OFTEN CONNECTED WITH ASPIRATIONS WHICH SEEK TO FUNDAMENTALLY TRANSFORM THE ENERGY SECTOR, EITHER VIA ENERGY EFFICIENCY OR ENERGY SAVINGS MEASURES, OR BY DEVELOPING THE FIELD OF RENEWABLE ENERGY.

There are a number of reasons for why energy efficiency and energy savings constitute a key area for national SD activities in the BSR. One is that most Baltic Sea States are members of EU, and need to work towards EU targets, such as the EU 2020 Strategy to combat climate change and pursue a low-carbon economy, in which energy efficiency, energy saving and the development of the renewable energy is central. These goals cut across a number of vital policy sectors in the BSR and have often served several ambitions. One is economic benefit brought by costs savings, another is that energy efficiency and renewable energy related activities constitute a mean to mitigate GHG emissions. Energy related policies and climate change polices are closely interlinked in the BSR. Mitigation of GHG emissions is also recognised as a national SD goal cutting across the BSR, either as an independent focal area, or more often as a part of energy policies.

Other recurring national SD goals in the BSR often fall within sectors that enable a broad societal development. Recurring societal goals are welfare growth, well-being of citizens, and development of human, cultural and social capital, often via education, innovation and employment efforts. Also, preserving natural capital emerges as an occurring goal. It most often includes protection of biodiversity, achieving an ecological balance, efficient use of natural resources, and reduction of air pollution as well as of land and water pollution. Preserving natural capital is also pursued by promoting sustainable consumption and production across sectors. These goals all emphasise the cross-generational responsibility that cuts across the NSDS.

The goals are complex, and therefore the National Sustainable Development goals are often of cross-cutting nature, dependent upon the cooperation in a number of sectors by different actors, public and sometimes also private. A holistic and integrated approach is therefore often applied that attempts to account for the diversity of interest.

The long-term SD ambitions vary considerably in the Baltic Sea States, albeit some recurring features emerge. As mentioned above, one is innovation, which is hoped to facilitate SD activities in e.g. advancing energy efficiency, or in the area of public and general transport. Innovation is also applied to governmental processes, e.g. to develop public participatory approaches, or to promote transparency in governmental processes, clearly with a view to strengthen the legitimacy of governmental processes, which would improve the prerequisites for implementation procedures. To reach the long-term SD goals policy coherence, ensuring that policies and policy instruments are coherent across the various tiers of government, is seen as crucial.

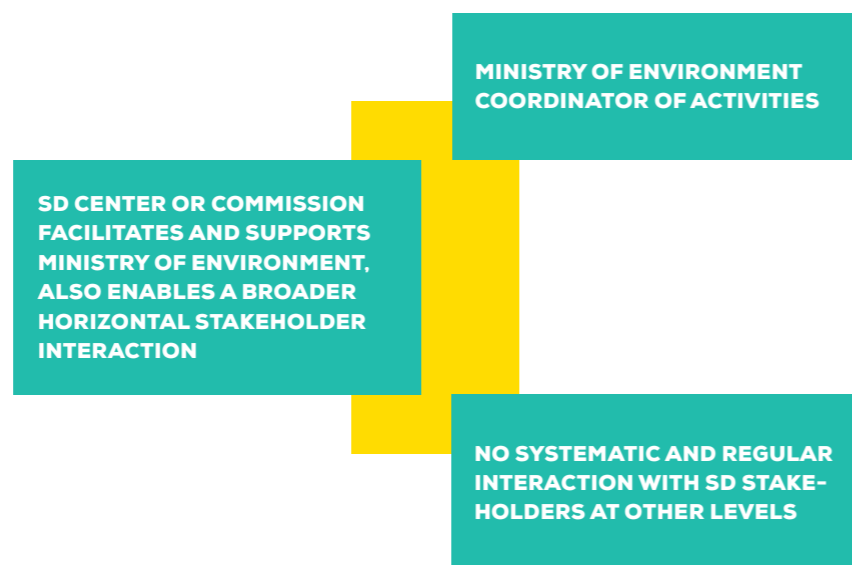# NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

From a global perspective, SD stakeholder engagement in the BSR is vivid and exists on a multitude of governance levels, in the public sphere as well as outside of it, in the civil society and in business life. However, from a strictly NSDS perspective, SD stakeholder engagement is predominantly a national level exercise.

On the national level the Ministry of Environment has a key role, both as a coordinator of activities, and in revising and updating the NSDS. It is in general facilitated and supported in its work via various forms of SD centres, committees, or commissions, including affiliated ministries and is quite often chaired by the Prime Minister, or other representatives of the Government. These centres also consist of members from other tiers of governance, sub-national stakeholders and representatives of academia. Their role is to aid the coordinating NSDS Ministry, but they also fulfil purposes beside that, in particular to enable a broad horizontal stakeholder interaction to facilitate policy coherence and support cross-compliance of sectorial policies. A second purpose is to engage with the broader public by facilitating and arranging public participation processes while revising and updating the NSDS.

Regular national SD vertical stakeholder interaction is scarce in the BSR, though vertical national stakeholder interaction to some extent is organised by the various SD centres. Sub-national stakeholders, in particular local authorities, play an important part in implementing SD related activities. Most NSDS in the BSR recognise also this shortcoming and emphasise the need for further and better involvement of sub-national levels in NSDS, improved communication and collaboration.

Despite that NSDSs constitute the guiding policy documents in terms of planned national SD policy activity and policy implementation, the NSDSs outreach in terms of

FIGURE 2.3 **TYPICAL NATIONAL SD STAKEHOLDER CONSTELLATIONS IN THE BSR**

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT COORDINATOR OF ACTIVITIES

SD CENTER OR COMMISSION FACILITATES AND SUPPORTS MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, ALSO ENABLES A BROADER HORIZONTAL STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION

NO SYSTEMATIC AND REGULAR INTERACTION WITH SD STAKE-HOLDERS AT OTHER LEVELS

regular SD stakeholder dialogue do not generally reach beyond the national level. Even on a national level, cross-cutting stakeholder engagement appears to be limited to a few policy sectors, such as energy, sustainable consumption and production, employment, transport, education and partially also climate change. NSDSs in the BSR do generally emphasise the need of improved cooperation and involvement of different types of stakeholders, representing different tiers of national governance, but also international stakeholders. The improved stakeholder engagement is not restricted to only include the public sphere, but includes also NGOs and civil society across the region, especially with a view to build SD capacity.

TABLE 2.12 **BSR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL GOVERNANCE NARRATIVE**

UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	CONCRETE GOALS, TARGETS AND ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	MONITORING TOOLS
There is no common view of SD in the BSR, instead what emerges are three national traits of notions of SD. (1) The first national SD trait is characterised by the view that SD principles are viewed as a societal commitment, as an on-going process, where SD is envisioned to engage various actors representing the society, not only governmental or public actors, but actors at large. (2) The second national SD trait utilises the principles of SD to pursue national capacity building. Though the long-term SD ambition is to facilitate the development of the socio-cultural space, the short-term ambition is on underlying economic growth, with a view to enable a societal development that is in line with other EU countries. (3) In the third national SD trait, the views and principles of SD are not perceived as independent guiding principles. Instead the SD principles are integrated with the national general development discourse.	A cross-cutting goal unifying the Baltic Sea States in terms of SD related activities is the focal area of economic development. Economic development does not emerge as a single unrelated goal, but rather as interconnected and interdependent goals which are linked to a variety of sectorial goals and policy areas. These goals are often viewed in the BSR SD sphere as enablers of inclusive growth, which is attentive of social and environmental concerns. The goals are often operationalised in terms of aspirations which aim to basically transform the energy sector, either via energy efficiency or by developing the field of renewable energy. These goals are often pursued within the energy and climate change policy sectors. Energy and climate change related policy goals are often perceived in the BSR SD national sphere as a basis on which a general economic development is envisaged to deliver future growth.	From a global perspective, SD stakeholder engagement in the BSR is vivid and transpires on the multitude of governance levels comprising the BSR multi-level governance framework, both within the public sphere as well as outside it. However NSDSs in the BSR do not succeed in facilitating regular SD stake-holder engagement activities, as the outreach of NSDSs in terms of regular SD stakeholder dialogues do not generally reach beyond the national level. In terms of NSDS stakeholder engagement, the Ministry of Environment often emerges as a key stakeholder, both in its role as a coordinator of actual activities, but also whilst NSDS are revised and updated. The Ministry of Environment is generally facilitated and supported either by e.g. a SD center or committee, which often is made up of representatives of other affiliated Ministries.	Characteristically the national implementation structures in the BSR are not designed to encompass the full complex nature of SD related activities. Horizontal national level implementation activities are often coordinated by a SD committee, with the view to enable cross-sectorial coordination among relevant Ministries. With regard to vertical SD implementation structures in the BSR two different pathways emerge: (1) Characteristic for the first vertical implementation corridor is its top-down nature, comprising of active tiers steered by the mandatory obligations, which are based on the provisions set out in law. (2) The second vertical implementation pathway is distinguished by its ad-hoc nature and based on bottom-up initiatives and is often judged by its inability to force implementation action. Instead implementation is dependent upon voluntary activities by local authorities.	National SD related activities in the BSR are monitored regularly, often by utilising indicator assessments, which in turn are used as a basis to compile various SD related progress reports. The Baltic Sea States generally monitor SD activities by following the same procedures. Usually SD indicators are developed by an affiliated governmental entity, often the entity in charge of national statistics. Affiliated EU or UN indicators are often considered whilst national SD indicators are developed or updated. There are no indicators that are directly developed with a focus on the BSR *per se*, i.e. that would adhere to the geographical boundaries of the region. However, the Nordic countries have developed within the Nordic cooperation framework a set of SD indicators, with the view to monitor the long-term progress within a number of specified relevant areas.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES

In general the national SD implementation structures in the BSR do not cover the full complex nature of SD related activities. These require interaction and cooperation across governance levels and fields and interaction on a both horizontal level and vertical level. Instead what emerge are national horizontal structures bound by sectorial and planning principles, and though the vertical implementation structures, characterised by the provisions set out in law, provide effective implementation structures, they do not cover the full spectrum of needed SD activities. The vertical implementation pathway complements to some extent this shortfall, although it is anything but rigorous and resolute, as it is based on voluntary commitment and implementation by various stakeholders.

Despite the very different character of the states in the BSR some common SD implementation national structures exist both on horizontal and vertical levels. One of these is that many Baltic Sea States have established a SD centre, a committee, or a commission to assist the Ministry in charge of implementation, as a response to the system's nature of SD. In these centres a systematic dialogue can take place, and cooperation between various Ministries and affiliated government agencies can be established.

Many HORIZONTAL national SD implementation efforts are parts of sectorial planning. Some actions are carried out in cooperation between networking programmes, partnerships or projects and actors, different policy sectors and authorities, the civil society or business. Their overall purpose is often to launch activities which facilitate policy development. Although proactive and effective, the drawback is that these programmes are most often temporary and not institutionally anchored.

Two VERTICAL SD implementation structures emerge. The first is top-down, steered by national obligations set out in law carried out by the government with affiliated ministries, agencies and regional or local authorities. Regional or local authorities are in these actions bound by a range of mandatory duties generally prescribed in detail, mostly related to land use planning, e.g. long-term planning of building or general infrastructure. The second vertical pathway is mostly based on ad hoc activities and bottom-up initiatives in cooperation between stakeholders in certain policy areas, such as the environment. These actions do not necessarily include national level participation, although the national level does often fulfil a role, e.g.

by providing financing. Local authorities often play a role as implementing bodies, and macro-level stakeholders often enable local authority interest. The Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC) and Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) are active stakeholders in this field. For financing, the EU emerges as the most influential. The EU has a range funding schemes addressed to especially implement SD related activities. Because SD efforts are implemented by ad hoc features, the knowledge pool created by these activities is not often in the public sphere, but rather in external stakeholder organisations, which do not always reach the national levels in charge of updating and revising NSDSs.

> **THE NATIONAL SD IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES IN THE BSR ARE NOT DESIGNED TO SUCCESSFULLY ENCOMPASS THE FULL COMPLEX NATURE OF SD RELATED ACTIVITIES.**

FIGURE 2.4 **BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES**

COORDINATORS OF HORIZONTAL NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION: MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & CENTRE FOR SD

TOP-DOWN STEERED VERTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

Steered by the mandatory duties prescribed by law; actors are public stakeholders

BOTTOM-UP STEERED VERTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

Steered by voluntary ad hoc engagements by governance actors at macro-regional level and local level
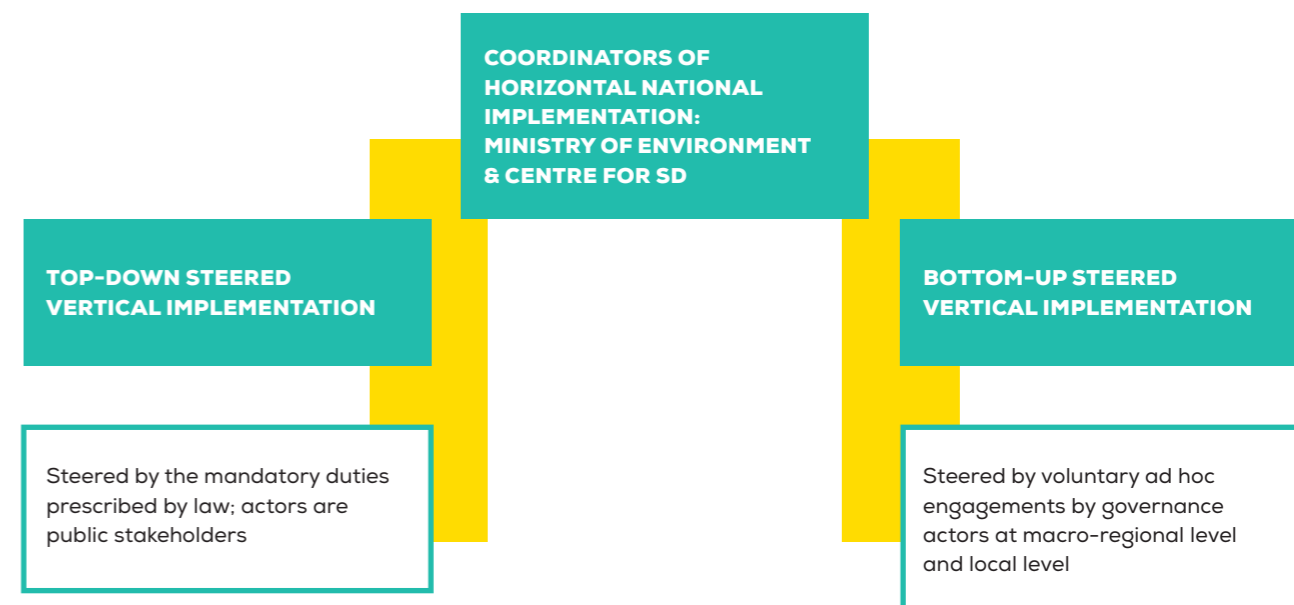
NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MONITORING

The Baltic Sea States generally monitor national SD related activities by following the same overall procedures. The basis of the monitoring is a set of indicators. Usually the indicators are developed by a governmental authority, often the National Statistics Office. Normally the acquisition and updating of data for the national statistics is coordinated with collecting data for the EU or the UN. In this way, too, indicators become coherent and suitable to assess whether countries adhere to agreed international SD targets. While there are no indicators that are directly developed with a focus on the BSR *per se*, the Nordic countries have as part of the Nordic cooperation developed a set of SD indicators to monitor long-term progress in specified areas.

> **NATIONAL SD RELATED ACTIVITIES IN THE BSR ARE MONITORED REGULARLY, OFTEN BY UTILISING INDICATOR ASSESSMENTS, WHICH IN TURN ARE USED AS A BASIS TO COMPILE VARIOUS SD RELATED PROGRESS REPORTS.**

The national indicators often consist of a small number of headline indicators and a larger number of indicators that are designed to measure progress in specific areas. The number of indicators applied in the monitoring of national SD related activities varies in the BSR. The long-term trend appears to be a reduction of the overall number to improve the visibility of progress, or to limit indicator based work. The various sets of national SD indicators are used for national SD related progress reports, which appear

regularly with varying content. Most of them focus on implementation, but many are used to update and revise the NSDSs on a fairly regular basis. Some NSDS in the BSR have also been the subject of peer reviews, for example when the NSDS of one state is reviewed by another state. The frequency of which some NSDS are updated in the BSR is encouraging, especially considering that the EU Sustainable Development Strategy has not been revised since 2009.

THE BALTIC SEA REGION
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
MACRO-REGIONAL
GOVERNANCE NARRATIVE
AND MACRO-REGIONAL
GOALS

MACRO-REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AND RELEVANT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDERS

The challenges the BSR is facing, whether it concerns the state of the Baltic Sea, or land based activities, are shared macro-regional challenges, which require macro-regional responses. Overall the macro-regional level and organisations active on this governance level, based on their particular mandates, work for a better Baltic Sea Region. The macro-regional entities or pan-Baltic networks do not *per se* participate in policy processes in the BSR, though some of them provide policy recommendations to relevant national authorities. The authorities however, are not by law requested to follow these recommendations. Still, the macro-regional level constitutes a vital governance level in the region. Pan-Baltic networks contribute actively in developing capacity and awareness in the

region and they represent a large part of the knowledge pool and often provide platforms for various stakeholders to develop actions across the region.

The pan-Baltic networks often have a rather specific SD focus based on their special SD mandate. In table 3.1 five different entities that operate on the macro-regional level and their key SD features are listed. The list includes two inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM) plus the European Union (EU), the Helsinki Commission, which is the governing body of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, and the Union of the Baltic Cities,

which is a voluntary network of more than 100 local authorities in the wider BSR.

The EU as a supranational entity is in this context seen as a "macro-regional entity" linking together a number of states by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence. The EU has emerged as an essential part of the BSR in particular in connection with the launch of the Strategy for the BSR (EUSBSR). The EUSBSR is made to provide a platform for enabling coherent activities across the region, to reinforce cooperation in the region, to face common challenges by working together and promoting a more balanced development in the BSR.

TABLE 3.1 RELEVANT MACRO-REGIONAL SD STAKEHOLDERS (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

MACRO-REGIONAL STAKEHOLDER	SHORT BACKGROUND	SD RELEVANCE	SD FOCUS	METHODS FOR SD IMPLEMENTATION
COUNCIL OF THE BALTIC SEA STATES (CBSS)	Political forum for regional intergovernmental cooperation. Members of the Council are the 11 states of the Baltic Sea region and the European Union. An Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region, Baltic 21 (now Baltic 2030) was established in 1996 by the Prime Ministers of the BSR countries and the European Commission with the aim to support the implementation of the Rio Declaration and the global Agenda 21, adopted in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environmental Development, UNCED.	Contribute towards advancing SD in the BSR by coordinating goals and activities, and by serving as a forum for cooperation across borders and between stakeholder groups. This includes enhanced capacity building for SD.	Climate Change; Sustainable Urban and Rural Development; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Innovation and Education for SD. The CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit (former Baltic21) is responsible for CBSS SD activity, is also Horizontal Action leader for 'Climate' within the EUSBSR.	CBSS Expert Group on Sustainable Development – Baltic 2030 is coordinating the SD activities. Knowledge exchange by sharing sustainable practices. Providing policy recommendations. Providing a platform for stakeholders to seek out new partnerships, while strengthen those already in existence.
EUROPEAN UNION (EU)	Supranational institution consisting of the 28 Member States in Europe.	Developed an overarching strategy for the region, the EUSBSR. The Strategy aims at reinforcing cooperation in the BSR in order to face common challenges by working together and promoting a more balanced development in the area.	Save the sea. Connect the region. Increase prosperity.	Different stakeholders participate in the implementation of the EUSBSR. The activities of the focal point are implemented by policy area coordinators and horizontal action coordinators. Implementation transpires e.g. via flagships.
BALTIC MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMISSION – HELSINKI COMMISSION (HELCOM)	Governing body of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area. The contracting parties are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the EU.	To protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental cooperation.	A healthy Baltic Sea environment with diverse biological components functioning in balance, resulting in a good ecological status and supporting a wide range of sustainable economic and social activities.	Developing common environmental objectives and actions, and recommendations. Providing information about the state of the marine environment and trends in it.
NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS (NCM)	The NCM is the forum for Nordic intergovernmental cooperation. The Council has 87 elected members from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as from the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.	To develop common solutions for common challenges. Solutions that offer good potential for promoting SD, generate added value, and promote greater knowledge and more efficient use of resources.	Focus on areas in which the Nordic countries have common interests and challenges. These areas include; the Nordic welfare model, viable ecosystems, changing climate, sustainable use of the Earth's resources, and education, research and innovation	Providing funding for project activity aligned with the NCM SD interests. Capacity and knowledge developer by the means of the various Nordic institutions and initiatives providers.
UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES (UBC)	A voluntary cooperation network on a local level between local governments surrounding or close to the Baltic Sea	To find efficient solutions for the SD challenges which local governments in the BSR are facing	Focus on processes that raise SD awareness and commitment, enhance local SD management, including managing natural and energy resources, and promoting quality of live and equity.	Local governments participate in various projects that align with the general UBC SD focal points. Exchange of good practices and provide possibilities for exchange of personnel, organise training workshops and conferences and increase policy liaison.

MACRO-REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Each macro-regional stakeholder lists their SD goals in relation to their specific SD mandate. The focus of the EUSBSR lies on three interconnecting areas: (i) 'Save the sea', focusing on concerns related to the Baltic Sea's vulnerability to eutrophication, pollution and over-fishing, aiming to attain 'clear water in the sea', 'rich and healthy wildlife' and 'clean and safe shipping'; (ii) 'Connect the region', which aims to utilise the region's potential in terms of competitiveness and quality of life by seeking to enable good transport conditions, reliable energy markets, connecting people in the region and better cooperation in fighting cross-border crime; and (iii) 'Increase prosperity', by improving the Baltic Sea States competitiveness through more cooperation on e.g. research and development, such as in IT, environmental technologies, health, and the wood and forest products industry (European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, 2015). The current Action Plan of the EUSBSR is linked to the EU 2020 Strategy and does not as such outline a specific SD mandate.

The activities of the focal points are divided into specific sectors and each sector is coordinated by specifically appointed Policy Area (PA) coordinators, and Horizontal Action (HA) coordinators. The EUSBSR Action Plan (dated September 2015) lists a total of 13 Policy Areas and 4 Horizontal Action Areas (EUSBSR, 2015b). Often macro-regional entity units, or branches or divisions, function as designated PA and HA coordinators, in order to utilise the macro-regional entities networking and knowledge abilities. One such example is the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit, mainly responsible for CBSS SD activities as well as functioning as the HA Climate Coordinator.

The **CBSS** SD Strategy 2010-2015 emphasised four areas: *'Climate Change', 'Sustainable Rural and Urban Development', 'Sustainable Consumption and Production'*

and *'Innovation and Education for Sustainable Development'* (Council of the Baltic Sea States, 2015a). The objective of 'Climate Change' is that the BSR should become a low-carbon and climate resilient region by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). With regard to 'Sustainable Rural and Urban Development', the objective is to achieve a region of sustainable cities and towns, in symbiosis with a vibrant rural landscape by emphasising quality of life in both urban and rural areas and strengthening the urban-rural linkage. 'Sustainable Consumption and Production' is pursued by promoting sustainable lifestyles and the development of green economies in order to reduce the ecological impact by the average citizen in the BSR. To promote 'Innovation and Education for SD', the BSR should become a leading region for education for SD and eco-innovations by facilitating the integration of knowledge, skills and competencies for SD into education for lifelong learning (Council of the Baltic Sea States, 2015a)

HELCOM'S general objective is to achieve a healthy environment for the Baltic Sea. For this HELCOM has developed the **BALTIC SEA ACTION PLAN** to reach a good environmental status of the Baltic Sea. The key aims include safeguarding the sea's natural ecosystems while allowing the sustainable use of its goods and services; improve the quality of life and prosperity in the region; and setting specific ecological objectives and measureable targets in line with the ecosystem approach. These goals should be implemented through national programmes and regional actions (HELCOM, 2015).

The **NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS'** SD STRATEGY, NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' entitled *'A Good Life in a Sustainable Nordic Region'*, sets overall guidelines and long-term goals for the Nordic countries in relation to SD. The Strategy has five focal areas: *'Nordic welfare model',*

'viable ecosystems', 'changing climate', 'sustainable use of the earth's resources', and *'education, research and innovation'* (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2015). The *Nordic welfare model* underpins the core values of a Nordic welfare system, and *viable ecosystems* refers to a sustainable management of natural resources, marine ecosystems, land-based ecosystems and air quality. Actions to combat a *changing climate* include as greater focus on renewable energy, more efficient use of energy and reduction of GHG emissions. The *sustainable use of natural recourse* should include sustainable consumption and production, improved resource efficiency and waste management. *Education, research and innovation* include education at all levels on SD, supporting inter-disciplinary Nordic research and development of environmental technology and social innovations to support green growth (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2015).

The **UNION OF THE BALTIC CITIES'** SD Strategy is process-orientated and the focus area *'SD awareness and commitment'* lays the foundation of their SD action (UBC, 2015). The Strategy emphasises that SD needs to be integrated, both as a notion and as a mean into overall strategies and goals of its member cities. Thus all UBC member cities should have SD integrated into their overall city strategy. The Strategy emphasises leadership and management abilities for enabling the cities' activities to become more efficient and sustainable. Efforts such as increasing cross-sectorial work are emphasised. With regard to specific SD related goals, the management of resources is a central goal including sustainable production and consumption; energy related issues. Cities have a major influence on energy production and consumption; and thus represent an actor which can have a significant influence in climate change mitigation, by reducing GHG, and increased use of renewable energy. The UBC lists also quality of life

as a goal. This includes e.g. gender equality, health and social well-being (Union of the Baltic Cities, 2015).

There are many similarities between the SD goals pursued at the BSR macro-regional level: three general areas and subsequent SD goals are found (Fig. 3.1). These macro-regional SD goals are also pursued on a national level. Both the macro-regional and the national level pursue **CLIMATE CHANGE** by addressing largely the same means, especially by transforming energy production in the region from a traditional fossil fuel-system-based to alternative energy resources. **SAVING THE BALTIC SEA** is on the national SD level focused on preserving the natural capital, though the Baltic Sea is not always explicitly mentioned. Also the third SD macro-regional focal point, the **QUALITY OF LIFE**, is also implicitly pursued on a national level, by for example, increasing prosperity and improving the well-being of the citizens.

The macro-regional stakeholders generally aim to advance SD in the region by reinforcing cooperation patterns. This is especially relevant for SD capacity and knowledge development. Here the macro-regional entities serve as a forum for cooperation to develop efficient solutions for common challenges.

However, the macro-regional stakeholders have different prerequisites and capabilities to work for promoting SD in the region. This is especially relevant went it comes to the implementation of SD actions, where financial capabilities and available personnel play an important role, and macro-regional stakeholders have to apply for funding (often of short-term nature). Stakeholders at a macro-regional level thus often use instead 'soft' means for implementing SD, i.e. means that are not mandatory to implement. These include knowledge exchange and policy recommendations for enhanced and more efficient implementation.

FIGURE 3.1 **MACRO-REGIONAL SD GOALS**

CLIMATE CHANGE	SAVING THE BALTIC SEA	QUALITY OF LIFE
focuses on addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation, often via efforts that seek to alter the energy sector in the region, or via efforts related to sustainable production and consumption. The goal is that the region becomes a low-carbon economy, by pursuing a green economy, which at the same time is attentive of the challenges related to climate change.	focuses is on a healthy environment for the Baltic Sea, e.g. with the help of viable ecosystems, which can be attained by e.g. better wastewater treatment efforts, or via maritime spatial planning efforts; or more generally via a better management of natural resources in the region	refers to increasing the prosperity in the region, both from an economical point of view, e.g. via new innovations, but also in terms of socio-cultural means, e.g. social inclusiveness, and health and social well-being. The goal of quality of life is also addressed via infrastructural means, in order to connect the people in the region in a better way

MACRO-REGIONAL PUBLIC AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

The main active entities in the BSR have been mentioned and described above, including the EU, CBSS, NCM, and HELCOM. To the list should however be added a number of cooperative schemes which may, or may not, have been actively working on SD but which still constitute a resource for future work. The Baltic Sea Region may be the region in the world which has the largest number of pan-regional cooperation schemes. Several of these know each other well and often work together. As a collective they constitute a kind of spider web of collaboration covering an amazing breadth of sectors, competences and experiences. Together they form a resource for all kind of projects for implementation of SD strategies. For this reason many of them are listed below to be known and contacted for policymakers when needed.

VASAB is an intergovernmental multilateral cooperation network of eleven countries of the Baltic Sea Region dealing with spatial planning and development. Founded in 1992, it draws on the document *Vision and Strategies for the Baltic Sea Region 2010* and coordinates infrastructure planning, spatial planning and development in the Baltic Sea Region with a capacity to support SD implementation. VASAB is an intergovernmental network of the CBSS and works with the Ministers of Planning. The Secretariat is located in Riga, Latvia.

Several sub-regional authorities cooperate in the region. The BALTIC SEA STATES SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION (BSSSC) is a political network for decentralised authorities (sub-regions) in the BSR including counties in the BSR, and the CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS OF EUROPE (CPMR) supports sustainable development of the sea. The CPMR has its Secretariat in Rennes, France and its expression in BSR is called the Baltic Sea Commission. EUROREGION BALTIC (ERB) is a political cooperation in the southeast of the Baltic Sea Region, consisting of eight regions in Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden. The B7 BALTIC ISLANDS NETWORK is a cooperation between the seven largest islands in the Baltic Sea. All these are available to support SD projects on the county level.

Although THE UNION OF BALTIC CITIES (UBC) is the most active of the associations of local authorities it is not the only one. For instance, the BALTIC METROPOLES NETWORK (BaltMet) is a forum for capitals and large metropolitan cities around the Baltic Sea to promote innovation and competitiveness in the Baltic Sea Region. One also needs to mention the tight NETWORK OF FRIENDSHIP TOWNS which many times support each other for sustainability projects.

PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION in the Nordic framework was enlarged in the 1990s. The three Baltic States and Poland were invited to join a number of schemes already functioning between the Nordic countries. The "newcomers" thus joined the Nordic Council meetings and also the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conferences (BSPC) of which Germany and Russia are members, to gather national parliamentarians which meet once a year.

A number of CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS with presence in the entire region are relevant and active in cooperation for sustainable development. In the 1990s an upsurge in voluntary associations were formed by all kinds of interest groups – farmers and artists, businesses and banks, schools and universities. Gunnar Lassinanti (2012) estimates that there are 200-300 networks in areas such as finance, environment, energy, communications, business, innovations, universities, research, local authorities in the region (Lassinanti, 2012).

In the academic field the BALTIC UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME formed in 1991 is by far the largest of several university networks. Its focus is on sustainable development, environmental protection, and democracy through education, research and applied projects. The Secretariat is at Uppsala University, Sweden. It covers universities or other higher education institutions in all the 14 countries wholly or partly in the Baltic Sea drainage basin. Today more than 200 universities of all kinds are listed in the network. The emphasis is on education and a total of some 350 course groups and close to 8000 students register for courses yearly.

SCANBALT BIOREGION is an organisation for the Baltic Sea or the Nordic-Baltic Region's Health and Bio Economy community for research institutions and biotech companies. Its Secretariat is located in Copenhagen, Denmark. BALTIC EARTH (former BALTEX – The Baltic Sea Experiment) is a cooperative organisation to study the Baltic Sea itself with a Secretariat located at the Helmholtz Centre in Geesthacht, Germany.

Several FINANCIAL SCHEMES support projects for Sustainable Development. These include the Visby Programme from the Swedish State (Swedish Institute) which supports exchange and common projects from the undergraduate to the PhD level and the INTERREG Baltic Sea Region Programme, which is a European Union initiative that funds transnational projects working together for balanced and sustainable development of the Baltic Sea Region.

Several Environmental Organisations are active in the region. This includes COALITION CLEAN BALTIC (CCB) with 21 member organisations to promote the protection and improvement of the Baltic Sea environment and natural resources. It has a Secretariat in Uppsala, Sweden.

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND (WWF) has a large activity on the Baltic Sea Region and especially the Baltic Sea itself. The Secretariat is located in Stockholm, Sweden.

STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE (SIWI) is a policy institute that generates knowledge and informs decision-making towards wise water policy and sustainable development. It is active in the Baltic Sea region with a Secretariat in Stockholm, Sweden.

BALTIC SEA PROJECT (BSP) is a UNESCO Associated Schools Project to awaken young people's interest in environmental issues, protection and sense of responsibility. Over 200 secondary schools from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden take part. Having national coordinators in each participating country, the responsibility of general coordination rotates every third year between the members. Since 2015, the Russian Federation holds the general coordinator position.

Networks also exists in the field of BUSINESS AND RELATED AREAS. The Baltic Development Forum (BDF) gathers not only politicians, but also business, academia and media to discuss strategies for the development of the Baltic Sea Region, with a Secretariat in Copenhagen. The Baltic Sea Chambers of Commerce Association (BCCA) unites the Chamber of Commerce of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden to promote trade and business relationships across the Baltic Sea Region. The Baltic Sea Tourism Commission is an international organisation for market-oriented companies and tourist organisations in the Baltic Sea Region. The Baltic Sea Trade Union Network includes trade union confederations around the Baltic Sea linked to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

CULTURE AND ARTS networks exist as well. There are a number of intergovernmental networks affiliated to the CBSS; in the field of culture, for example, the Ministers of Culture have created the Monitoring Group on Cultural Heritage (MGCH).

Ars Baltica is a cultural think tank which advocates arts and culture on the political level and promotes cultural life around the Baltic Sea.

The Policy Area 'Culture' of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region aims to support creative entrepreneurship, to promote BSR culture, BSR culture, using the innovative force of culture for societal development, to preserve and present the BSR cultural heritage and to strengthen the cultural identity of the region.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTING
THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS IN THE BALTIC
SEA REGION

→ 4.1
BSR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE IMPLEMENTATION

National implementation is the basis for BSR SD implementation. It is conducted by Ministries and Agencies and regional or local authorities in the countries. These are typically organised in a SD committee, established to manage activities and provide a platform for interaction. Activities are those decided on by governments mostly following agendas set out in law. Macro-regional, non-governmental, stakeholders engage in

the implementation processes by providing recommendations. Regional cooperation arrangements are central for SD implementation in the BSR.

Vertical non-mandatory national SD implementation activities, with other non-public stakeholders at other governance levels, are however to a large extent absent. Systematic coordination of SD implementation is dif-

ficult to put in place as most horizontal and vertical implementation efforts are driven by voluntary stakeholder action. This is particularly relevant for implementation at the macro-regional and sub-national levels.

The most common method for BSR SD implementation is project activities. Project stakeholders represent the entire SD sphere: macro-regional intergovernmental entities, academia, private actors, sub-regional entities, NGOs, local interest groups and local governments. Projects serve different interests, including capacity-building and knowledge development. The uptake and the implementation of the project outcomes are voluntary for national Ministers and Governmental Agencies and for local governments. Still, successful SD activities in the BSR are to a large extent dependent upon the ability of project stakeholders to create platforms for collaboration. Macro-regional stakeholders, such as the CBSS, HELCOM, the NCM and the UBC have prominent roles here due to their capacity to facilitate action and create collaboration platforms in the BSR. The several NSDS represent the most relevant

document for SD implementation in the region, but they are designed to serve the national implementation interests, and not macro-regional needs. Moreover, the NSDS have their own shortcomings as they predominately engage only horizontal level activity.

The EU emerges as perhaps the most influential stakeholder in the BSR SG implementation agenda - besides the national level. Through its various funding schemes the EU steers implicitly BSR SD implementation. There are also other funding bodies, most notably the NCM. The drawback of utilising various funding schemes as the main element for implementing BSR SD activities is their short-term nature. The EUSBSR has not been equipped with its own tools and financial means, and implementation depends on utilising existing financing possibilities.

The existing situation has however serious problems. SD activities require interaction and cooperation across governance levels and fields in order to be effectively implemented, and SD implementation structures in the BSR are not designed to encompass the full complex nature of SD related activities. Barriers to effective implementation in the BSR are reviewed in figure 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 **BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION SETTING**

LEVEL	MAIN STAKEHOLDERS	ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION	MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION	PRINCIPAL IMPLEMENTATION FEATURES
SUPRANATIONAL MACRO-REGIONAL	EU CBSS including the Baltic2030 Process; NCM; HELCOM; UBC	Adaptation of EUSBSR Facilitator of macro-regional activity at various governance levels	Specified strategies that call on voluntary engagement, project activity, finance generation (e.g. INTERREG), production and dissemination of knowledge	Enabler of voluntary collaborations, dependent on short-term financing, interaction transpires within the boundaries set by their mandate
NATIONAL	Relevant Ministries; Governmental Agencies	Policy developer, coordinator vis-à-vis the national implementation setting, supervising authority	Designated NSDS, specified mandatory tasks set out on law that involve the implementation of SD related activities, these do not however cover the full SD spectrum	Horizontally focused, lack of regular engagement with other tiers of governance
SUB-NATIONAL	Regional state agencies; local governments	Implementer of national SD policies (local governments)	Specified local strategies, participant in various projects and macro-regional networks	Outside nationally defined mandatory SD duties, SD activity is dependent on the voluntary commitment

FIGURE 4.1 **BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION BARRIERS**

LACK OF VERTICAL INTERACTION

→ Lack of regular vertical interaction among SD stakeholders

→ Interaction should not be bound by stakeholders SD mandate, which does not necessarily embrace the full SD integrated spectrum

SHORT-SIGHTED SD ACTION

→ Short-sighted SD action often epistomises BSR SD implementation

→ This is a result of project-based implementation activities

LACK OF COORDINATION

→ Lack of coordination of SD implementation activities across the region

→ Lack of oversight, which may result in overlaps, and impeding the SD implementation coherence in the region

METHODS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS OF THE UN

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and accompanied 169 targets, comprehensive and far-reaching, will guide the 2030 Global SD Agenda. While there is no unified or designated global scheme or strategy for the implementation of the SDGs, the UN emphasises the critical importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in implementation of the new agenda; *"Governments and public institutions will work closely in this regard with national parliaments, local authorities, international institutions, business and the private sector, civil society, academia, philanthropic organisations, voluntary groups and others"* (United Nations, 2015). The implementation of the far-reaching agenda that the SDGs encompass, has called for a revitalisation of the global partnership for SD, to engage all relevant stakeholders in the process (United Nations, 2015). The renewed and strengthened global partnership is viewed as *"facilitating an intensive global engagement in support of implementation of the goals and targets, bringing together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors"* (United Nations, 2015).

The UN stresses the importance of *"mobilisation of financial resources (both public and private, domestic and international) as well as capacity-building, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and a wide range of other supportive policies and measures. Business, the private sector and philanthropic organisations will feature prominently in relation to resource mobilisation and implementation of the Agenda"* (United Nations, 2015). Other means of implementation are also explored, e.g. the central role of science, technology and innovation, multilateral trading system, policy coordination, and coherence. The UN also stresses national ownership and responsibility that *"each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies*

and development strategies cannot be overemphasised. At the same time, national development efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment" (United Nations, 2015).

The SDG17 focus to **'Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development'** lists a number of means of implementation (Box 4.1). Although most of them are concerned with the support to developing countries the systemic issues, points 17.13 – 17.19, are relevant for the BSR countries. These include *'policy and institutional coherence'*, which emphasises policy coordination and policy coherence as a key for the global macroeconomic stability and for sustainable development. *'Multi-stakeholder partnerships'*, refers to encouraging and promoting effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships. *'Data, monitoring and accountability'* needs a strong monitoring, accountability and review framework (United Nations, 2015).

Within this setting, the UN emphasises the roles various stakeholders at different levels have; besides stakeholders at a national and global level, also (macro-) regional level stakeholders are important to build useful platforms for peer review and mutual learning, encouraging countries to set ambitious targets and stimulate implementation. Work at the (macro-) regional level could help to ensure progress on trans-boundary issues and on regionally shared targets. Regional reviews can draw on national level reviews and contribute to follow-up and reviews at the global level (United Nations, 2015).

The Member States are encouraged by the UN to develop ambitious national responses to SDGs, building on existing national reporting and planning instruments, such as various NSDS (United Nations, 2015) and

regularly conduct reviews of progress, based on public as well as civil society progress. Knowledge from national experiences of implementation should be shared among affiliated national stakeholders, as well as among peers at other levels, e.g. on a global or a macro-regional level to enhance the SD implementation capacity.

BOX 4.1 SDG 17 STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION (UNITED NATIONS, 2015)

FINANCE

17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection

17.2 Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including to provide 0.7 per cent of gross national income in official development assistance to developing countries, of which 0.15 to 0.20 per cent should be provided the least developed countries

17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress

17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries

TECHNOLOGY

17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism when agreed upon

17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing

countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed

17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology

CAPACITY-BUILDING

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation 21

TRADE

17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organisation, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda

17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020

17.12 Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organisation decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access

SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Policy and institutional coherence

17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence

17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development

17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development

Multi-stakeholder partnerships

17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships

Data, monitoring and accountability

17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts

17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries

MEANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE BSR

BSR implementation of SDGs provides platforms for macro-regional learning, which should facilitate national level SDG implementation. The macro-regional perspective is in line with the nature of sustainable development, which is not to be bound by national boundaries, even though a prerequisite for effective implementation is that it agrees with national conditions and contexts. Table 4.2 serves as a basis for comparing how current BSR implementation features align with the general methods suggested for implementing the SDGs.

The UN prescribes that all concerned stakeholders should participate in these implementation efforts, which also enhances the legitimacy of this process. Public entities, international bodies, business representatives, the private sector, civil society, academia, philanthropic organisations and voluntary groups are all included, implicitly or explicitly, in SD related activities. The process is impeded by the lack of regular stakeholder dialogues with governmental authorities. Even if there are many stakeholders engaged in SD related activities, actual implementation is a public sphere exercise. National ownership and accountability is a precondition for implementation the SDGs.

SD implementation depends on two lines of financial resources. The first is national funding for actions under duties prescribed in law. The second consists of various national and international funding schemes, which often results in project activities. EU programmes constitute a main financing source here. The myriad of funding schemes in place makes it difficult to arrive to a complete and updated overview. The EUs Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, the EUSBSR, was designed to avoid incoherence and overlaps, but also the EUSBSR is characterised by short-term funding and the coordinators need to apply for financing for their activities, mostly from EU project funding schemes, which may or may not be aligned with the EUSBSR focal points.

Capacity-building, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and multilateral trading systems are listed as means for strengthening the implementing of the SDGs. These are relevant also in the BSR, especially for capacity-building amongst SD stakeholders. For effective capacity-building in the region it is crucial that these two constellations of stakeholders engage in dialogue, built on pre-existing platforms. However, the knowledge produced can be short-lived if there is no funding available for the dissemination of the project outcomes.

TABLE 4.2   **SDG IMPLEMENTATION MEANS IN THE BSR IMPLEMENTATION**

SUGGESTED MEANS OF SDG IMPLEMENTATION	BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION CHARACTERISTICS
Engage all relevant stakeholders; government, public institutions, national parliaments, local authorities, international institutions, business, the private sector, civil society, academia, philanthropic organisations and voluntary groups	A multitude of stakeholders are involved in SD implementation, though implementation *per se* is confined to national and sub-national levels, and in particular local governments. National implementation transpires however largely within the public sphere and seldom engages regularly with other societal SD stakeholders at other governance levels.
National ownership and accountability, but national efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment	BSR States have acknowledged the notion of SD and each state has developed strategic SD planning documents for implementation.
Mobilisation of financial resources, public and private, domestic and international business, the private sector and philanthropic organisations should feature prominently in relation to resource mobilisation and implementation	Financing SD implementation transverses along largely via two pathways. The first line of financing is provided by the national level and the second line of financing is provided by the EU and its schemes. EU financing however enables only short-term implementation efforts at the various BSR governance levels, often in the form of project activities. Private entities are to some extent involved in financing BSR SD implementation, e.g. via a philanthropic foundation set up to address a specific SD related concern.
Capacity-building, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and multilateral trading systems	Capacity building is carried out via short-term projects, which generally seek to build SD capacity in the region. It is unclear to what extent project outcomes are utilised by affiliated stakeholders as a mean to build capacity. Often project outcomes are not fully utilised, as the uptake of project outcomes are voluntary for SD implementation stakeholders in the region, e.g. for local governments.
Policy and institutional coherence, enhance SD policy coordination and coherence	BSR SD implementation is generally uncoordinated at all governance levels, with the exception of national implementation, which occurs within the national boundaries. Coordinating BSR SD implementation to ensure policy coherence at all levels is difficult, primarily because most implementation relies on voluntary engagement of stakeholders, which in turn is typified by its ad hoc nature, resulting in a difficulty to attain an overall account of the implementation efforts.
Multi-stakeholder partnerships, encouraging and promoting effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships	Project based activities encourage the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships in the BSR, since project based funding often requires this. The nature of these partnerships varies considerably, depending upon the funding source, but there are public, public-private and civil partnerships. The partnerships are often only in place for the duration of the project, so their effectiveness is another concern, especially in terms of contribution to the long-term implementation in the region. Also, there is no coordinated and regular interaction between the numerous multi-stakeholder partnerships, which operates at the various governance levels, which would ensure that partnerships build on experience and ultimately contribute to implementation coherence.
Data, monitoring and accountability, increase the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data relevant in national contexts.	Most states in the BSR have high-quality, timely and reliable data relevant for the national contexts. Furthermore, the data is updated on a regular basis, but comparability is a challenge.

Policy and institutional coherence is central. A precondition for SD policy coherence and coordination are institutions that are equipped with capacity and knowledge to adhere to the outcomes of policy envisioned action which aligns with other policy actions in other fields. However implementation action largely occurs within a national policy environment that is not necessarily coherent with the integrated SD implementation model. This is mainly due to national sectorial divisions, and the constraints it has in relation to integrated implementation. Hence, institutional actions which are not bound by sectorial thinking but function in a coherent and integrated way are required. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are a means for strengthening SDG implementation and to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships. Multi-stakeholder SD partnerships are also encouraged as a method for enabling project activity. However, apart from the Annual Strategy Forums of the EUSBSR there is neither a general systematic, coordinated, nor regular interaction between the numerous multi-stakeholder partnerships in the BSR which is an obvious weakness of this approach.

The final prescribed mean for strengthening implementation is data, monitoring and accountability. SD monitoring is essential to determine whether the national states demonstrate SD accountability. There are no designated indicators or data available for all BSR countries, nor entities responsible for doing this, although Eurostat provides comprehensive coverage of the region, considering that most countries in the region are EU Member States. BSR national level data monitoring is context dependent, though most countries align their procedures with Eurostat principles and coverage areas in order to ensure reliable and valid SD monitoring.

FIGURE 4.1 **MACRO-REGIONAL SD GOALS**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

| **BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION DOES NOT ENGAGE ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS AND IS OFTEN OF AN UNCOORDINATED NATURE** | **FINANCING OF BSR SD IMPLEMENTATION IS NOT COHERENT WITH THE LONG-TERM SD AMBITIONS OF THE REGION, NOR THE ENVISAGED SDG LONG-TERM ACTION** | **SD CAPACITY BUILDING IS OFTEN RELIANT ON SHORT-TERM FINANCING** | **SD POLICY COORDINATION AND COHERENCE IS COMPLICATED BY THE SHORT-TERM SD FINANCING** | **MOST MULTI-STAKEHOLDER SD PARTNERSHIPS ARE OF SHORT-TERM CHARACTER** |

CHAPTER 5

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND COOPERATION IN THE BSR

SHARED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – INCLUSIVE GROWTH, CLIMATE AND ENERGY, SAVING THE BALTIC SEA AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Inclusive growth by transforming the energy sector is a shared SD goal at a macro-regional level in the BSR. Transforming the energy sector is expected to support the creation of jobs in the environmental sectors, via e.g. new innovations enabling the emergence of 'green' technologies, while simultaneously delivering direct economic benefits in terms of costs savings. Furthermore, the transformation of the energy sector is also expected to provide means to combat climate change by reducing GHG emissions, to provide secure energy supplies, offer a greater diversity in energy supplies, and to emit less air pollution as well as reduce the dependency on fossil fuels, in particular oil and gas.

The other identified macro-regional goals, 'Saving the Baltic Sea' and 'Quality of Life', are also pursued on a national level, whereas the former by means of preserving the environment, e.g. reducing water pollution, and the latter is pursued by enabling welfare growth by promoting the development of the human, cultural and social capital in the society.

FIGURE 5.1 **CENTRAL SD GOALS IN THE BSR SETTING**
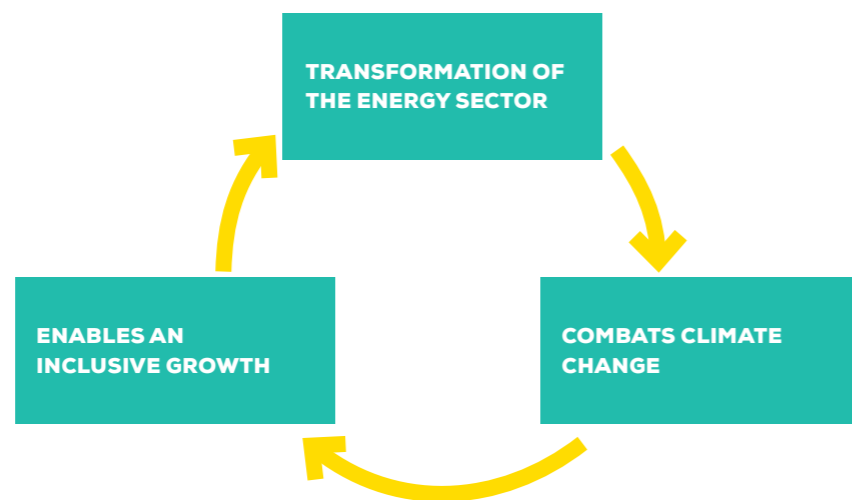
The Baltic Sea States relative cohesion, in relation to the pursuit of transforming the energy sector is largely influenced by external determinants and derives largely from EU initiatives. The overarching EU policy initiative, the EU 2020 Growth Strategy, represents the main influence for the transformation of the energy sector in the BSR. The EU 2020 Strategy lists five targets to be reached by 2020 in the 'Climate and Energy Package' (CEP). These are that GHG emissions should be 20 % lower; 20 % of energy production should stem from renewable energy sources; and a 20 % increase in energy efficiency should be met (European Commission, 2015a). The 20-20-20 targets provide the means to pursue a low-carbon economy across the EU. The CEP provides a set of binding legislation to ensure that the EU meets its climate and energy targets for 2020 (European Commission, 2015b), but

gives considerable freedom to EU Member States on how they can achieve their targets (European Commission, 2012). The CEP does not address however the energy efficiency target directly as this is achieved via the EU Energy Efficiency Directive.

IMPLEMENTING THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FROM A MACRO-REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Many of the UN SDGs represent shared interest among the countries in the BSR, and can thus clearly be included in a common BSR 2030 Agenda. The SDGs including the energy and climate goals discussed above are in this group. Several of the other SDGs are also of common relevance between a majority of the countries in the region but not an obvious part of the macro-regional goals described in chapter 3. Several other SDGs need to be addressed and pursued through global action by support to developing countries, e.g. in terms of enhanced cooperation development, or via mobilisation of resources, or through effective official development assistance. The global dimension of Sustainable Development is part of the National Strategies in the Nordic countries and in Germany, but it is not a prevailing principle in the national SD narratives in any of the other EU countries in the BSR.

In the EU Council Conclusion (Council of the European Union, 2015) the global dimension is central. The foundation of the Council Conclusion is that a new global partnership for poverty eradication and sustainable development is required, and that this is addressed via e.g. EU Member States commitment to continuing their provision of support to developing countries in strengthening their public finance management, as well as by the EU Council's reaffirming its collective commitment to achieve the 0.7% Official Development Assistance target within the time frame of the 2030 Agenda (Council of the European Union, 2015). This is a message to all EU Member States. With this approach we can discuss all 17 SDGs below and attempt to identify which are the most crucial problems and areas in the BSR which need to be addressed under each goal. Some of the goals (seven are listed in Box 5.1) are discussed in larger detail as there is a wider interest among the Baltic Sea States to facilitate common action.

The SDGs could thus be pursued on a regional level or nationally. However for each

of the 17 SDGs there are possibilities to find macro-regional stakeholders, interest groups, which are prepared to get involved and provide competence, capacity and take part in projects to implement the targets connected to the goals, if the member states wish so. None of the goals can be dismissed. The UN states that the SDGs and related targets are *"integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities"* (United Nations, 2015). The 169 targets that accompany the SDGs offer tangible aims to be reached within a specific area in the next 15 years. The SDG targets are *"defined as aspirational and global, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances"* (United Nations, 2015).

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD (UNITED NATIONS, 2015)

SDG1 END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

SDG2 END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

SDG3 ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES These goals accentuate global cooperation and responsibility, and are thus not developed as easily for BSR cooperation. Wellbeing is however relevant also in the BSR and included in the NSDS in e.g. the three Baltic States.

SDG4 ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL An aspect of this goal important for the BSR countries is education for sustainable development, ESD. Again it is not part of the several NSDS and is at present not pursued as a common project. It is, however, part of the CBSS Baltic 2030 SD Agenda.

SDG5 ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS For this goal there is much to improve in the BSR countries. However it is not part of the several NSDS, and thus not immediately addressed as a common project.

SDG6 ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL A reoccurring national SD goal is the preservation of the natural capital in the region. In the BSR natural capital refers generally to the Baltic Sea and its ecosystem. The Baltic Sea is documented to be one of the most polluted seas in the world, and targets enlisted by the SDG6 are well in line with SD activities addressed in the region. Especially, targets to "improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimising release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater" or to "protect and restore water-related ecosystems". The measures to reach these targets in the BSR are addressed in particular in the Helsinki Commission Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP), which is an ambitious programme to restore the good ecological status of the Baltic marine environment by 2021. Other organisations with which to cooperate for this goal include the CCB, SIWI and more recently the Race for the Baltic pursued by the Zennström Foundation as well as the urban wastewater projects pursued by the Sendzimir Foundation.

SDG7 ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL This goal prescribes a number of targets that are already being pursued in the BSR on a national level, as highlighted previously in this chapter, in conjunction with the EU's Climate and Energy Package and the related 20-20-20 targets. Relevant targets set by goal number seven are "increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix"; "double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency" and "enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology". These targets are also pursued by the means provided by the EUSBSR, and especially the focal pints listed under PA Energy. Partners here are the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit as well as a series of others, including BASREC, the UBC and universities.

SDG8 PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL The SD fundament, on which many of the BSR countries are directly or indirectly based on, is to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation. Economic growth is mainly pursued on the national level through growth that includes social and environmental concerns, which translates into efforts that aim to transform the national energy sector. Inclusive and sustainable growth is also aligned with efforts listed in the EUSBSR, given that one of the three overall objectives is to increase prosperity in the region, by means e.g. of innovation. However, there are also other paths that are being pursued across the region in order to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation. One particular path is through efforts related to sustainable consumption and production. These efforts are envisioned to contribute to resource efficiency, thus preserving the natural capital via e.g. a reduced use of raw materials. In view of this, the SDG target: "Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead" and supports well the BSR activities. Important partners for this goal include for example the UBC.

SDG9 BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALISATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION This goal refers to the sustainable development of infrastructure in the Baltic Sea region. Transport infrastructure includes development of train traffic to reduce car traffic. Resilient and sustainable energy infrastructure includes electric grids rather than gas and oil pipelines, while also renewables such as biogas should be included. Finally information infrastructure is part of this goal, and should be pursued on a macro-regional level. Possible partners in work to achieve this goal include

VASAB, the UBC and several of the universities in the region as well as the Northern Dimension Partnership on Transport and Logistics (NDPTL).

SDG10 REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES In order to secure welfare for all, the states in the region should be aware of the fact, that the existing market economy system is likely to increase economic inequalities if not being regulated. In addition, further improvements in tackling issues related to shadow economy should be undertaken in some of the BSR countries. Applying efficient control measurements is an urgent matter in regards to this. Partners to meet the problems and to achieve this goals could include besides the governments, e.g. the Stockholm School of Economics with partner institutions in several BSR States, as well as the Stockholm Resilience Centre together with the Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics.

SDG11 MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE While SD actions within cities are not as such directly pursued in a BSR SD environment, cities are at the forefront of implementing SD policies in the region. Nonetheless, some of the prescribed targets falling within goal number eleven are pursued in a BSR SD environment, e.g. supporting the economic, social and environmental links between urban, city outskirts and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning. Other actions pursued, especially by the voluntary macro-regional network of local governments, the Union of the Baltic Cities, are improving air quality and waste management in cities, as well as facilitating the process whereby cities adopt and implement integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters. Interesting partners here include the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit, the UBC, the Sendzimir Foundation with much work on sustainable urban development and several of the universities.

SDG12 ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS This goal is interlinked with the previous listed goal number eight, but has a more comprehensive approach on sustainable consumption and production. It details besides the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, targets including e.g. "sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources', 'halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses', 'achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimise their adverse impacts on human health and the environment' and 'substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse'. Measures to work for this goal thus include the development of green economy, with recycling economy as well as the economy of sharing, an improved waste management and the recycling of resources. Important actors are again the local authorities and several of the universities, as well as the CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit, which has sustainable urban (and rural) development as one of its strategic areas under the EUSBSR.

SDG13 TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT The action prescribed include e.g. 'strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters', 'integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning' and 'improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning'. Combatting climate change is a central focal point vis-à-vis the national SD setting as demonstrated by the macro-regional institutions dealing with these issues. The strengthening of resilience and adaptive capacity is especially relevant on a macro-regional level, through the HA Climate in the EUSBSR, and also by other relevant actors. Combatting climate has be-

come such a central focus in the BSR that the notion of climate change and SD are to some extent interchangeable notions. Albeit the focus on the SD national sphere is on combatting climate change via transforming the energy sector, there is e.g. separate national mitigation and adaptation climate change policy documents for dealing with strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters. The role of good forest management should not be forgotten here as the forests in the region have an important role as CO2 sinks. Cooperation between HA 'Climate' and PA 'Secure' will be increasingly important in the future.

SDG14 CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Goal number fourteen focuses on target that seek to 'prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution', 'sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans' and 'effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics'. Many of the aforementioned targets interlink with targets set out by SDG number six. These targets coincide also with the efforts of protecting the Baltic Sea and its ecosystem. The listed targets are especially relevant for the efforts to reduce eutrophication, i.e. nutrient enrichment or nutrient pollution, of the Baltic Sea, a consequence of land-based activities, as is also the target of implementing a science-based management plan, in order to properly manage the Baltic Sea and its ecosystems. While the latter is not *per se* highlighted in the BSR SD cooperation, supportive efforts of introducing a science-based management plan are

being undertaken, especially by BONUS, a joint Baltic Sea research and development programme for 2010-2017. BONUS was initiated by eight EU Member States around the Baltic Sea who fund jointly with the EU's Seventh Program for research, technological development and demonstration by a total of EUR 100 million. Russia participates through bilateral agreements (BONUS Science for a Better Future of the Baltic Sea Region, 2015). Important macro-regional partners include HELCOM, Baltic Earth (former BALTEX), SIWI and WWF.

SDG15 PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS For the BSR the focus here is on the protection of biodiversity and good management of landscapes. The areas are regulated by several EU directives and initiatives, not the least the Natura 2020 Programme and the Bird's Directive. Natura 2000 is implemented in all BSR countries.

SDG16 PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS It is obvious that sustainable development is not possible in a situation of military conflicts. Several macro-regional stakeholders are active in conflict resolution and constitute an important resource here. Also several of the macro-regional networks active since the 1990s pursue dialogue rather than conflict as a means to improve cooperation in the region.

SDG17 STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT This goal on implementation is not applicable here but discussed in chapter 4.

GOAL 6.
ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and increasing recycling and safe reuse by [x] per cent globally

6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through trans boundary cooperation as appropriate

6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes

GOAL 7.
ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix

7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology

GOAL 8.
PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead

GOAL 11.
MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage

11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and decrease by [x] per cent the economic losses relative to gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning

11.b By 2020, increase by [x] per cent the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, develop and implement, in line with the forthcoming Hyogo Framework, holistic disaster risk management at all levels

GOAL 12.
ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

12.1 Implement the 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries

12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities

12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

GOAL 13.
TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACT

13.1. Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters,

13.2. Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

13.3. Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning'

GOAL 14.
CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information

14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organisation fisheries subsidies negotiation

CHAPTER 6

BALTIC SEA REGION
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
CAPACITY

THE BALTIC SEA REGION HAS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

The Baltic Sea Region has excellent opportunities for becoming a forerunner in the transition towards a sustainable future. The region has a uniquely long history of cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe exemplified by the Helsinki Convention (1974), the CBSS (1992) and a history of and a history of Nordic cooperation manifested by the formation of the Nordic Council in 1952. The natural resource base in the region is in a global perspective rich. The share of renewable energy is the highest in the EU and in general increasing.

Opportunities for cooperation in the BSR are manifold. The BSR has a large number of networks for all kinds of cooperation, such as in the fields of environment, economy, social affairs, culture, research, and so forth. The states with the task of governing a transition towards sustainability thus have a unique support mechanism from other stakeholders in the region to draw from. Most of the SD activity in the region is an outcome of multi-stakeholder partnerships. The potential in terms of further enhancing SD governance are great. The regional groups often have a very large competence in their specific areas and provide opportunities for expertise, innovation and mutual learning.

There are **SHARED SD GOALS** in the region, most importantly within the climate and energy policy, which is seen as a platform to deliver future inclusive economic growth, but also broad societal development, welfare growth, and development of human, cultural and social capital, education, innovation and employment efforts, preserving the natural capital, protecting biodiversity, an ecological balance, efficient use of raw materials, reduced pollution, sustainable production and consumption.

IN SHORT OUR RECOMMENDATIONS ARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. FACILITATE SD COOPERATION ACROSS THE REGION

2. FACILITATE THE PROCESS FOR RESPONDING COHERENTLY IN RELATION TO THE SDGS OF THE UN

3. INTRODUCE BSR SD MONITORING IN SELECTED AREAS

4. ESTABLISH REGIONAL PLATFORMS IN THE BSR FOR MUTUAL LEARNING

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The region has a uniquely long history of cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe exemplified by the Helsinki Convention (1974) and a history of Nordic cooperation manifested by the formation of the Nordic Council in 1952.

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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS ARE NEEDED

The Independent Research Forum points out in its Policy Paper (2013) that a new approach for achieving development is needed. The former governance frameworks characterised by top-down steering and multiple discrete actions is not able to deliver what is necessary. To address development in an integrated way, governance frameworks need to be aligned with multi-stakeholder decision-making processes and by cross-scale coordination. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are viewed as a mean to respond to the multifaceted SD activities, required to tackle systematic barriers to progress (United Nations, 2015; Independent Research Forum, 2013). Multi-stakeholder partnerships should be viewed as a mobiliser, which shares knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources. Carefully constructed multi-stakeholder partnerships can facilitate participation and voluntary engagement and draw on the assets and strengths of different actors (United Nations, 2015).

The roles, and in particular the collaboration of a range of stakeholders active at different levels of governance, are emphasised as a mean to both facilitate and drive action. An essential governance feature for enabling the built-up of these partnerships is an intensive cooperation among relevant stakeholders at all the different levels of governance. The basis for building cooperation is an equitable participatory process, characterised by transparency and accountability (Independent Research Forum, 2013).

Enhanced BSR SD governance is about the combined and collective actions by a variety of stakeholders, including macro-regional partnerships along with national and subnational. A central element in enabling the development of an enhanced SD governance capacity is **CROSS-SCALE COORDINATION** and subsequent **INTERACTION AMONG GOVERNANCE LEVELS**, which allows the scaling up of good practices, which have been enabled by multidimensional project activity. Decision-making should be driven by knowledge-based and inclusive processes. However, structures for cross-scale coordination have been slow to develop (Independent Research Forum, 2013). If stakeholders operating at various governance levels are part of the decision-making processes, agreed actions become more effective and feasible and implementing agencies are more accountable (Independent Research Forum, 2013).

KEY GOVERNANCE FEATURES FOR ENABLING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Governance features that can either enable or impede SD responses across the region are listed in Figure 6.1. The opportunities and constraints are clustered into three broad, interconnecting and interdependent governance areas. Important for BSR SD governance are cooperation, activity and finance. Perhaps the most imperative is finance as it has large implications for the results.

The in-built barriers against cooperation in the BSR are mostly found between peers at different governance levels, i.e. vertical integration. Governance stakeholders operating at the same level are more inclined to share similarities in terms of common interest and common agendas. Conversely, vertical interaction and cross-scale cooperation is dependent on finding common interest. Given the voluntary nature of vertical interaction, cross-scale coordination is thus too often of short-term.

The BSR however, offers excellent opportunities for fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships. Most SD activity in the region is an outcome of multi-stakeholder partnerships. These schemes oftentimes have as a requirement for funding, that project constellations should include stakeholders which represent different countries and sectors. Interaction and cooperation patterns in the BSR are thus constantly developing and stakeholders interact in new ways, involving

not only macro-regional, sub-national and national stakeholders, but also stakeholders representing the private sector, academia and NGOs. From a global perspective, the BSR is at the forefront with regard to cooperation that involves multi-stakeholder partnerships.

BSR SD activity is frequently pursued across the region, by stakeholders operating at the various governance levels. The coherency of this activity is difficult to establish. Whereas the EU functions as an overall coordinator in terms of SD goal setting, the prerequisites for implementing activities falling under these goals are markedly different in the region. National norms and national capacity ultimately determines the outcome of implementation efforts.

The BSR SD activities are often problematic. They are typically difficult to coordinate, subject to potential overlaps and inconsistencies, and mostly short-term based on project stakeholder constellations. In addition they are often sectorial, but what is required is an integrated approach. Much of this is due to financing. Long-term financing are usually confined to the national space.

What generally drives BSR SD activities are the funding schemes for project activities. These only enable short-term financing, and are not necessarily aligned with the SD focal points in the BSR. There are no general and straightforward procedures to address these constraints.

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There is thus much to do to improve SD governance in the region. But the basis for effective governance already exists. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can respond rationally to the SGDs, and can also be a mean for tackling systematic barriers. Multi-stakeholder partnerships should therefore be strengthened, as the partners all have a vested interest to work for a more sustainable BSR. Their prerequisites to act needs to be improved, e.g. in terms improved financing and policy influence.

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FIGURE 6.1 **BSR SD GOVERNANCE – OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

BSR SD COOPERATION
COOPERATION PATTERN FEATURES THAT PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERACTION AND COOPERATION IN THE BSR MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

OPPORTUNITY
→ Most of the SD activity in the region, with the exception of national level activity, is an outcome of multi-stakeholder partnerships

CONSTRAINT
→ Operational cooperation arrangements are impeded by in-built barriers
→ Inclined to serve horizontal cooperation, whereas cross-scale cooperation is often of short-term nature which does not necessarily embrace the full SD integrated spectrum

BSR SD ACTIVITY
FEATURES THAT TYPIFY SD ACTIVITY IN THE REGION, BOTH IN TERMS OF GOAL SETTING AND IMPLEMENTATION PATTERNS

OPPORTUNITY
→ Many of the shared BSR challenges are addressed via SD related activities
→ SD activities are carried out across the region, by stakeholders operating at the various governance levels that comprise the region

CONSTRAINT
→ Generally BSR SD activities are difficult to coordinate
→ SD goals are set to target challenges that require integrated responses, but activities are often carried out in terms of sectorial approaches

BSR SD FINANCING
FINANCING FEATURES THAT ENABLE SD ACTION AND SD COOPERATION IN THE REGION

OPPORTUNITY
→ The features of the financing available for BSR SD activity provide opportunities for just-in-time action by a variety of stakeholders

CONSTRAINT
→ The drawback of the financing available is, besides only enabling short-term action, that the funding schemes providing financial means are not necessarily aligned with the SD focal points in the BSR

→ 6.4
THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following, three kinds of recommendations will be presented. As emphasised earlier the listed recommendations are ambitious but attainable to implement. The recommendations seek to strengthen the BSR macro-regional actors within the larger BSR in order to enable a more systematic and coherent SD cooperation in the region, and to enable mutual learning in the region for implementation of the SDGs. Organisations active in the BSR, not only the ones that are listed in this report, represent a collective strength and an opportunity that is at the moment not pursued and utilised to its full extend.

FIGURE 6.2
ENHANCING THE PRECONDITIONS FOR FUTURE BSR SD COOPERATION
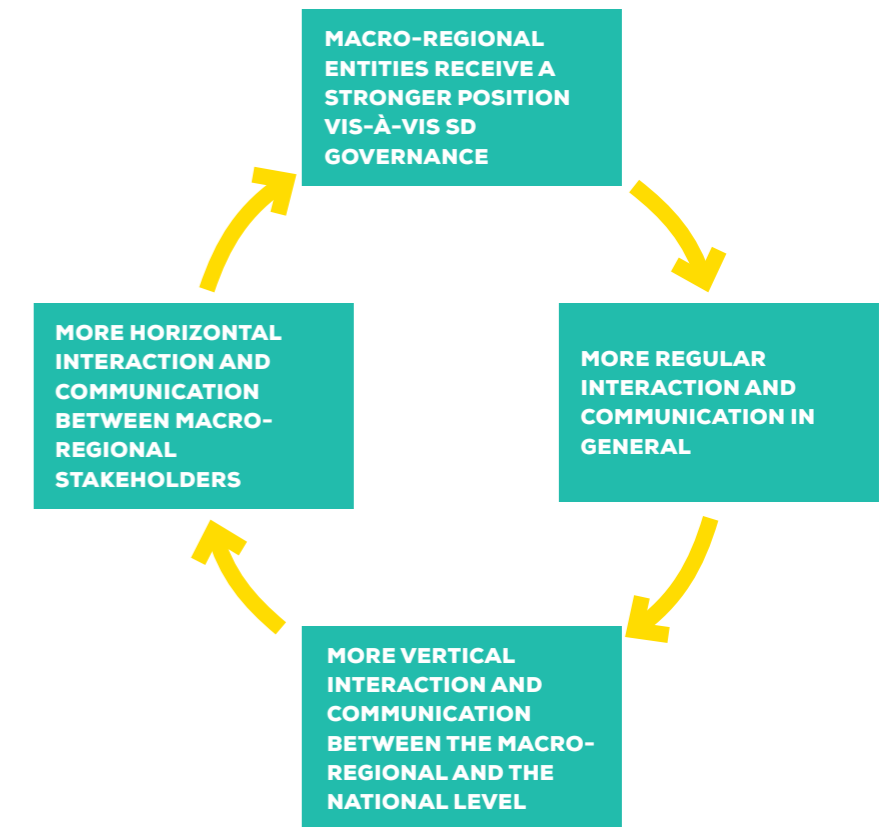
The realities of the BSR SD set the scene for **THE FIRST RECOMMENDATION**: Both in relation to SD activities in general and in relation to activities affiliated with the SDGs, the BSR SD fundament needs to be strengthened. A multitude of stakeholders are involved in BSR SD activities, and many work successfully towards SD, but to efficiently use the means available to them, there is a need to strengthen BSR SD ownership. This does not imply that one single entity needs to have the overall ownership and accountability for SD in the region, but rather that SD ownership and

accountability should be a shared responsibility. By working systematically together, the preconditions for future SD activity is enhanced.

Macro-regional entities need to be viewed as legitimate governance stakeholders, and their position should be acknowledged to a greater extent, especially by national SD stakeholders, as facilitators of SD action. National stakeholders should more fully acknowledge the added value of these stakeholders, e.g. in terms of cooperation possibilities. A starting point could be to introduce more regularity in terms of vertical

communication and interaction, between macro-regional and national level stakeholders. Secondly, macro-regional stakeholders themselves should embrace the integrated SD view, interact more frequently with other peer macro-regional stakeholders to provide better prerequisites for an overall coordination of SD activities in the region, reducing possible overlapping activities, and increasing the coherency of SD activities. Figure 6.2, summarises how future BSR SD cooperation could be enhanced by strengthened BSR SD ownership and accountability.

RECOMMENDATION TWO concerns systematic monitoring of future implementation activities. SD monitoring has been emphasised as crucial for implementing the SDGs. The EU Council Conclusions point out that indicators and data should be based on existing indicators in order to ensure robust datasets and cost effective solutions, and be built on already established systems for monitoring. The Conclusions further highlight that monitoring at national level should also contribute to monitoring at global level including through the provision of statistics and other relevant information regarding global indicators (Council of the European Union, 2015). The UN emphasises that the regional level provides a useful forum for peer review and learning, and encourages countries to work at the regional level to ensure progress on trans-boundary issues and on regionally shared targets (United Nations, 2015).

Regionally shared targets could constitute the basis for BSR SD monitoring. Regional monitoring could help to ensure progress on trans-boundary issues, and facilitate a more coherent progress in relation to shared SD goals. Beneficial for a future SD cooperation would therefore be the introduction of BSR monitoring in selected areas. The basis for monitoring would be to utilise applicable and reliable SD indicators.

It is important to comprehend that using indicators is a demanding and challenging task, since indicator data that may have been collected via different channels by different methods, and perhaps collected during different timeframes may compromise the reliability and validity of the assessment. Also, long-term intervals, or perhaps outdated data, can make it difficult to interpret the indicator data. Therefore, when choosing relevant and reliable indicator data, the ideal would be to use data from a single source, which have been collected in a similar manner during the same period in order to reduce any possible reliability and validity issues.

Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, and the data aggregated by relevant Eurostat indicators could provide the base on which BSR SD monitoring could be based on. Eurostat has developed a set of Sustainable Development Indicators (SDI) which covers most Baltic Sea States, including also

non-EU Members, like Norway. The SDIs are used to monitor the EU SD Strategy and are presented in ten themes. Each theme are headed by headline indicators, except of one theme (good governance).

> ❝
> The UN emphasises that the regional level provides a useful forum for peer review and learning, and encourages countries to work at the regional level to ensure progress on trans-boundary issues and on regionally shared targets (United Nations, 2015).
> ❞

One of these themes is *'climate change and energy'*, which covers areas and activities that are being actively pursued by the Baltic States. Eurostat utilises three headline indicators *'Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Share of Renewables in gross final energy consumption'* and *'Primary Energy Consumption'.* All three headline indicators have data for the Baltic Sea States, Iceland and Russia excluded. The headline indicator of *Greenhouse Gas Emissions* have available data on all Baltic Sea States except Iceland, Norway and Russia, as is the case also for the headline indicator of *Primary Energy Consumption,* whereas the headline indicator of *Share of Renewables in gross final energy consumption* have data for all BSR countries, except of Iceland and Russia. Eurostat has a quality profile for each indicator data set. The quality profile is only available for *Greenhouse Gas Emissions* and *Share of Renewables in gross final energy consumption.* Both indicator data sets score high in terms of geographical comparability and comparability over time. Data on *Greenhouse Gas Emissions* have a high overall accuracy, while the data on *Share of Renewables in gross final energy consumption* has a medium level accuracy overall.

Any BSR SD monitoring would need to be based on voluntary basis and driven by incentives to participate and be based on the rational put forward by the EU Council

Conclusions, i.e. build on already established systems for monitoring. BSR SD monitoring could rely on entities that have the necessary capacity and knowledge, either at a national level, or on a macro-regional level by utilising the information produced by Eurostat. Eurostat and its indicators will have a central role in monitoring the progress of implementation of SDGs in Europe and is currently working on the last monitoring report of the EU SDS and will, subsequently, adopt a new reporting structure that will focus on the SDGs (European Sustainable Development Network, 2015a).

However, we need to recognise that not all SDG targets can be followed by using Eurostat data. The most rational way to coordinate the work over the entire region would be through the CBSS and new monitoring processes developed by the CBSS, too. Furthermore, it would be the best approach to establish cooperation between different organisations which have already the competence and capacity to collect data. Various opportunities to start such processes can be indicated in all sectors.
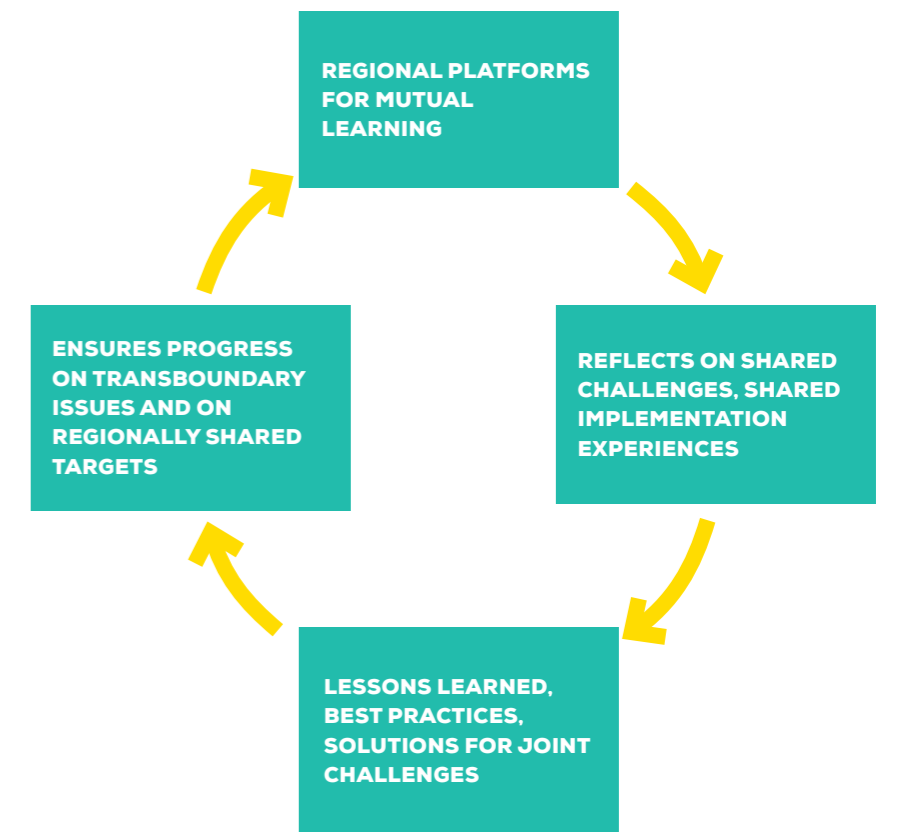
The last and **THIRD RECOMMENDATION** has its focus on the SDGs. There is no unified or designated global scheme or strategy for the implementation of the SDGs. In view of this, there is a general need for mutual learning, not only at a national level, the level implementing the SDGs, but also at other governance levels, in order to develop necessary capacity for implementation of the SDGs. Learning and capacity-building can be developed on a national level, but also the global or regional levels can be useful platforms for mutual learning. Mutual learning could help to ensure the progress on trans-boundary issues and on regionally shared targets. Operating learning platforms would offer a space where affiliated stakeholders could share their implementation experiences.

The UN encourages Member States to identify suitable regional fora in which to engage on useful opportunities for mutual learning (United Nations, 2015). Therefore this report suggests that the BSR could constitute as a suitable geographical entity within the larger EU for mutual learning on SDG implementation. The region is in comparison to the EU or in a global perspective, rather unified.

> ❝
> There is a general need for mutual learning, not only at a national level, the level implementing the SDGs, but also at other governance levels, in order to develop necessary capacity for implementation of the SDGs. Learning and capacity-building can be developed on a national level, but also the global or regional levels can be useful platforms for mutual learning.
> ❞

Regional platforms could facilitate action based on policy lessons learned, mutual exchange of experiences with national and local level implementation, best practices and challenges, regional issues, discussing and finding solutions for joint challenges and trans-boundary issues. Platforms for mutual

FIGURE 6.3
BENEFITS OF REGIONAL PLATFORMS IN RELATION TO SDG IMPLEMENTATION

REGIONAL PLATFORMS FOR MUTUAL LEARNING

REFLECTS ON SHARED CHALLENGES, SHARED IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCES

LESSONS LEARNED, BEST PRACTICES, SOLUTIONS FOR JOINT CHALLENGES

ENSURES PROGRESS ON TRANSBOUNDARY ISSUES AND ON REGIONALLY SHARED TARGETS

learning could be hosted by already existing relevant SD macro-regional organisations. Setting up appropriate regional platforms would need to consider firstly, for which SDGs there is a particular need for a platform for mutual learning, and secondly, to identify a suitable macro-regional stakeholder that can act as a host for this platform.

As an example, SDG13, *'Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact',* could involve the CBSS and its Baltic2030 Unit as a regional platform, to enable mutual learning. The CBSS Baltic 2030 Unit has responsibility for the Horizontal Action (HA) Climate under the EUSBSR. HA Climate

establishes a strategic dialogue between governments for supporting the development of a national low-carbon economy (EUSBSR, 2015b). Another central focal action is facilitating the BSR Climate Change Dialogue Platform. Hence a platform is already in place, enabling mutual learning as a mean to adapt to climate change.

CONCLUSIONS

As of 2016 the SDGs are expected to be implemented across the world. Key for the transition and the adoption of the SDGs are the SD Strategies, viewed as key instruments for guiding decision-making and the implementation of SD at all scales of governance. The UN encourages Member States to develop ambitious national responses to the SDGs and targets as soon as possible (United Nations, 2015). National SD strategies, ownerships and accountability are thus essential for the implementation of the SDGs. Several EU MS have prepared for the introduction of the SDGs by organising events, meetings and workshops for public servants, but also dialogues with stakeholders to exchange views and broaden participation towards the 2030 Agenda (European Sustainable Development Network, 2015b).

The European SD Network (ESDN), an informal network of public administrators and other experts dealing with SD Strategies in Europe, have arranged meeting for stakeholders on issues related to the SDGs. These meetings have addressed e.g. peer-to-peer recommendations, for defining appropriate goals and national monitoring procedures for the SDGs. National discussions and preparations of SD indicators have been organised to align national indicators and structures of national progress with the SDGs (European Sustainable Development Network, 2015b). EU Member States have also started processes to incorporate results from the 2030 Agenda in their National SD Strategies (European Sustainable Development Network, 2015b).

The EU Council has underlined that the EU as a policy entity, via the EU 2020 Strategy, the EU SDS, and the 7th Environment Action Program is committed to SD (Council of the European Union 2015). Processes such as the Europe 2020 Review could be used to share best practices and build knowledge and awareness across EU MS in relation to the implementation of the SDGs (Council of the European Union, 2015). With regard to the proposed SD Global Partnership and the need of a strong monitoring, accountability and review framework for the SDGs, the EU has expressed its need for a policy unit to support capacity building, including statistics and monitoring (Council of the European Union, 2015).

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