

Sustainable development

INCREASING THE GOVERNMENT'S CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE POLICY COHERENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Sweden has long championed efforts to promote policy coherence, notably through its Policy on Global Development, and will apply this key instrument for implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- ▶ The country recognises the importance of identifying and analysing critical interactions among the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for greater impact globally and encourages the consideration of transboundary and intergenerational policy effects.

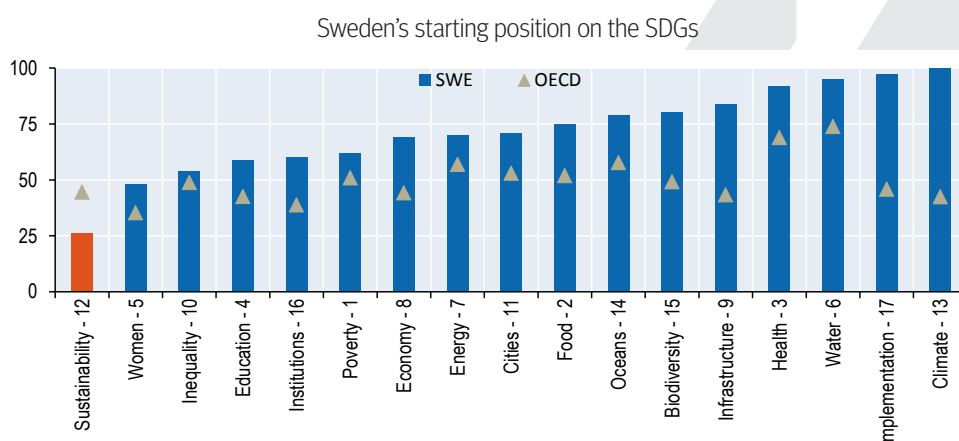
What's the issue?

The OECD's pilot assessment of Sweden's starting position in relation to the SDGs suggests that Sweden performs well in most areas. Even though Sweden encourages the consideration of transboundary and intergenerational policy effects, in particular with regard to its environmental goals and the so-called "Generational Goal", it could do even better on the related SDG 12 on sustainability (see Figure). Goal 12 calls on countries to minimise natural resource use, waste and pollutants throughout the entire production and consumption process. While the OECD's pilot study does not assess a country's situation in a fully integrated manner, the country's relatively weak performance on Goal 12 nonetheless suggests that Sweden's contribution to the global achievement of the 2013 Agenda could benefit from a change in its domestic consumption and production patterns that would reduce the country's

material footprint and domestic material consumption. For example, an integrated approach would encourage Swedish policy makers to gauge the country's intensity of water use domestically against its consumption of imported water-intensive goods and services. Similarly, it should consider its high use of renewable energy (more than half of the energy delivered to final consumers) against the carbon footprint of its food waste.

Sweden's Policy for Global Development recognises the need to identify synergies and trade-offs between all goals. A challenge going forward will be to translate the political commitment into practice, including developing national indicators and targets. Moreover, a strong institutional setup is needed, together with coherent strategies for SDG implementation that also account for the impact of domestic policies on other countries and

Sweden can improve the sustainability of its consumption and production patterns



Note: The chart shows SDG target scores averaged at Goal level. A 100 score at Goal level indicates that every underlying target is already met. A 0 score at Goal level indicates that the underlying targets received one of the three lowest OECD country scores.

Source: OECD (2016), *Measuring Distance to the SDGs Targets: A Pilot Assessment of Where Countries Stand*, OECD Publishing.

future generations. The new action plans put forth by each ministry will play an important role for clarifying the respective mandates and responsibilities for SDG implementation.

Why is this important for Sweden?

Achieving SDG 12 is one of the key criteria for transformation by 2030. An integrated analysis of all goals and targets could help Sweden to better identify appropriate policies and actions with the greatest cumulative impact on the global achievement of the 2030 Agenda and that leaves no one behind. Policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) can support this process by helping to ensure that institutional mechanisms are adapted to deliver the integrated policies required by the new agenda. PCSD also provides a framework for identifying critical interactions among the 17 SDGs, for balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and for considering the effects of policies on future generations and on other countries, particularly the least developed and vulnerable ones. For example, by changing its consumption and production patterns at home, Sweden can contribute to more sustainable business practices at the global level, minimise its “footprint” elsewhere and, as part of a collective effort, contribute to overall global well-being for current and future generations. National indicators and targets would enable the government to ensure that progress is being made.



Further reading

OECD (2016), *Better Policies for Sustainable Development 2016: A New Framework for Policy Coherence*, OECD Publishing. <http://www.oecd.org/development/better-policies-for-sustainable-development-2016-9789264256996-en.htm>

OECD (2016), *Measuring Distance to the SDGs Targets: A pilot assessment of where OECD countries stand*, OECD Publishing. <http://www.oecd.org/fr/std/measuring-distance-to-the-sdgs-targets.htm>

OECD (2016), *Survey on planning and co-ordinating the implementation of the SDGs: Results*, OECD Publishing. <http://www.oecd.org/gov/cob-sdg-survey-overview-of-results.pdf>

What should policy makers do?

- ▶ Ensure that political commitment is translated into concrete actions for coherent SDG implementation.
- ▶ Build on the OECD pilot assessment of OECD countries' starting positions to establish priorities and to develop coherent strategies for SDG implementation.
- ▶ Strengthen institutional mechanisms and clarify the mandates and responsibilities of all stakeholders.
- ▶ Look at goals and targets as an integrated whole to identify synergies and trade-offs.
- ▶ Consider the impacts of domestic policies on other countries and on future generations.
- ▶ Identify those goals and targets where domestic action would have the greatest impact on global sustainability outcomes.
- ▶ Develop national indicators and targets for SDG implementation, including on target 17.14 to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.
- ▶ Include PCSD as part of national reporting on SDG implementation to the High Level Political Forum.

