2022 Sustainable Development Transformation Forum
Accelerating the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels

Theme: Sustainable Development Governance: Is it Fit for Purpose?

Contribution by Louis Meuleman

- Director, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development, Brussels
- Vice chair of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), New York
- Vice chair of the Scientific Committee of the European Environment Agency, Copenhagen
- Visiting professor public governance, Leuven University, Belgium

- **Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development** (**PCSD**) **is almost a proxy for sustainability governance: If PCSD is good, it generates better governance frameworks for all SDGs**

- **The 8 domains (UNEP) or Principles (OECD) cover many key governance challenges:**

1. **Institutionalised Political Commitment** /Political Commitment & Leadership
2. **Long-term considerations** / Strategic Long-term Vision
3. **Interministerial and cross-sectoral coordination** / Whole-of-Government Coordination
4. **Participatory processes** / Stakeholder Engagement
5. **Integration of the three dimensions of sust. development, assessment of policy effects and linkages** / Policy Integration
6. **Consultation and coordination across government levels** / Sub-national Engagement
7. **Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence** / Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation
8. **Financial resources and tools** / Policy and Financing Impacts

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

Handbook for SDG Indicator **17.14.1** of the Sustainable Development Goals

Implementing the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development: Guidance Note

Examples of PCSD-stimulating structures and mechanisms:

1. **Integration in an SD strategy or action plan, and/or separate PCSD Action Plan**

3. **Participation in global Community of Practice (UNEP with OECD, Launch 10 Nov 2022)**

2. **Interministerial (high-level) Coordination Team**

Applying the indicator with a self-assessment tool (UNREP)

Indicator 17.14.1: Number of countries with mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development					**Full Metadata**
Theme	**Domain**	**Yes/No**	**Points**	**Score**	**Supporting evidence**
1. Institutionalized political commitment	Political commitment expressed/endorsed by the highest level	No	5	0	
	Additional specific commitments (1 point each, maximum of 5 points):				
	• Set timelines for the achievement of policy coherence objectives;	No			
	• A dedicated budget;	No	5	0	
	• Defined roles and responsibilities;	No			
	• Regular reporting mechanism;	No			
	• Explicit consideration of international commitments;	No			
	• Other nationally relevant commitment.	No			
2. Long-term considerations	Long-term objectives going beyond the current electoral cycle included in national strategies	No	5	0	
	Additional specific mechanisms (1 point each, maximum of 5 points):				
	• A commissioner, council or ombudsperson for future generations;	No			
	• Other mechanisms of scrutiny or oversight on possible future effects;	No	5	0	
	• Mechanisms for regular appraisal of policies;	No			
	• Impact assessment mechanisms; and	No			
	• Other nationally relevant factors.	No			
3. Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination	National mechanism for regular coordination	No	5	0	
	Additional elements (maximum of 5 points):				
	• A mandate to make decisions regarding trade-offs (2 points);	No			
	• Coordination body is convened by a centralized government body (1 point);	No	5	0	
	• Coordination at both political level and technical level (1 point);	No			
	• Mandate for aligning internal and external policies (1 point);	No			

Linking PCSD to individual SDGs can give insight in typical governance challenges

Issues per 'Policy Coherence for SD' domain

Issues per selected SDG for all PCSD domains

PCSD governance domains/ principles	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 17	SDG 16
1. Institutionalised Political Commitment /Political Commitment & Leadership	- Top leadership & commitment - Top-down & bottom-up; - Metagovernance mechanisms - Return of street-level bureaucracy	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
2. Long-term considerations / Strategic Long-term Vision	- Long lead time of education - Strategies for lifelong learning - Foresight & resilience of education systems	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
3. Interministerial and cross-sectoral coordination / Whole-of-Government Coordination	- Silo-thinking - Whole-of-government - Cross-sectoral collaboration & CSO engagement	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
4. Participatory processes / Stakeholder Engagement	- Civil society coalitions - Education partnerships	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
5. Integration of the three dimensions of sust. development, assessment of policy effects and linkages / Policy Integration	- Diversity and inclusion - Cultural change	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
6. Consultation and coordination across government levels / Sub-national Engagement	- Multilevel governance	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
7. Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence / Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation	- Top-down, participative and/or privatised accountability systems - Performance agreements for equitable access - Assessment frameworks to measure progress	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues
8. Financial resources and tools / Policy and Financing Impacts	- Basic (mandatory) training on the SDGs - Access to remote learning - Financing higher education and qualified teachers	issues	issues	issues	issues	issues

Source (forthcoming): Ingeborg Niestroy, Publication Reflecting on SDTF 21-22

Principles of
Effective Governance
for Sustainable Development

Effectiveness
- » Competence
- » Sound policymaking
- » Collaboration

Accountability
- » Integrity
- » Transparency
- » Independent oversight

Inclusiveness
- » Leaving no one behind
- » Non-discrimination
- » Participation
- » Subsidiarity
- » Intergenerational equity

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
G⊙ALS

- Use the principles to test new strategies/policies/action plans:

Principles	Action1	Action2	Action3	Action4	Action5
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

A shift is taking place:

From: Governments central and stakeholders in partnerships with governments

To: Policentrism, pluriformity and meta-governance (governance style mixtures and steering mechanisms) at all levels
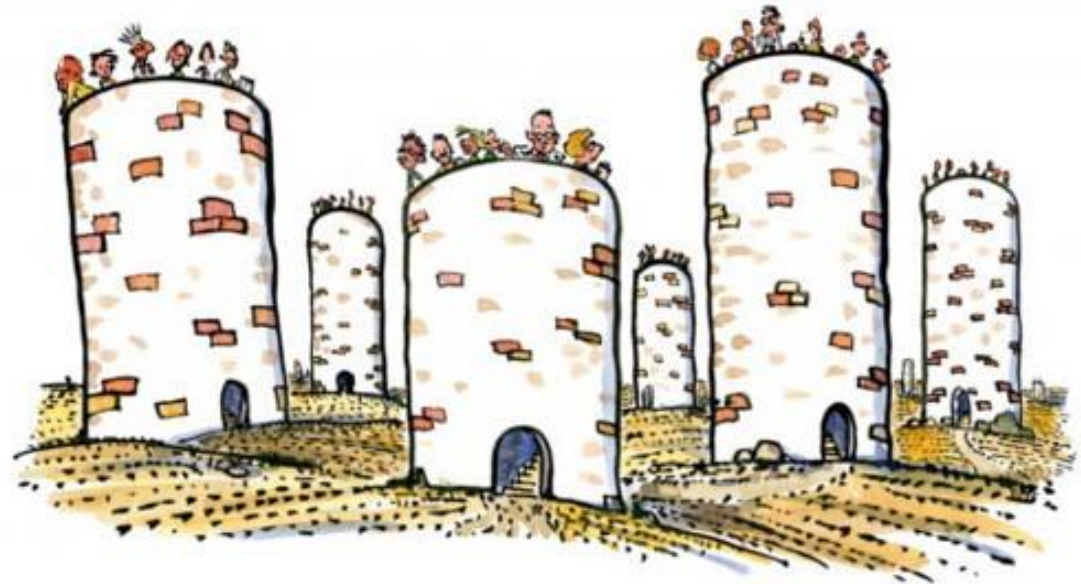
But:

➢ The poli-crisis brought back governments in full power – as long as there are crises, they don't want stakeholder involvement

➢ Where governments focus on crisis management, stakeholders have to tackle more with complex, wicked problems.

1. **If we needed one headline indicator representing PCSD, it would be the one on <u>mechanisms for horizontal coordination </u>between ministries/departments, to change silo mentality into collaboration**

[Point of attention: if a ministry sees no silos it might be that they work in isolation (e.g. ministry of agriculture, or defense)]

2. Five 'i' s to work harder on:

- Insight -> mindsets, the cultural dimension, silo thinking

- Influence -> power/influence relations are a reality

- Instruments -> tools to guide towards PCSD and measure progress

- Innovation -> of policies, governance, partnerships

- Information -> better knowledge on drivers of policy <u>in</u>coherence is important

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louismeuleman@ps4sd.eu