

# Update 2030 Agenda



Federal Council for Sustainable Development (FRDO-CFDD)

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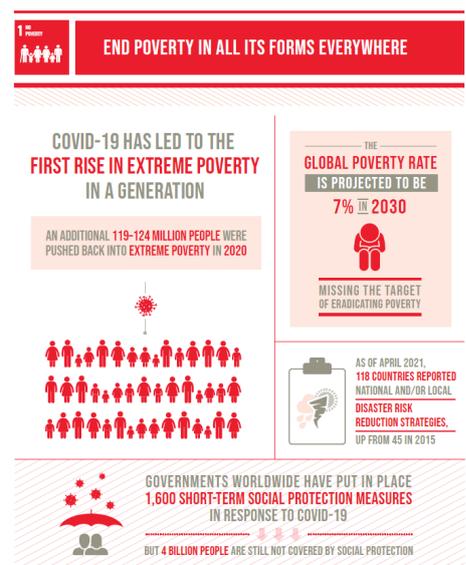
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## Achieving the SDGs at risk because of Covid-19

In recent years, there has already been a delay in implementing the [2030 Agenda](#). The recent analysis on how the global community is achieving [the SDGs](#) shows that the global pandemic has caused a major setback. The recent [Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021](#) has an alarming message. "The pandemic has halted, or reversed, years, or even decades of development progress. Global extreme poverty rose for the first time since 1998." UN Under-Secretary-General Liu Zhenmin said [at the launch of the report](#). In addition to more than four million deaths due to the coronavirus, between 119 and 124 million people were pushed into poverty and 255 million jobs were lost. The inequality that already existed between countries has been exacerbated, as evidenced by unequal access to vaccines. Globally, it is the poorest and most vulnerable who are most at risk of being infected and who also bear the economic consequences. The economic crisis in 2020 ultimately made little difference to the climate crisis. After a brief hiccup, emissions rose rapidly again. The Paris climate targets are still far from being achieved. And the targets for halting the loss of biodiversity were not met either.

However, there are still many opportunities to turn the tide. Many countries are engaged in economic recovery programmes. According to the report,

governments, cities and businesses should use the recovery to make the transition to low-carbon, resilient and inclusive development. That way, we can get the SDGs back on track.



## FRDO-CFDD advises on federal plan for sustainable development

The federal government is working on a new federal sustainable development plan. This plan must become an important lever for a better implementation of the SDGs by our country. In the spring, anyone who wanted to could [respond to the preliminary draft](#). The FRDO-CFDD produced an [extensive](#)

[opinion](#) with a reaction to that preliminary draft. The council is pleased that there will finally be a plan, but still has many reservations about the text. Based on all the reactions, the government should have a definitive plan ready in the autumn.

## HLPF 2021

From 6 to 15 July, the annual [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#) took place. (A [report](#) on the course of the HLPF.) This year the meeting took place in a hybrid format. During the HLPF, a mid-term review of the implementation of the SDGs is made every year. During this edition, there was special attention for the impact of Covid-19. The theme of the forum was the need for a sustainable and resilient recovery in the different countries.

During this HLPF, special attention was paid to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17. It also looked at the 19 targets that were supposed

to be achieved by 2020. 44 countries presented their Voluntary National Review (VNR) in which they explained the imple-

was adopted at the end of the HLPF.

At the end of June, Member States had already reached an agreement on a [review](#) of the functioning of the HLPF. (Photo: IISD)



mentation of the SDGs in their country. There were many side events, including one organized by the [youth organizations](#) of our country. Over the past few months, preparations were made for a ministerial declaration that

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**“Without the Multi-Stakeholder Platform, civil society risks being shut out of the development of EU solutions for sustainable development, which runs counter to the principles of the 2030 Agenda.”**

([Rebecca Humphries, WWF](#))

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## Flash

The special campaign [#culture-re2030goal](#) calls for a structural focus on culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. • The EEB published a report about a [well-being economy](#) within planetary boundaries. A special [documentary](#) was made to accompany the report. • Forum [analyzed](#) the VNRs submitted to the HLPF. • IRENA published a [1.5°C scenario](#). • Have major mega-conferences really brought about progress in sustainable development? An [analysis](#). • A [report](#) on greening trade policy. • A [report](#)

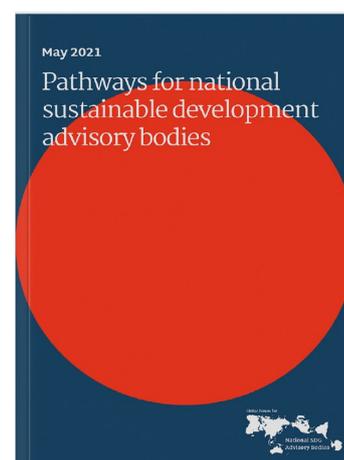
by UNEP on the environmental indicators of the SDGs. • The [Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2021](#). • A report on [human health in the anthropocene](#). • The [‘Dasgupta Review’](#) on the economics of biodiversity.

## Advisory Councils and the SDGs

What role can national advisory councils have in the implementation of the SDGs in their country? On the initiative of the [Global Forum for National SDG Advisory Bodies](#), an extensive study was conducted on this subject. For this purpose, the functioning of advisory councils in Belgium, Namibia, Portugal, Georgia, Kosovo, Mexico, Romania and Senegal was analyzed.

The findings were compiled in an extensive [study](#) and a [summary](#). The research looked at the factors

that determine whether an advisory council has an effective [impact on the policy](#).



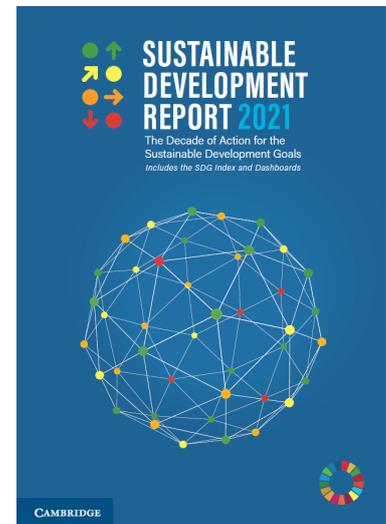
## Sustainable Development Report 2021

The SDSN published the [Sustainable Development Report 2021](#). Every year, it evaluates whether the implementation of the SDGs is going well. Among other things, it contains an SDG Index that maps the performance of all countries in the world. The overall conclusion is that for the first time since the SDGs were adopted in 2015, there is a real decline in their implementation. The average score of countries on the SDG Index has dropped. A major cause is the global pandemic, which caused increasing poverty and unemployment.

The report also points to the limited fiscal space that developing countries have. Governments from rich countries could borrow

money more easily for their economic recovery plans. Poorer countries could not. As a result, richer countries will probably recover more quickly from the current crisis.

The report also looks at so-called 'spillover effects'. These involve the negative impact that countries have on other countries. It is mainly the richest and OECD countries that have the greatest negative impact abroad.



## Flash

What progress has Belgium made towards sustainable development? The Federal Planning Bureau made [an analysis](#) and the conclusion is clear: "Trend break needed to achieve all SDGs by 2030." • Without peace, there is no sustainable development. That is what some [SIPRI researchers](#) say. • We must urgently choose the [circular economy](#), says Olga Algayerova. • A call for the establishment of a [UN Sustainable Development Council](#). • A [report by IEEP](#) on the importance of natural areas as a tool for achie-

ving the SDGs. • A paper on [social work and the SDGs](#). • A study on the [SDGs as a compass](#) for Belgian development cooperation. • An article on [cities and the SDGs](#). • During the HLPF, the trade unions ask attention for [SDG 8 as a social contract](#) for a sustainable recovery policy. • The WBCSD published an update of its [SDG Sector Roadmap Guidelines](#).

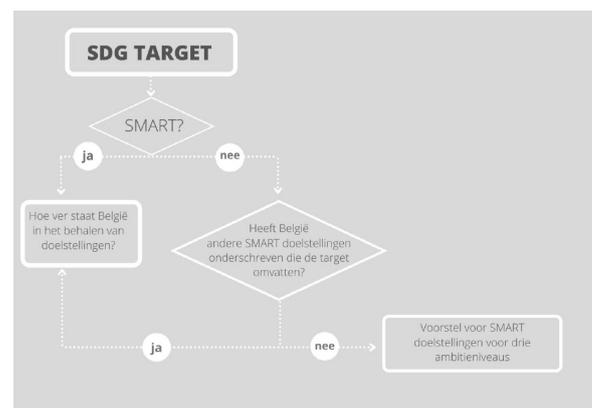
***"The world cannot sustain our rate of use and abuse forever, and it is imperative that we accept the changes in lifestyles and livelihoods necessary to achieve the 2030 goals."***

([Elizabeth Maruma Mrema](#), CBD)

## How is Belgium implementing the SDGs?

A [new study](#), commissioned by the FIDO-IFDD, charts how Belgium is implementing the SDGs and formulates recommendations for improving the policy. The study examines whether the 17 SDGs and 169 targets are 'SMART'. The researchers examined whether the targets are clear, attainable and fair, and which deadlines need to be met. The study shows that 119 targets are SMART and 50 targets are non-SMART. The study also looks at how far Belgium has got in achieving the targets.

The FRDO-CFDD is currently working on an opinion about this study.





FRDO CFDD

**Federal Council for Sustainable  
Development**

*This newsletter is produced under the responsibility of the administrative office of the **Federal Council for Sustainable Development** (FRDO/CFDD). The FRDO/CFDD advises the Belgian government on the federal policy on sustainable development. The council moreover organises activities to enhance the base for sustainable development.*

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## EU approach to SDGs can be improved

What applies to the rest of the world, also applies to the EU: Covid-19 causes a delay in the implementation of the SDGs. This is evident from the new [monitoring report](#) by Eurostat. For a number of SDGs this impact is already visible, for others there is still too little recent data to assess the situation properly. When looking at the results over a five-year period, one sees for a number of SDGs a clear progress, for most SDGs a limited progress and for some SDGs a decline. In the areas of climate, energy and biodiversity, for example, there is little or no progress. The report also examines how SDGs are interlinked and what impact the EU has on other parts of the world (spillover effect).

Also at the political level, a mid-term review of the EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda

was carried out. The Council adopted a set of [conclusions](#) on 22 June. The Council calls for a renewed ambition to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. For example, there should be a clearer link between the SDGs and the Green Deal and the annual planning cycle. The Council is also asking for a better dialogue with civil society, by reinstating the [Multi-Stakeholder Platform on SDGs](#) that was active in the previous legislature.

