



REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

France strongly supported the United Nations' adoption in September 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the world to eradicate extreme poverty, combat inequalities and protect the planet.

This first universal approach provides a new framework for development policies for the next 15 years. It builds on the eight Millennium Development Goals implemented since 2000, which have contributed to real progress with tackling hunger, poverty and child mortality, rolling back pandemics, and improving access to water and education.

Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the new Sustainable Development Goals have a universal dimension and apply to all development challenges in all countries. In addition to the poverty reduction goals, the agenda features new goals to which France is equally attached with respect to environmental protection, gender equality, universal medical coverage, tackling illicit financial flows and corruption, and good governance.

Given our long-standing, unremitting commitment to sustainable development, France has volunteered to present its 2030 Agenda implementation approach at the very first high-level political forum held since the adoption of this agenda.

This report draws on consultations with civil society to present a first review of the implementation of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in France, identifying the main issues and challenges, government courses of action, and good practices and model measures already in place in a spirit of experience sharing.

1) IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN FRANCE: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES

- France has achieved a **high standard of living and quality of life** driven by inclusive social security systems (unemployment benefits, supplementary benefits and redistributive policy) and access for all to healthcare and basic goods and services (water, energy, quality food and education). The country has also developed state-of-the-art public and private infrastructures (innovation and research, transport, communications, and cultural heritage).
- **Yet there is still work to be done**, especially to reduce social, educational and gender **inequalities**, maintain healthy ecosystems and **sustainably manage natural resources**. In a climate of low growth and despite a downturn in recent months, **unemployment** remains persistently too high, especially among young people.

➤ FRANCE IMPLEMENTS THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT AND PROMOTES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- On 17 August 2015, well before COP21, the Energy Transition for Green Growth Act gave legislative shape to France's voluntary commitment to **cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030**.
- The act sets targets to **increase the share of renewable energy sources to over 30% of final energy consumption in 2030** and bring down the share of nuclear power in electricity generation to 50% by 2025.
- The Government led Parliament to pass a "**climate energy contribution**" on greenhouse gas emissions built into the taxes on petroleum products on a pathway, already adopted by Parliament, set to rise from €56 per tonne of CO₂ in 2020 to €100 per tonne of CO₂ in 2030. It will propose that Parliament **introduce a price floor on carbon of some €30 per tonne in the power generation sector in 2017**.
- In June 2016, France was **one of the first industrialised countries to complete its domestic process to ratify the Paris Agreement** and is working with its European partners for the EU in its entirety to ratify it as soon as possible. As a contribution to rapidly increase collective ambition, **France committed to upgrade its mitigation target by 2020**.

➤ FRANCE, A LAND OF POSITIVE ENERGY FOR GREEN GROWTH

- In 2013, the French Government launched the New Face of Industry in France initiative to **position French businesses on new economic growth markets**. The projects backed by the initiative mainstream environmental goals.

- Two industrial solutions focus more especially on the energy transition: New Resources and Sustainable Cities. The Government's Industry of the Future programme designed to modernise the French productive machine based on the use of digital technologies also includes a goal to improve the energy efficiency of industrial processes.
- As test grounds for the ecological transition, local authorities are encouraged to put in place solutions to develop energy-smart housing retrofits and efficient public transport networks funded by the Energy Transition Fund (with a three-year budget of €350 million), to promote a low-carbon footprint and green urban areas, and to tackle social-spatial segregation. Rural areas are also part of this environmental approach, with the promotion of agroecology to produce safe, sufficient food.
- France, as one of the ten countries with the largest number of endangered species, due mainly to pressures overseas and in the Mediterranean, has taken measures to protect its marine and land ecosystems against artificial land cover, overexploitation of resources, climate change and pollution.
- The French bill for the restoration of biodiversity, nature and landscapes, which is currently being debated, thus provides for the ratification of the Nagoya Protocol, the acknowledgement of the notion of ecological prejudice, the establishment of action plans for all threatened species in France, the enhancement of protection of marine biodiversity, the prohibition of neonicotinoids, and the exchange of traditional seed.

➤ THE GOVERNMENT IS WORKING FOR EMPLOYMENT.

- In December 2015, France's **unemployment rate stood at 10.2%**, just below average for the eurozone (10.4%). However, the country posted 25.9% under-25 jobseekers compared with 19.7% for the eurozone.
- Three years ago, France introduced a **plan to tackle unemployment based on three priorities**.
 - The first priority is to reduce social security charges, mainly with the emergency plan for employment, which should see one million people hired in 2016.
 - The second priority is to improve vocational training with the reform of the national vocational training system and measures taken in 2016 to double the number of training courses for jobseekers. The aim is to train a total of one million people or 20% of all jobseekers.
 - Lastly, although an average 600,000 employees will retire each year through to 2020, a total of 700,000 young people per year will enter the labour market at the same time. The Act of 1 March 2013 hence introduced the Intergenerational Contract to foster youth employment. This scheme hires young people on open-ended contracts, retains older workers and smooths the transfer of vocational skills. In September 2015, over 100,000 young and older workers were on an Intergenerational Contract.
- Although this ambitious policy is starting to pay off, the number of young people entering the labour market every year calls for an offensive employment policy combined with a revised industrial policy.

➤ **A HIGH-QUALITY SOCIAL SOLIDARITY SYSTEM WHOSE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED.**

- In the last 70 years, **France has developed a social security system that protects people living in France from social risks** (illness, accidents and family welfare) **and pays them a pension in retirement.**
- **Any person residing legally in France is also guaranteed a minimum income and essential services** (education, housing benefit, power supply, culture, etc.) as social inclusion and poverty exit mechanisms. These take the form of welfare, supplementary benefits and free public services.
- France also promotes **access to culture and national heritage** for all population groups, in particular with programmes for young people from disadvantaged areas.
- These measures are provided mainly by central or local government, but **civil society also makes a significant contribution.** Associations and many businesses play an important solidarity role, with free meals as well as literacy, social reintegration and back-to-work actions.
- France also **redistributes wealth across the nation.** Former industrial areas, for example, receive funds to finance their redevelopment.
- This solidarity system driven by social and intergenerational solidarity relies on **continued efforts to restore the balance of the social security accounts** for it to maintain the same, if not higher, level of quality.

➤ **WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE TO REDUCE SOCIAL INEQUALITIES.**

- In France today, **one in seven households lives below the poverty line** (income of less than €960 per month) and one in five children is highly vulnerable. A total of 22% of the people below the poverty line live in a situation of food insecurity.
- With **78.3% of *baccalauréat* holders in one generation in 2015**, France has virtually achieved its target 80% *baccalauréat* pass rate. Nevertheless, the weight of social class in academic achievement remains high and an estimated 20% of pupils have academic difficulties.
- In terms of remuneration, **men still earn 23.5% more on average than women** for the same number of working hours, especially in executive positions.
- As the bedrock for social unity and cohesion, tackling inequalities calls for new social mobility drivers. The French Government is totally committed to this and a particular effort is being made in the most disadvantaged areas, from neighbourhood to regional level, to identify the main factors of inequality and reduce them by means of education and training in particular.
- Social inequalities go hand in hand with environmental inequalities. So the public policies in France are also designed to reduce exposure to risks and hazards (pollution, natural disasters, etc.), tackle fuel poverty and facilitate access to nature for all.

➤ **ACTIONS TO IMPROVE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

- France is a well-established democracy based on a robust political and legal system, which offers sound guarantees to French citizens and foreign nationals to effectively assert their rights. Human rights and equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of gender, race or religion are written into the French Constitution and their respect guaranteed by the courts.
- This framework has been improved in recent years with the introduction of independent administrative authorities, scaled-up court supervision, especially when public and individual freedoms are in issue, and legislative measures such as legalising same-sex marriage.
- France has also taken new measures to improve the transparency of political life, streamline administrative formalities and deepen our democratic tools, based especially on the use of digital means (public consultations, consensus conferences and local referendums). Every year, the “environmental conference” thus mobilizes the whole government to find responses to the demands of civil society representatives including local governments, unions, businesses and NGOs.

2) AN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

➤ FRANCE, FIFTH LARGEST GLOBAL DONOR, COMMITS TO INCREASE ITS INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY EFFORT

- From 2013 to 2015, French bilateral aid helped put 2.6 million children in primary and middle school, gave 3.8 million people access to a sustainable source of clean drinking water and supported the development of 150,000 small businesses.
- France has renewed its pledge to scale up its official development assistance, which stood at **€8.3 billion or 0.37% of gross national income in 2015, 22% of which went to the least developed countries.**
- **The target is to reach the collective European Union goal of official development assistance standing at 0.7% of gross national income by 2030**, with a special effort made for the least developed countries (short-term target of 0.15% to 0.2% of gross national income).
- To this end, **France has undertaken to earmark an additional €4 billion per year to fund development by 2020**, including €2 billion for climate change action, bringing the French Agency for Development’s volume of financial assistance to over €12.5 billion per year. Accordingly, it will increase the volume of funds allocated to climate change adaptation to €1 billion per year in 2020. **Lastly, France will allocate nearly €400 million more in grants by 2020 compared with their current level.**

➤ FRANCE IS A GLOBAL ADVOCATE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

- In July 2014, the **Pluriannual Development and International Solidarity Policy Act** was passed upstream of the 2030 Agenda. It focuses on the different dimensions of sustainable development (economic growth, poverty eradication and protecting the

planet), stresses the need for an integrated approach and onboards non-governmental players in the definition of action priorities.

- **In 2013, France set the French Agency for Development the ambitious target of supporting at least 50% of projects with a climate co-benefit, a target that it has already achieved.**
- France **proposed a reform of global environmental governance**, which has seen the scaling up of the United Nations Environment Programme. In the scientific field, France made a strong commitment to set up the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).
- Likewise, France **worked closely on the negotiations for the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and actively promoted a number of objectives high on its list of development policy priorities: environmental and climate sustainability, gender equality (especially sexual and reproductive health and rights), universal health coverage, transparency, with a governance and rule of law objective, and sustainable cities.
- France **hosted and chaired COP21, which drove the first universal agreement on climate that calls for respect for human rights and recognizing the specific role of women, and has since then it called for rapid ratification by all the parties.**
- With Peru, and then Morocco, and the United Nations, France encouraged all civil society players to be rallied to this cause under the “Lima-Paris Action Agenda”, which today united 10,000 players from over 180 countries working in 70 international and multi-partner coalitions.
- Lastly, it also **actively defends the principle of carbon pricing at European and international level.**

➤ **FRANCE TAKES AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOOLS AND FINANCING**

- In 2004, France took the initiative, with Brazil and Chile, to propose putting in place **international solidarity taxes** on activities that benefit the most from globalisation to provide innovative development financing in addition to budget resources. It introduced these taxes on airline tickets and financial transactions, providing funding to tackle the pandemics and take climate change action.
- France **fully supports the broad, modern vision of development financing**, rallying all stakeholders and available sources of financing, as it is endorsed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted by the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015.
- To this end, the French Agency for Development has a **wide range of financial tools** (grants, soft loans and hard loans to public and private partners, equity stakes, guarantees, etc.) and works with an array of players. It is one of the rare development institutions able to directly assist local government bodies. Private sector engagement in development policies is also encouraged.
- In 2016, France adopted a strategy entitled “Let’s Innovate Together” to prompt businesses to take **corporate social responsibility (CSR)** to the next level and

encourage social and cooperative economic initiatives. France has also stepped up its support for non-state entities in recent years with the aim of doubling funds allocated to non-governmental organisations from 2012 to 2017.

- Different tools are used **depending on the partner country's level of development and the issues addressed**. By way of illustration, two-thirds of French Agency for Development grants are earmarked for 16 priority poor countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- In early 2016, France launched a **reform of its development cooperation mechanism** by establishing links between the French Agency for Development and the Deposits and Loans Fund and giving it a larger budget to build its intervention capacities and its multi-partner dimension.

3) THE METHOD USED TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: THE CHOICE OF A PARTICIPATORY FRAMEWORK

➤ INTERMINISTERIAL COORDINATION BASED ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S AUTHORITY AND THE MINISTERS' PERSONAL COMMITMENT

- The Interministerial Representative for Sustainable Development and General Commissioner for Sustainable Development steered the drafting of this first report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as tasked by the Prime Minister. She heads up the network of senior officials for sustainable development.
- On 6 June 2016, Ségolène Royal, Minister of the Environment, Energy and the Sea, in charge of Sustainable Development, and André Vallini, Minister of State for Development and Francophonie, launched consultative workshops on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. These workshops held at the end of Sustainable Development Week were attended by over 180 participants from all walks of life: international solidarity, the environment, social sectors, education, etc.

➤ WORK IS UNDERWAY TO DEVELOP INDICATORS TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- France has been closely involved in the process to define global indicators to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals. These indicators will be formally endorsed by the UN General Assembly in the near future. The French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) is already conducting a feasibility study with all the ministries' statistical departments on their production at national level. The government statistics system should be able to produce just over half of the indicators (given or comparable definition) in the short to medium term. The indicators could be transposed nationally.
- In keeping with the objective to develop new wealth indicators, the Act of 13 April 2015 has given France ten new wealth indicators. These indicators are presented in the appendix to this first report and are to be factored into public policymaking to extend the measurement of progress beyond mere gross domestic product. They

cover employment, investment, national debt, health, inequalities, education, environmental protection and happiness.

- These indicators, driven by the 2030 Agenda, are consistent with the national reform programme, which is the national version of the European Commission's Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

➤ **THE GOVERNMENT HAS CHOSEN BROAD-BASED ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY RIGHT FROM THIS PILOT PHASE.**

- France considers that the involvement of civil society, the private sector and the general public is key to the success of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and, more generally, to public policymaking. It considers that deepening democracy is one of the best responses to the rise of all forms of radicalism and exclusion.
- National representative civil society bodies such as the National Council for Ecological Transition, the National Council for Development and International Solidarity and the National Advisory Commission on Human Rights were consulted in the preparation of this report. The Economic, Social and Environmental Council was also tasked by the Prime Minister with submitting a report in the autumn to inform the next Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID) meeting.
- A committee of international experts was set up to inform government thinking on the development of the next national action plan. The multidisciplinary nature of this committee is designed to guarantee a holistic approach to the challenges and better capture the systemic nature of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- A public consultation open to all has been launched on the Internet to guarantee the inclusiveness of the consultation process.

➤ **NEXT STEPS: DEVELOP A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- A national action plan will be developed, working with all players at each stage (definition, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and regular reviews).
- Under a parliamentary mission mandate, the ministries' general inspectorates could analyse sector policies conducted in their areas to produce a more detailed public policy evaluation with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals. The findings of these evaluations could form the basis of recommendations and inform the public and civil debate.
- The national action plan will be driven by the ambition of the broadest possible mobilisation for the success of the Sustainable Development Goals: shared vision, government measures and public policy guidelines for sustainable development, assistance to players in their fields of activity, especially economic players, citizens' ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals, rollout at all levels (national, regional and local), international actions, especially with the European Union, the International Organisation of the Francophonie and the United Nations, synergies between and promotion of initiatives and good practices by all players, etc.

- Regional consultative workshops could be held in autumn 2016 for local players to take up the Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to the national action plan. Shared local diagnoses could be conducted to identify the assets and challenges of the French mainland and overseas regions with respect to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The regional economic, social and environmental councils could be usefully associated with these diagnoses.
- A participatory Internet platform (www.agendafrance2030.gouv.fr) will propose an open digital commons to all players and citizens to disseminate good practices and recommendations, monitor progress and rally coalitions.
- Onboarding the Sustainable Development Goals could also be placed on the agenda of a next Interministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development meeting.
- Every year, European Sustainable Development Week will be a time to galvanise and promote society players' projects.