

SINGAPORE'S VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MAIN MESSAGE

As a small island city-state with limited land and no natural resources, Singapore appreciates well the challenges of sustainable development. This is why our policies have always been designed with sustainability in mind in order to achieve our vision of a clean, green and sustainable Singapore in which our people and future generations can lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our first Voluntary National Review (VNR) takes stock of the policies we have enacted since independence and assesses their contribution to Singapore's sustainable development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The VNR also examines areas where our policies may be lacking and how we could overcome them to better achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Inter-Ministry Committee on SDGs, co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, consulted all relevant government agencies and stakeholders, including businesses, youth organisations and civil society, in order to obtain an accurate and holistic picture of Singapore's progress on sustainable development. While we sought to use the Global Indicator Framework to assess our implementation of the 2030 Agenda, we found that some of the targets and indicators either did not apply to our context or we lacked data for them. In this regard, we used proxies where appropriate. We also used international rankings and indices to gain an independent perspective of our progress vis-à-vis other countries.

We assessed that our approach of integrating sustainability directly in our policy process has worked well for us overall. Through the VNR process, we found many bright spots, or areas where our efforts have paid off, in our sustainable development journey so far. These include securing access to affordable and high quality potable water for all Singaporeans and ensuring accessible and good quality education for our children. At the same time, the VNR allowed us to identify and reflect on several challenges and constraints we face, such as our ageing demographic. We were also able to identify opportunities that may arise to overcome these challenges.

Looking ahead, we must be resilient and innovative to seize these opportunities. We have put in place key policies such as our SkillsFuture and Smart Nation initiatives to prepare our nation for these challenges. To this end, the principles that have guided Singapore in the past, such as our forward-looking, long-term approach to sustainable development and our resolve to take tough decisions that are necessary for our development, will continue to serve us well.

An important takeaway from the VNR process has been that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving the SDGs. Countries should be free to pursue the SDGs in the

manner they choose, taking into account their national priorities and circumstances. At the same time, Singapore recognises that there is much that countries can learn from one another in our common pursuit of sustainable development. We ourselves have benefited and continue to benefit from the generous sharing by others of their own development experiences. We are thus committed to strengthening the global partnership for sustainable development, including through our technical assistance initiatives as well as our Chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2018.

Our VNR report to the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development presents Singapore's domestic and international efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Besides being a snapshot of our progress so far, the VNR process has been a powerful reminder that sustainable development is a journey that requires continuous commitment from all of us. Singapore will continue to build on our progress in this journey towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and beyond.

(602 words)