

## Germany

**A unified strategy with commitment at the highest level promotes PCSD.** The German Sustainable Development Strategy, adopted by the cabinet in January 2017, is the key policy instrument for implementation of the 2030 Agenda under the direct aegis of the Federal Chancellery. The strategy bundles various policy areas to achieve greater coherence in light of the large number of systemic interdependencies and contains the ambition to use the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to increase efforts for policy coherence, with particular reference to SDG 17.14. It thus provides a good basis for further enhancing Germany's sustained commitment to PCSD.

**The centre of government promotes PCSD through an issues-based approach backed by all ministries.** The State Secretaries' Committee (SSC) is the central steering institution of the Sustainable Development Strategy. It is composed of representatives from all ministries and chaired by the Head of the Federal Chancellery. Germany's whole-of-government approach also requires all ministries to participate actively in the SD Working Group (UAL-AG), which prepares the meetings of the SSC and helps to implement and further develop the strategy. The SSC meets regularly to address important cross-cutting or sectoral issues on a consensus basis, e.g. setting a new political framework for topics or announcing concrete actions. While Germany has implemented many mechanisms after its first VNR, such as the establishment of SD co-ordinators in each ministry, it could go further to harness the potential of societal stakeholders. Plans to establish a standing working group of societal actors ("*Dialoggruppe*") to support the preparation of SSC meetings should thus move ahead.

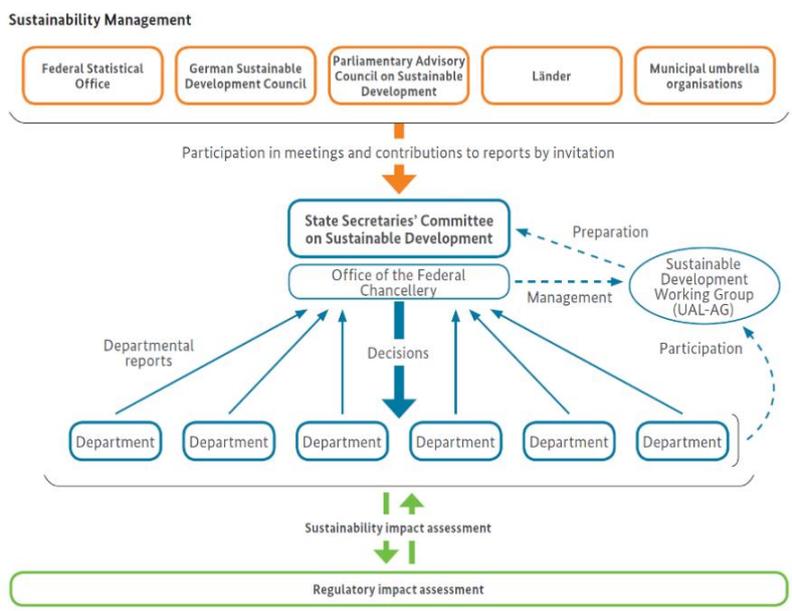
**Indicators established to measure transboundary and domestic impacts set a good example for tracking progress on PCSD.** The German Sustainable Development Strategy contains 63 key indicators including at least one indicator-backed target for each SDG. An interministerial working group of representatives from the government and the statistical offices develops and adopts new indicators, while the Federal Statistical Office reports on progress every two years. This enables independent continuous monitoring while maintaining the possibility for revision. Thirteen new topics and 30 indicators have been added to the strategy, some of which include transboundary consequences of national policies. Two examples are a target to increase the share of imports from LDCs, and another to increase membership of the Textile Partnership.

**Table Error! No text of specified style in document..1. Institutional mechanisms for PCSD in Germany**

Building Block	Germany
Political commitment	The Chancellor has repeatedly stressed Germany's commitment to an ambitious implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Federal Chancellery is in charge of the German Sustainable Development Strategy, the essential framework for implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
Policy integration	All ministries retain primary responsibility for their own contributions to implementation of the German Sustainable Development Strategy within their respective policy areas. Newly appointed Ministry Coordinators for SD strengthen policy integration and co-ordination within each ministry.
Intergenerational timeframe	There is broad political consensus in parliament and across the main political parties on the importance of SDG implementation and sustainable development. The first management rule of the German SD Strategy includes intergenerational fairness as a core principal. Possible long-term effects of a particular regulation are part of the Sustainable Impact Assessment. Intergenerational aspects are further anchored in the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany (Art. 20a).
Policy effects	All proposals for new laws and regulations are subject to a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA). The SIA is based on indicators, targets and management rules which include intergenerational and transboundary dimensions. Since March 2018, laws and regulations can be checked against the SIA through an online tool: <a href="http://www.enap.bund.de">www.enap.bund.de</a> .

Co-ordination	The State Secretaries' Committee (SSC), headed by the Federal Chancellery, is the central steering institution of the German SD-Strategy/SDG implementation. A standing working group on Sustainable Development (UAL-AG, at deputy director general level), chaired by the Federal Chancellery, prepares the SSC's meetings with participation of all ministries. The SSC meets regularly to address relevant cross-cutting or sectoral topics, e. g. setting a new political frame or announcing concrete actions, with decisions taken on a consensus basis. The co-ordination mechanism aims at decision making, information sharing and consultations.
Local involvement	Representatives of the Länder and municipalities are invited to SSC meetings when relevant. Thirteen out of 16 Länder have drawn up or are currently working on their own SD strategies. The Federal-Länder Experience Exchange on SD offers space for regular communication between the federal and Länder levels. The Sustainable Development Council supports vertical integration by a Sustainability Network of Lord Mayors and the creation of regional hubs. An interministerial working group on sustainable urban development (IMA Stadt), including the Association of German Cities and the German Association of Towns and Municipalities, among others, promotes the 2030 Agenda at the municipal level. The Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) provides information on community-level development co-operation.
Stakeholder participation	The independent Sustainable Development Council advises the Federal Government on all sustainability matters. Its 15 members, last appointed in 2016 by the Chancellor for a three-year term, represent the three dimensions of SD based on their professional and personal backgrounds. A Sustainability Forum is organised once a year by the Chancellery to give a selection of important stakeholders the opportunity to comment on SD policy in Germany.
Monitoring and reporting	The GSD Strategy includes domestic and international indicators and targets and defines long-term goals, most until 2030. The Federal Statistical Office continuously monitors the 63 indicators and publishes an independent indicator report every two years in which weather symbols illustrate whether a target is on track. The findings can influence agenda setting and evaluation within the SSC. The Parliamentary Advisory Council on SD monitors the Federal Government's sustainability policy at national, European and international level in the Bundestag. The German Sustainable Development Strategy itself is reviewed every four years. A first update is due in 2018, with a comprehensive review foreseen for 2020.

**Figure 3.3. Institutional mechanisms for SDG implementation in Germany**



#### **Box 3.4. German initiative on sustainable cocoa**

PCSD enables countries to consider transboundary effects of domestic policies. This includes national production and consumption patterns, as well as trade agreements. The German Initiative on Sustainable Cocoa (GISCO) is a multi-stakeholder initiative including policy makers and business stakeholders from the cocoa, chocolate and confectionery industry, the German retail grocery trade and civil society. It brings together relevant actors from Germany with those from producing countries and international initiatives to promote sustainable cocoa production. GISCO currently has more than 70 members and is open to other interested parties.

The goal of GISCO is to improve the lives of cocoa farmers and their families, preserve natural resources and biodiversity in cocoa-producing countries and ultimately increase the proportion of sustainable cocoa production. The Federal Government is represented in the alliance by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The initiative exemplifies how national co-ordinated action across ministries, including stakeholders and the transboundary perspectives can create synergies supporting several SDGs simultaneously.

*Source:* OECD (2018), "Country profiles: Institutional mechanisms for policy coherence", in *Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development 2018: Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264301061-6-en>.