

## **Summary of the 18th Meeting of the informal network of National Focal Points for Policy Coherence**

### **Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development: From principles to action**

04 December 2019, 10:00 – 17:30 hrs, OECD Conference Centre, CC9, Paris

This document presents a summary of the discussions at the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the informal network of National Focal Points for Policy Coherence.

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### Key messages of the 18<sup>th</sup> PCSD Focal Points Meeting

National Focal Points for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) met to discuss how the draft revised Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development [C(2109)118/REV1] could be implemented at the national level, the outline for the accompanying guidance note that will support implementation, as well as tailored country support on PCSD implementation, including through the OECD-UNDP Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs.

Countries welcomed the approval of the PCSD Recommendation by the Executive Committee as well as the participatory approach set out by the Secretariat for drafting the accompanying guidance note, which integrates comments made on earlier drafts of the Recommendation. The meeting included several non-OECD countries which expressed their interest in adhering to the PCSD Recommendation.

Representatives emphasised several topics that should be included in the accompanying guidance note, including ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments, PCSD indicators, examples of horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms, the role of parliament in PCSD implementation, and SDG budgeting. They also highlighted the need for broad participation of stakeholders, implementation assessments, and digital tools to foster sustainable development and awareness of the PCSD and the 2030 Agendas.

The discussion also focused on the current OECD support to countries on implementing PCSD as well as platforms to disseminate good practices including through the joint UNDP-OECD Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs.

With respect to the work going forward, the following areas were highlighted as priorities: the development of the guidance on the PCSD recommendation; undertaking thematic reports (for example on climate, gender equality and PCSD); the development of PCSD indicators and monitoring tools; in-country support for PCSD; and communication and awareness-raising on the importance and impact of PCSD. A first draft outline of the PCSD guidance note will be shared in early 2020 and a revised version will be presented at the next Focal Points Meeting on 31 March 2020.

### Welcome and introductory remarks

1. Marcos Bonturi, Director for Public Governance, opened the Meeting highlighting the importance of the forthcoming adoption of the PCSD Recommendation – the first joint DAC-PGC proposal – by the OECD Council. He underlined the need to step up efforts on policy coherence and the governance for the SDGs, given the lack of progress across many different SDGs, including in OECD countries and with only ten years left to 2030. He also highlighted current efforts to engage with a variety of OECD and non-OECD countries in providing tailored support to PCSD.

2. Mr Bonturi mentioned that the OECD and UNDP launched the Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs in September 2019 to provide a more structured and coherent approach to supporting governments in the implementation of the SDGs. He mentioned that it is currently undergoing a consultation process which will draw on member contributions and discussions including at the DAC in January 2020. He also highlighted that the initiative is driven by country demand and that the OECD and UNDP will contribute based on their respective mandates and strengths.

## Session 1. Update on the OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

3. In the first session, the Secretariat provided an overview of the revised draft Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development pending final approval by the Council [adopted on 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2019]. The Recommendation is an update of the [2010 Recommendation of the Council on Policy Coherence for Development](#) and responds to the [OECD Action Plan on SDGs](#) agreed by Ministers in 2017. It emerges in the context of the OECD-wide standard-setting review, to ensure the continued and increased relevance of OECD Recommendations.

4. The [OECD Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development](#) provides a comprehensive standard to help countries equip policy-makers and key stakeholders with the necessary institutional mechanisms and policy tools to enhance PCSD, address integrated economic, social and environmental goals, and accelerate progress towards the SDGs. It is structured along three pillars: vision and leadership, policy interactions, and policy and financing impacts. Under these themes, the Recommendation sets out eight key principles for enhancing PCSD: political commitment and leadership; a strategic long-term vision; policy integration; whole-of-government coordination; subnational engagement; stakeholder engagement; policy and financing impacts; as well as monitoring, reporting and evaluation. The Secretariat also presented the [Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance](#) and how it can be helpful in designing tools to implement the PCSD recommendation, in particular on SDG-budgeting, public procurement, leadership and skills and the accompanying guidance note on PCSD.

5. Country representatives welcomed the PCSD Recommendation, thanked the Secretariat for the participatory process and [public online consultation](#) – including a multitude of OECD Committees, international organisations, as well as stakeholders from over 33 countries and territories. They welcomed the integration of all their comments, expressed their desire to disseminate the Recommendation as well as for a detailed guidance note providing a diverse range of instruments to implement and enhance PCSD.

6. Following a brief presentation on its SDG Governance architecture, Finland proposed to disseminate the Recommendation at EU level, in particular at the Working Party on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Germany emphasised that it will strengthen its PCSD commitment as part of the 2020 update of its sustainable development strategy. Sweden highlighted that the Recommendation will be a basis for policy coherence in its new international cooperation strategy. Spain noted the importance of dissemination and offered to translate the Recommendation to Spanish. Morocco highlighted its constitutional commitment to foster sustainable development and policy coherence, emphasising the need for effective coordination, SDG assessments and arbitration of policy decisions that entail trade-offs.

## Session 2. How to move from principles to action?

7. In the second session on moving from principles to action, the Secretariat presented a proposal for the roadmap, process and main structure of the draft guidance note to support the implementation of the OECD Recommendation on PCSD. The outline integrates comments on previous drafts of the Recommendation and will be sent to Focal points in early 2020 for additional comments, contributions and review. Countries are requested to send their inputs on the structure and content for the outline as well as for thematic focus areas which will be discussed at a following Focal Points meeting.

8. Focal Points expressed their strong support for going ahead with the proposal for the PCSD Recommendation guidance note, highlighting areas of major interest for countries. In particular, representatives asked for more evidence on SDG impact assessments, monitoring, transboundary impacts, stakeholder participation, and digital tools to foster sustainable development and public awareness of PCSD and the 2030 Agenda.

9. The Secretariat presented various initiatives on coherent SDG implementation including work on [a territorial approach to the SDGs](#) by the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE), on transboundary impacts by the Statistics and Data Directorate (SDD) and on coherent [financing strategies for sustainable development](#) by the Development Co-operation Directorate (DCD).

10. Mexico presented its model for aligning the budget with the SDGs, emphasising how the national development plan, objectives, indicators and budget commitments need to be interlinked to enhance policy coherence. Spain, presenting its national sustainable development structure, highlighted the positive experience of having a dedicated High Commissioner for Sustainable Development at the Center of Government as well as a dedicated Sustainable Development Council. Canada underlined that the OECD Recommendation was crucial for drawing up the first draft of its national sustainable development strategy and that it seeks to improve knowledge and skills on SDG implementation. Country representatives highlighted their demand for guidance on enhancing PCSD in decision-making, managing trade-offs, national legislation, subnational engagement, engagement of indigenous communities and improved monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms.

### Session 3. Targeting country-level work

11. In a third session, the Secretariat presented various ongoing initiatives on tailored country support in PCSD implementation and discussed with Focal Points how the OECD can support countries on challenges in SDG implementation, including through the OECD-UNDP Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs.

12. The State Counsellor for sustainable development of Romania, Mr Lazslo Borberly, presented current efforts undertaken by the Sustainable Development Directorate, located within the Prime Minister Office, to develop an action plan to implement the National Sustainable Development Strategy (2030) and OECD collaboration. The Counsellor highlighted that the work the OECD is conducting to support the governance framework has contributed to raising awareness around the process and increased the commitment of all of government to collectively contribute to the development of the action plan. Going forward, the OECD will provide policy options and recommendations for strengthening relevant decision-making and monitoring processes.

13. The OECD secretariat also provided a summary of the work on policy coherence for sustainable development currently undertaken in Malta. The Maltese government requested support from the EU Commission (SRSS) for the development of the Sustainable Development Strategy and its action plan. The OECD has been tasked to deliver the support by providing policy options, identifying institutional and capacity needs for improving SDGs delivery. Several countries underlined their interest in tailored support, including Brazil and Morocco. Brazil highlighted its interest in enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development as it is currently restructuring its governance strategy. Morocco expressed interest in more evidence on SDG impact assessments and policy integration for coherent SDG implementation.

14. The Secretariat also provided information on the Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs, including on the proposed operations of the Global Hub, namely an online knowledge platform and support on SDG leadership and SDG accelerator actions. To help shape the Global Hub and ensure its effectiveness in responding to the governance challenges countries face in SDG implementation, an extensive consultation process (needs assessment) will be carried out in different regions of the world. The consultations will help improve the understanding of countries' specific capacity needs, including as they relate to leadership and skills and policy coherence for sustainable development. The consultation process for the Global Hub will seek the views of a wide range of stakeholder groups, such as Delegates from relevant OECD Committees; policy practitioners from both OECD and Partner countries; and experts from the OECD, UNDP and other international and regional organisations as appropriate. The results of the consultations will be presented to relevant OECD and UN bodies in 2020.

## Next steps

15. Discussing the next steps, the Chair emphasised that the strong support of countries for ongoing and future work on PCSD was greatly welcome. As per the request of countries, work on the guidance note will go forward, as will work on thematic reports, PCSD indicators, PCSD country work and communications. The Chair also underlined that it seeks to continue the participatory approach of its work and that it is open to suggestions and looking forward to input on the content and structure of the guidance note, country profiles, indicators and thematic work. A first draft of the guidance note will be shared in early 2020 and a revised version will be presented at the next focal points meeting on 31 March 2020.

16. Work is also underway to re-launch the OECD-facilitated [PCSD Partnership](#), a voluntary commitment under the UN Partnerships for the SDGs initiative. The Partnership, which is open to governments, civil society, academia and others, aims at knowledge sharing and peer learning around innovative tools and methodologies for enhancing PCSD.