



OECD GUIDE TO SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Annual Meeting of Sustainable
Development Experts (AMSDE)

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MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- Builds on other assessments: EIA, SEA, RIA, PIA
- Assesses economic, environmental and social impacts
- Examines long-term effects
- Identifies synergies and trade-offs
- Respects open and transparent processes

STEPS IN SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Relevance

Screening proposals

Analysis

Scoping assessment

Delineation

Selecting tools

Ensuring participation

Impact Analysis

Analysing impacts

Identifying synergies/conflicts

Optimisation

Proposing mitigating measures

Presenting results

Relevance Screening in Swiss Sustainability Assessments

INDICATORS	Degree of expected Impacts on scale of 0 to 3
ECONOMY 1) income, employment 2) productive capital 3) competition, innovation 4) market mechanisms 5) public sector enterprise	
ENVIRONMENT 6) areas of natural importance, biodiversity 7) renewable resources 8) non-renewable resources 9) water, soil, air, climate 10) environmental disasters, risk	
SOCIAL 11) health, security 12) education, identity 13) culture, values 14) legal security, equality 15) solidarity	

Scoping Elements in Belgian Sustainability Assessments

Scoping Area	Examples of scoping questions
Procedural	<p>Who will conduct and oversee the assessment? What are the financial resources available? What are the human resources available? What decision-makers need to be engaged? What specialists and expertise could usefully be involved? Which stakeholders should participate at what stages? What is the timing of the assessment?</p>
Substantive	<p>What is the purpose of the assessment? What are the goals and target groups of the policy? Which potential impacts should be the focus of the assessment? Which criteria will be used to assess the significance of the impacts? How extensive should the assessment be? Are there potential unintended side effects which warrant attention? What is the time horizon for the assessment?</p>
Methodological	<p>What data sources and information are available? Which methods will serve the purpose of the assessment? What set of tools should be considered? How will the assessment process be monitored and evaluated?</p>

Proposed Sustainable Development Indicator Set

Indicator domain	Stock Indicators	Flow Indicators
Foundational well-being	Health-adjusted life expectancy	Index of changes in age-specific mortality and morbidity (place holder)
	Percentage of population with post-secondary education	Enrolment in post-secondary education
	Temperature deviations from normal	Greenhouse gas emissions
	Ground-level ozone and fine particulate concentrations	Smog-forming pollutant emissions
	Quality-adjusted water availability	Nutrient loadings to water bodies
	Fragmentation of natural habitats	Conversion of natural habitats to other uses

Proposed Sustainable Development Indicator Set

Indicator domain	Stock Indicators	Flow Indicators
Economic well-being	Real <i>per capita</i> net foreign financial asset holdings	Index of changes in age-specific mortality and morbidity (place holder)
	Real <i>per capita</i> produced capital	Enrolment in post-secondary education
	Real <i>per capita</i> human capital	Greenhouse gas emissions
	Real <i>per capita</i> natural capital	Smog-forming pollutant emissions
	Reserves of energy resources	Nutrient loadings to water bodies
	Reserves of mineral resources	Conversion of natural habitats to other uses

What are the main difficulties with sustainability assessments?

- Giving equal attention to the three spheres and adequate attention to the longer-term
- Assigning common values to economic, environmental and social assets for comparisons
- Identifying trade-offs – presenting positive vs. negative impacts in the three spheres in a comparable manner
- Reconciling conflicts between economic, environmental and social goals and providing the basis for political decisions

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- *What are your views on the proposed capital-based statistics for sustainable development?*
- *What are your views on the proposed approach to conducting sustainability assessments?*
- *What are your recommendations for future OECD work on sustainable development statistics and assessments?*