POST 2015
Project On Sustainability
Transformation beyond 2015

Governance and National Sustainable Development Strategies: Implications for the SDGs

1. Leadership
4. Progress Review
2. Institutional Coordination
3. Stakeholder Engagement

IGES
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

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Governance and National Sustainable Development Strategies: Implications for the Sustainable Development Goals

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

APBN	State Budget Indonesia
BAPPENAS	National Development Planning Agency Indonesia
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CSO	civil society organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ECP	environment climate change and poverty
EIA	environmental impact assessment
EPA21	Enhanced Philippine Agenda 21
EPI	environmental policy integration
GG	green growth
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GNH	gross national happiness
GNP	gross national product
HM	His Majesty
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	Local Government Unit
LTPDP	Long-Term Philippine Development Plan
MBIs	market-based instruments
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTPDP	Medium Term Philippine Development Plan
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
NCCC	National Council for Climate Change
NCSD	National Sustainable Development Councils
NCSD	Northeast Asian Commission for Sustainable Development
NEC	National Environment Commission
NES	national environment strategy
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board
NEB	National Environmental Board
NGO	non-government organisation
NIA	National Innovation Agency
NSTDA	National Science and Technology Development Agency
NRCT	National Research Council of Thailand
NEDPs	national and economic development plans
NSDS	national sustainable development strategies
NSSD	national strategies for sustainable development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OEPP	Office of Environmental Policy and Planning
PA21	Philippine Agenda 21
PCGG	Presidential Committee on Green Growth
PCSD	Presidential Council for Sustainable Development
PRIME	private sector participation in managing the environment
PRRM	Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement
PRSPs	poverty reduction strategy papers
PCSD	Philippine Council for Sustainable Development
RPJM	Regional Long Term Development Plan
RPJPN	National Long-term Development Plan
RPJMN	National Medium-Term Development Plan
RKP	Government Work Plan
SE	sufficiency economy
SEA	strategic environmental assessment
UNCSD	United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SDC	Social Development Committee
SD	sustainable development
SDGs	sustainable development goals
STAND	Science and Technology Agenda for National Development
TEI	Thailand Environment Institute
UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Preface

The Rio+20 conference provided a mandate to develop a set of transformational Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But whether the SDGs prove truly transformational will to a large extent depend upon governance. Governance is pivotal to translating the global sustainability agenda into national and local action. This timely report not only reinforces this point; it suggests looking back at the governance of national sustainable development strategies (NSDS) after the 1992 Earth Summit to draw insights into how governance may affect the post-2015 agenda.

Focusing on the governance elements contained in overarching development strategies (such as the NSDS) in Bhutan, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand, the report provides some eye-opening messages for the architects of the SDGs. Among the most relevant is that really gaining traction with the SDGs is likely to require that countries not only exhibit leadership and well-coordinated institutions but also develop mechanisms that can engage multiple stakeholders and monitor and track progress. Without attention to all four of these desirable elements of governance—leadership, institutional coordination, stakeholder engagement, and review of progress—countries may find themselves, two decades after the SDGs, calling for an even greater transformational sustainable development agenda but still lacking the governance mechanisms to implement it.

We take these messages very seriously at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). IGES is a strategic policy research institute headquartered in Hayama, Japan that has grown up with efforts to craft an ambitious and effective sustainable development agenda since it was founded in 1998. As a partner in a three-year research project (S-11) on the SDGs funded by the Ministry of Environment of Japan, IGES is convinced that governance is a critical but easily overlooked element of the post-2015 development agenda. We further recognize that experiences with governance in Asia can help identify which elements will make the world a better place for current and future generations.

Hideyuki Mori, President, IGES

Executive Summary

At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, world leaders agreed to formulate National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS), as one among many mechanisms to translate global agreements to national action. Two decades later, in 2012, the Rio +20 conference concluded with an agreement to formulate sustainable development goals (SDGs) as part of the post-2015 development agenda. If the SDGs are to be effective, they will need to pay attention to the mechanisms and processes that already exist at national and local levels, which can determine the translation of goals into action. It is therefore timely to distil some lessons from exercises already undertaken at the country level in recent years.

This policy report aims to survey the NSDS of five countries in the larger Asia-Pacific region. It identifies examples of governance institutions and processes in the NSDS from the selected countries. Summarizing existing mechanisms and processes can be of use as countries translate future sustainable development goals (SDGs) into national and local level action post-2015. The report is a first step in this direction, although it is quite clear that more thorough analyses will be needed to identify what elements of governance can bolster implementation of sustainable development strategies and plans in the future.

To take this initial step, the report draws upon several desirable elements of governance from the public policy and sustainable development literature to propose a framework of inquiry consisting of four roughly sequential stages: (i) vision and leadership, (ii) institutional coordination; (iii) stakeholder engagement; and (iv) progress review. It is applied to the review of the NSDS in five Asian countries, which highlights several promising practices found in the NSDS that can potentially be refined and used in a post-2015 development agenda. Although care should be taken in extrapolating from this initial assessment, some potentially noteworthy examples include long-term leadership commitments to sustainable development in Thailand and Bhutan. Others consist of empowering institutions with sustainable development mandates that reached beyond (but involved) environmental ministries in the Philippines, Indonesia and Republic of Korea.

This review also shows that good strategies exist, but that they are often replaced with other strategies before much can be said about implementation. This limited follow-through may be attributable to the lack of at least one of the elements of governance (especially at the stage of progress review); none of the surveyed development strategies put equal emphasis on all four governance dimensions. At the same time, a more encouraging finding is that as countries move to new iterations of these strategies they appear to be adapting sustainable development planning to national circumstances as illustrated by the advent of Green Growth (Korea), Gross National Happiness (Bhutan), and other similarly themed interpretations.

Substantiating these broader claims will require additional research on a larger number of cases and/or a closer review of single country case studies. The next decade in Asia will offer a fertile ground to conduct such research. For the time being, this study offers preliminary insights into which governance mechanisms and processes may matter in designing and implementing national and local level action plans for the future SDGs.

Introduction

In the wake of the 2012 Rio+20 conference, governments and non-state actors are convening to negotiate the post-2015 development agenda. Those negotiations are slated to yield a set of global sustainable development goals (SDGs) for the post-2015 timeframe. While global goals help shape international funding and policy agendas, action takes place at national and local levels. In this regard, there has been relatively little attention to how domestic institutions and decision making processes have translated global sustainability agendas into nationally relevant and actionable implementation plans. To shed light on experiences in Asia, this policy report focuses on how key governance structures and processes contributed to holistic development strategies known as the national sustainable development strategies (NSDS) in the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Bhutan, and the Philippines. For ease of reference, these strategies will be referred to as NSDS, although they may have different names and focuses. The report is intended to offer a preliminary descriptive assessment of the relationship between governance and the NSDS; results from this assessment can then be used for more rigorous analyses of a wider range of countries or single country experiences.

Strategies falling under the heading of NSDS were initially developed in response to the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED). Over the past 20 years, there have been repeated calls to strengthen these strategies. More recently, countries have turned to a new generation of similarly themed strategies with stronger links to climate change or greater emphases on green growth and comparable combinations of environmental protection and development objectives. Yet, as evidenced by this twenty-year history, the progress with the NSDS and their more recent incarnations has been underwhelming. While many advocate improving governance to enhance performance on a host of global environment problems, it has been difficult to pinpoint which aspects of governance matter for sustainable development. This is made even more challenging by a broad range of definitions of governance.

To make this task more tractable, the report unpacks governance into four roughly sequential components with an institutional or process-oriented focus, namely: 1) leadership and vision, 2) institutional coordination, 3) stakeholder engagement, and 4) progress review. These categories are inspired by the sequences often described in the public management and policy cycle literature (Lasswell 1956), where 1) envisioning and planning leads to 2) coordinating with and between relevant institutions and then 3) engaging with important stakeholders for implementation that, in turn, sets the stage for a 4) review of progress before beginning the cycle anew. The report does not offer hard and fast conclusions about how these processes and institutions affected "implementation" or "effectiveness". Rather it has two more modest objectives:

1) it highlights desirable and potentially promising practices in the selected countries; and
2) it infers broad patterns in sustainable development governance elements that can be recognized across different countries.

The choice of the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Bhutan, and the Philippines offers a useful cross section of countries to highlight good practices and discern more general trends. Not only have all five countries developed unique practices when crafting NSDS to relieve the environmental stresses of rapid economic growth, they also offer some insights into the more general reasons the NSDS struggled

to gain traction. In terms of narrower practices, the following were observed in the surveyed country strategies:

- Thailand and Bhutan illustrate that long-term leadership commitments to sustainable development gave impetus to the NSDS;
- Governments in the Philippines, Indonesia and Republic of Korea empowered institutions with mandates that reached beyond (but involved) environmental ministries to help integrate different agendas into a broad sustainable development strategy;
- Circulating central government officers to posts at provincial and municipal levels in Bhutan may have helped vertically integrating objectives of NSDS from national to local scales of governance;
- The Philippine case shows signs of meaningful engagement with stakeholders in the NSDS processes;
- Some attempts at more limited awareness and consensus campaigns were observed in the Republic of Korea;
- Interactions with civil society groups on management of externally funded projects has been practiced in Indonesia;
- All of the countries' NSDS contained provisions for monitoring, reporting and review, but less evidence of their application was found.

In terms of broader trends, the cases suggest an important paradox. Though examples of good practices exist in many governance categories, there is also an absence of one or more key components of governance in all of the countries' strategies. One possible result is what may be termed a tendency toward "incomplete cycling." When a new government is voted into office, it scraps previous work on sustainable development and starts over with new policies, commissions, working groups, formulation of strategies and so on. Good plans are supplanted by other good plans, but none move far enough along the policy cycle to make good on its provisions. A possible consequence of this trend is that countries transition from NSDS to other well intentioned development plans (Gross National Happiness in Bhutan, Sufficiency Economy in Thailand, Green Growth in the Republic of Korea). To some extent, these tailor-made strategies offer nation-specific interpretation of sustainable development, but they may also fall prey to a fate similar to the NSDS. Considerable ink on paper is not matched by commensurate action on the ground and it is not clear which ingredient needs to be added to incentivise more action in the context of the future SDGs.

Nonetheless, the studies in this report may be useful for future SDGs. The achievement of the SDGs will hinge critically on whether policymakers move through the policy cycle and devote sufficient energy and resources to implementation. Here the case studies imply that the successful translation of globally agreed goals at national and local levels is likely to rest on giving sufficient attention to all four categories of governance outlined in this report. As such, it may be important to include elements of leadership, institutional coherence, stakeholder engagement and monitoring and evaluation into a "governance SDG"; alternatively, these dimensions of governance may help implement SDGs in other thematic areas and thus should be embedded within thematic goals. Further, as a region that has accrued significant experiences with the practices and pitfalls of governing NSDS, experiences from Asia could meaningfully

inform the process of designing implementation strategies for SDGs at national and local levels in the coming years. This is particularly true for experiences that show how countries have given globally generic agendas a particular national 'twist' to make it fit their own context.

Setting the Context: UN Calls for Sustainable Development Strategies

In 1992, the world's leaders congregated in Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Three important outcomes of that meeting were Agenda 21, the 27 Rio Principles, and the Rio Declaration. These outcomes provided the foundation on which the international community was to assemble the global sustainable development agenda. Among other things, they mandated countries to formulate National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) within a set timeframe.

Such strategies were meant to be process-oriented, dynamic and adaptive while simultaneously concrete, action-oriented, and simple enough to resonate with multiple stakeholders, thereby paving the way for a sustainable future. In Agenda 21, this sentiment was reflected in chapter 8; section 8.7 suggested governments should adopt NSDS to advance the implementation of decisions agreed upon at UNCED. In particular, governments should aim to harmonize and integrate social, economic, and environmental policy to ensure that none of the sectors would be at odds with each other (United Nations 1992). Reflecting the emphasis on integration, NSDS were defined as "a coordinated, participatory and iterative process of thoughts and action to achieve economic, environmental and social objectives in a balanced and integrated manner at the national and local levels" (United Nations 2002, 8).

After the 1992 UNCED meeting, many countries formulated NSDS, but examples of meaningful follow-through on their provisions remained few and far between. Perhaps the reason was because the top-down requirements for NSDS and similar strategies were quite demanding. They should be process driven but outcome oriented, comprehensive but focused, inclusive but led by the government. Creating the perfect NSDS proved to be difficult; and their lacklustre performance in many countries underscored just how challenging it was. Thus, additional calls for countries to set up NSDS were repeated at the Rio+5 conference in 1997 (United Nations 1997), where the lack of progress with such strategies prompted the decision to set a new target date of 2002 for their development. Five years later, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) reaffirmed the need for more effective NSDS in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPoI) (United Nations 2002).

The provisions in the JPoI also stated that the international dimension of sustainable development related issues required more cooperation; and that the objectives of NSDS should be integrated with existing plans, strategies and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) as were required for development loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The exact design of a sustainable development strategy was also made more flexible; some countries worked from scratch, while others incorporated sustainable development issues in existing plans and strategies.

In retrospect, the NSDS process was destined for trouble. By 2009, 106 countries had formulated a strategy (Murphy and Drexhage 2010); however, in most instances integration of its priorities into mainstream policy making and implementation remained absent. Moreover, many of the documented strategies were out of step with on-the-ground realities. Some observers suggested that the sources of the problems have never been sufficiently addressed (Chasek 2010). It has become increasingly clear that

one of the critical blind spots was the inattention to governance. This policy report focuses, therefore, on the role of governance.

Governance for Sustainable Development

The term *governance* derives from the Greek verb κυβερνάω [kubernáo], which means literally to steer. The term experienced a renaissance of sorts in the late-1980 and early 1990s when the development community began to recognize that the performance of neoliberal economic policies counselled in the "Washington consensus" required not simply markets, but robust government and non-governmental institutions to provide public goods and correct market failures. Since the early 1990s, governance has grown to encompass many meanings in numerous policy arenas. This diversity of interpretations is indeed evident in the field of sustainable development; one could pick from numerous interpretations with an even more diverse array of constitutive components. In fact, the NSDS alone were called upon to contain people-centred, achieve consensus on a long-term vision, comprehensive and integrated, targeted with clear budgetary priorities, based on comprehensive and reliable analysis, incorporate monitoring, learning and continuous improvement, country-led and nationally-owned, have high-level government commitment and influential lead institutions, build on existing progress and strategies, involve effective participation, link national and local levels, and finally develop and build on existing capacity (OECD DAC 2001:29).

Rather than requiring attention to all of the process and institutional components, the report breaks governance down to four roughly sequential components of the policy-implementation cycle. Literature on the policy-implementation cycle has deep roots; while many argue that it has outlived its usefulness, some still suggest that it cans serve as a framework of inquiry. It is also clear that that looking at potentially desirable elements of this cycle aligns with the notion of "good enough governance" (Grindle 2005). That is, it distils governance down to a sufficiently discrete set of sequential steps that are likely to be both necessary and manageable. For this reason the countries' NSDS will be reviewed focusing on elements in the following four dimensions of governance: 1) leadership and vision; 2) institutional coordination; 3) stakeholder engagement; and 4) review of progress.

Leadership and Vision

In a recent lecture, the head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Helen Clark, underlined that leadership is an essential ingredient of good governance.[1] Focusing on the Asia-Pacific region, Döbel (2006) takes this claim further, arguing that leadership can influence policy at differing junctures in the decision making process. For instance, speeches and official statements may get sustainable development issues onto the agenda. However, ensuring that decisions are adequately integrated and effectively implemented typically requires going beyond agenda setting. In other words, rhetorical support may be necessary for sustainable development agendas to move forward, but rhetoric is also insufficient to maintaining progress needed for sustainable development to take place.

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[1] Read an excerpt of her lecture at http://www.undp.org/content/undp /en/home/presscenter /speeches/2012/03/13/the-importance-of-governance-for-sustainable-development/

Stronger commitment to sustainable development involves political support. Well-intended leaders may not achieve the desired effect on implementation of NSDS, which intuitively should be the overarching motivation, unless work is being done to achieve high-level buy-in from other parts of the government such as cabinet ministers and parliaments (Steurer 2008, 107). A possible carry over from political support is the allocation of sufficient financial and human resources for implementing actors.

As the case studies illustrate, ministries of environment have often remained the main proponents of sustainable development strategies but lack the funding and authority to aid integration and mainstreaming of sustainable development concerns into other ministries' portfolios (IISD; Stratos Inc.; The Environmental Policy Research Centre of the Freie Universität Berlin; and GTZ 2004), and Niestroy (2005). Both building political and administrative support will be essential to getting the necessary follow through once strategies are approved. Leadership also functions as enabler for other governance mechanisms and processes, including institutional coordination, stakeholder engagement and progress review.

Institutional Coordination

Another important element for integrating the cross-cutting issues of sustainable development is institutional coordination. Coordination is essential for treating competing development priorities in a balanced and holistic manner. The importance of the institutional aspect is well recognized in strategizing, planning and implementing stages of development where coordination can help avoid separate but parallel processes that increase fragmentation, overlap and confusion. It is possible to distinguish between different types of integration: there is integration across sectors, across scales of governance, as well as administrative and financial integration and coordination.

Starting with financing, the integration of sustainability concerns into budgetary planning is clearly important (United Nations 1992). This can help ensure that development areas receive adequate resource allocation without which implementation will be impossible. It is also critical that local governments have sufficient resources to enforce policies. Often this will require sound fiscal policies, coordinated spatial planning, resource transfers or budgetary autonomy at local levels and other interventions. Financial issues are often related to administrative challenges, which is why leaders need to accord finance and planning a central role in the NSDS formulation and planning processes (IISD; Stratos Inc.; The Environmental Policy Research Centre of the Freie Universität Berlin; and GTZ 2004).

In terms of administration, a wide range of government departments and agencies need to be involved in the formulation of development strategies and plans, overseen by the office of the Prime Minister or equivalent (OECD 2006). This can take place in a commission, working group, committee or a defined Council for Sustainable Development. For instance, Hungary had a Commissioner for Future Generations (Government of the Hungarian Republic 2007) and Israel created a Parliamentary Commission for Future Generations (Göpel 2012).

Institutional coordination can achieve cross-sectoral synergy in two ways. On the one hand, it can occur through aligning the sustainable development (or similar) strategy with the objectives of a country's existing development strategies, plans or roadmaps. On the other hand, it can involve integrating the goals from the strategy in the overall development plan to "work towards convergence, complementarity and coherence among different planning frameworks" (Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and Development 2001). Good coordination across agencies may influence the extent of coordination between levels of government.

Similar to horizontal coordination, coherence between national and local governments is important to enhance local ownership of national plans. Local authorities should be fully involved in the preparation and planning stages to make strategies locally relevant. Another important element of institutional coordination can be achieved by decentralization and devolution of decision making; many decisions need to be taken to the lowest possible level and thus increase vertical coherence. Apart from governments, vertical coherence also concerns participation and establishment of partnerships with actors outside the government. In some cases, active civil society groups with expertise in social, economic or environmental fields at local levels can become involved throughout planning and implementation, including during reporting to evaluate and refine a development strategy (Ciel Habito and Ella Antonio 2007). That is, institutional coordination often complements stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder Engagement

As seen above, multiple stakeholders are involved in various aspects of governance. The processes used to involve stakeholders not only increases transparency but also enhances accountability as the audience of decisions grows. Fully accounting for stakeholder views and demands is desirable for sustainable development, as value judgments adapting the strategies to varying contexts require participation of all impacted parties and sectors (OECD 2006). Partnerships and participatory consultation, decision making and implementation are becoming the norm in many national and international contexts. The extent of stakeholder engagement can vary from (i) communication and awareness raising; (ii) consultation; and (iii) involvement in decision making; as well as (iv) involvement in various parts of implementation and progress reviews.

Participation and stakeholder engagement has been emphasized as a proxy for integration, ownership and implementation of sustainable development policies and strategies (D. D. Barry Dalal-Clayton 2002). Therefore key elements of the NSDS (as referenced above), include participation and partnerships among different stakeholders. Especially for the envisioning and planning phase of an NSDS, participation can be institutionalized in National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) (Ciel Habito and Ella Antonio 2007) or other suitable multi-stakeholder bodies.

Apart from improving transparency and accountability, the identification of common interests - a result of consultations and deeper levels of engagement - can also improve the buy-in to plans and strategies. In some cases, the capacity of governments may also be constrained, and involving other stakeholders, including involvement in monitoring and review of progress tasks, may share the burden across a greater range of actors.

Progress Review

Progress review is used to check if implementation of policies and plans has followed the directions set forth in NSDS. Reviews allow for learning and identification of what went well and what could be improved, thus providing a feedback loop for the NSDS. There are various ways to check for progress with development strategies, emphasizing review of (a) the strategy process; (b) strategy content or products; (c) outcomes; and (d) impacts (International Institute for Envrionment and Development 2006).

Research has identified the main differences between the most commonly used tools for review. The ESDN (2006) [2] distinguishes between peer reviews, external evaluation, and internal reviews, which all have strengths and weaknesses. The IIED (2006) focuses on (i) national peer reviews; (ii) internal peer reviews; (iii)external auditing; (iv) parliamentary reviews; (v) budgetary reviews; (vi) public, local monitoring, as well as (vi) international monitoring. At the outset, it may seem difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of long-term NSDS and similar strategies, as implementation may vary over time. If longer term objectives can be broken into shorter implementation plans, it can ease the review of progress, providing coherence between short-term, medium-term and long-term goals.

Review mechanisms are important because adjusting longer-term strategies will be necessary according to lessons learnt and learning outcomes in the shorter term (Steurer and Martinuzzi 2005). Some countries in Europe have mechanisms in place to monitor the government's sustainable development performance, "…using (largely quantitative) indicators (such as GDP per capita for the economic, poverty rate for the social, and CO_2 emissions for the environmental dimension of sustainable development)" (Steurer 2008:102). Reviews could also be conducted by using aggregated indicators such as the ecological footprint, as well as alternative accounting systems, and research has been undertaken on the modalities for doing so for over a decade (United Nations 2000).

Other researchers elaborate on the importance of assessments, including those on "…sustainability, regulatory and other types of impact assessment, attempts at improving management of concrete environmental sectors (e.g. climate change and energy, water management, land-use planning), sustainable development indicators and their monitoring reports, green public procurement, corporate social responsibility, socially responsible investment etc.)" (Nisido Gjoksi 2010) Such assessments can exert impact on social and environmental performance of development plans.

However, more often than not indicators necessary for evaluating progress are either lacking or are not linked to the sustainability goals and objectives of development strategies (IISD; Stratos Inc.; The Environmental Policy Research Centre of the Freie Universität Berlin; and GTZ 2004). An option for the future could be for countries to measure the impact of their policies according to planetary boundaries (Rockström, J., W. Steffen, K. Noone, et. al. 2009), or a disaggregation of the conceptual framework encompassing the Oxfam Donut (Raworth 2012).

A Lens of Inquiry: The Policy-Implementation Cycle

Policies are not always brought onto the agenda or implemented in a sequential and rational way; however it can be useful to adopt a certain approach as a lens of looking at countries' NSDS and similar plans. To this end, this report will use the policy-implementation cycle, which as mentioned above contains the following four sequential steps:

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[2] Also add into references < http://www.sd-network.eu/?k=quarterly%20reports&report_id=2>
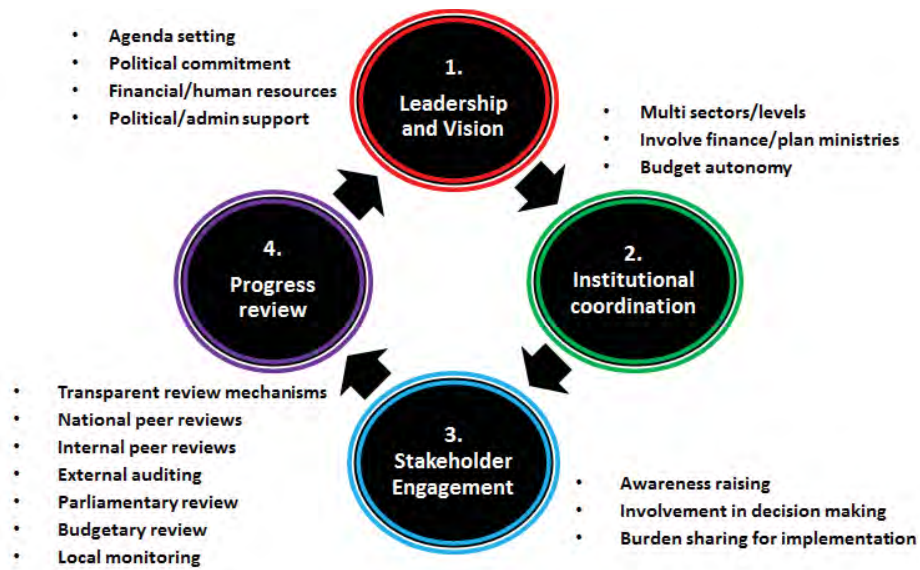
Figure 1 Policy Cycle Framework

One caveat is that while stakeholder engagement can be seen as primarily an action component and therefore closely associated with the implementation stage of the policy cycle, it is not excluded to this stage. In fact stakeholder engagement is rather cross-cutting and as the case-studies below will illustrate, it can be instrumental to have an element of engagement with various actors throughout the policy cycle.

The framework sketched above is used in two ways in the remainder of the report. The first, which can clearly be seen in the case study chapters to follow, is as a heuristic for identifying promising practices. In particular, each of the five case studies chapters is divided up into complementary sections. After a brief introduction, the chapters look at the relationship between the four governance dimensions and the NSDS. This exercise is rather inductive in nature; there is a deliberate attempt to distil whether and to what extent leadership, institutional coordination, stakeholder engagement, and review of progress were prominently figures in the NSDS. This may be helpful for other countries seeking to replicate promising practices at each of these stages. A second reason, which is discussed in the concluding chapter, involves looking more broadly at trends across the five countries. This approach, to foreshadow one of the main conclusions, gives some sense of the cycling problems that have plagued the NSDS process. More specifically, it can help illuminate that none of the examined case studies exhibits sustained and conscientious effort to move through every stage of the policy-implementation process.

Case Studies

The remainder of the policy report analyses how these components contributed to (or factored into different NSDS) and other overarching strategic documents in the countries of Bhutan, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Philippines and Thailand. These five countries are chosen for several reasons. First, all five cases are located in Asia-Pacific, a region known for experiencing both unparalleled economic development and environmental degradation. In fact, as illustrated by numerous high profile environmental crises, there has been a growing recognition in the region of the environmental costs of economic growth. And so there have been several attempts to rein in those costs with the creation of

environmental agencies and legislation. The five countries all created environmental agencies and institutions, as well as subsequently formulated overarching sustainable development strategies.

In the first years after 1992 and 2002, they all the reviewed countries attempted to create either Agenda 21 or integrated plans such as the NSDS, using top-down UN guidance. However, over time they have all developed a unique nation-specific interpretation of sustainable development. This is interesting on two levels: first, because they may have created something entirely new, such as Gross National Happiness in Bhutan, Sufficiency Economy in Thailand, or Green Growth in the Republic of Korea; and second because there seems to be a need to arrive at nationally relevant interpretations of sustainable development to address specific challenges like climate change in Indonesia or public participation in the Philippines. Hence the reviewed countries can show unique good practices in the 'localization' of sustainable development, which again will become essential once countries translate generic global development goals into nationally specific and relevant narratives.

Thailand

Thailand has the longest reigning monarch in the world. The king's long reign has enabled him to influence policies beyond the usual four-year legislative periods or repeated political instability that has regularly impacted political continuity in the country. Thailand is also interesting for its own conception of a sustainability philosophy called the Sufficiency Economy, which will be elaborated below.

Leadership and Vision

A distinctive element in the articulation of leadership - both in terms of agenda setting and for the generation of political commitment - is embodied in the long rule of HM the King of Thailand. The contributions from the royal family to development in Thailand over the years are quite considerable and include numerous Royal Development Projects. The value and messages of operationalizing sustainable development in these projects along with the impacts of the King's annual speeches have kept sustainable development well-positioned on Thailand's political agenda. However, other priorities often override the sustainable development agenda.

His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej also fathered the concept of Sufficiency Economy (SE) in 1974, shortly after the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. During the same period, the economist E.F. Schumacher published *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*. Both HM the King and Schumacher's concepts of development call into question the predominant belief in unchecked and unregulated economic growth. The concept did not gain much traction, however, until 1997 when the Asian Financial Crisis brought renewed attention to alternative interpretations of development that did not rely solely on the market as delivering the sources for human well-being. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its 2007 Human Development Report interpreted the concept of a Sufficiency Economy as follows:
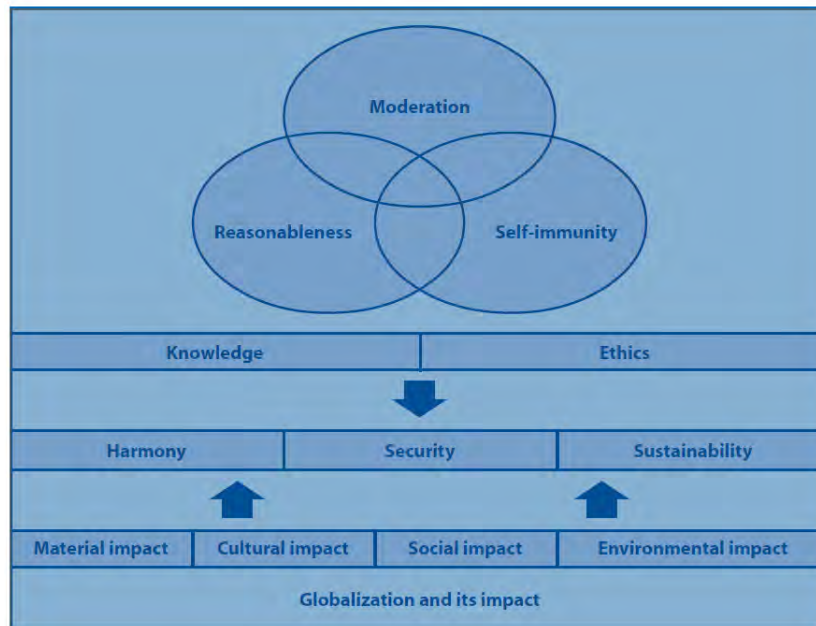
Figure 2: "Sufficiency Economy and Globalization" (United Nations Development Program 2007)

The philosophy is designed to guard against negative external and internal influences. The values such as reasonableness, and moderation together with knowledge and ethics are meant to help create more harmony, security and environmental sustainability. These factors together can help Thailand withstand negative material, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. This does not mean that a country or individual following this principle will necessarily deny the positive influences from globalization, but it indicates a more prudent and cautious approach to dealing with greater global flows of goods, services, information, and overall consumption resulting from rapid development and globalization.

The traces of political and administrative support for sustainable development can also be seen in the production of various policies and plans. In 2010, Thailand published the comprehensive "National Sustainable Development Strategies – A Guidance Manual", which is a long-term strategic policy document covering the period 2007-2036. It was created through several rounds of stakeholder consultations (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB). The manual emphasizes four main principles or goals: (i) quality; (ii) stability and adjustment; (iii) equity and distribution, and (iv) good management systems.

Institutional Coordination

Planning and strategizing towards sustainable development has been a result of Thailand's voluntary commitments under Agenda 21, Local Agenda 21, the MDGs, and the JPoI. Many of these commitments were translated into national legislation in the Government Reform Act, B.E. 2545 in 2002. Soon after, the Government and other stakeholders created a National Sustainable Development Council to improve coordination among stakeholders and create ownership of formulating and implementing sustainable development in Thailand. The Council then drafted Thailand's NSDS which was released in 2008. The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) had high level participants and was chaired by the

Prime Minister, who provided political support to the council. Thailand also had a Committee on the implementation of Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development, led by the Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE).

Thailand has two advisory boards to assist with integrated decision-making: the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), and the National Environmental Board (NEB). Both boards function as sustainable development coordination mechanisms but separate their focus into economic and social on one hand, and environmental dimensions on the other (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB).

In terms of integrated planning the NEDSB is responsible for breaking down the overarching NSDS into 5-year national and economic development plans (NEDPs), although much of the input to the NEDPs also come from sector agencies. The 2006-2010 10th plan focused on holistic and sustainable development, utilizing the Sufficiency Economy concept as a guiding tool, "… stressing stability, transparency, accountability, equal development distribution, sustainable natural resources and environmental management, and enhancement of national competitiveness" (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB). Even though the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan covers only five years of implementation, it is worth noting that the Government intended that it should address development also over a longer period of time, and in that sense it could be considered Thailand's version of a NSDS.

In terms of the financial and budgetary side of institutional coordination, NESDB is also responsible for key government policies and major development projects, analysis of budget proposals by state enterprises and related agencies as well as indicator development.

Stakeholder Engagement

Thailand's NCSD had an explicit participation mandate, with the intention that public participation in integrated planning with government agencies together could support the uptake, ownership and ultimately the implementation of the NSDS. Participatory engagement practices rest on the Thai constitution, which in Section 85 recognizes the right of the people to participate in the management, maintenance, preservation and exploitation of natural resources and the environment in a balanced fashion (Constitution Drafting Commission 2007). While these are good practices, recent research mentions some challenges with convening the Council (Asia-Europe Environment Forum 2012) as well as its abolishment in 2006, due to political disagreements connected to a coup d'état that year.

Participation seems to be important for implementation of poverty reduction strategies and for mobilizing the urban poor. Particularly the fourth component of the NSDS on ensuring good governance emphasizes the importance of public participation in decision making (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB). Another set of key objectives in the NSDS is the creation of a knowledge-based and ethical society. Here the Government emphasizes that access to information and participation in decision making is important. As such, it provides an extensive legal foundation as well as planned measures to enhance access to information and participation by the public (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB).

Progress Review

Thailand's NSDS has detailed sections containing implementation measures for each of its four strategic areas followed by provisions for monitoring and evaluation. Thailand also established the National Committee for the Implementation of Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development in 2003. Its purpose was to regulate, monitor and evaluate implementation efforts and then report the findings to the National Council for Sustainable Development. Moreover, since 2002 the Government has worked on developing sustainability indicators, with which it would be possible to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and projects on all three dimensions of sustainable development. The Government also set-up national operation centres, whose purpose would be to collect and exchange data and information necessary for monitoring, evaluation and subsequently informed decision making (Chantadisai 2003).

Additionally, there have been experiments with different sets of indicators, such as the well-being index, sustainable economy index, and sustainable development indicators (as they were requested by the Commission on Sustainable Development) (United Nations Environment Programme, Thailand Environment Institute and the National Economic and Social Development Board 2008 UNEP, TEI and NESDB). These exercises continued until 2007, but it is not clear to what extent they managed to inform policy making or if they were simply shelved as the project was completed.

Overall Prospects

Thailand has made progress in terms of planning and strategizing for sustainable development, having produced both an overarching NSDS as well as a number of consecutive five-year plans. The Royal Family and HM the King's vision of sustainable development and the Sufficiency Economy concept is a interesting example of leadership for sustainable development and it also shows how countries can translate a global concept into a nationally relevant formulation. While the concept has worked to promote sustainable lifestyles and generated ownership Thailand, the country still has governance challenges relating to long-term leadership, transparency and accountability.

In terms of institutional coordination, Thailand grouped together social and economic issues, while environmental issues stayed separate in a different institution. This occurs frequently in other countries. Progress review seems to be quite well institutionalized through the setting-up of national operation centres to collect data on implementation. Stakeholder engagement in sustainable development planning seems to have worked well at times and embedding the right to participation and information into the constitution stands as a good example, provided people actually know that this has happened and utilize it to gain information. Experience with the now defunct NCSD, which - along with other offices of the former Prime Minister - was abolished when he was removed from power indicates that long-term political continuity remains a challenge that hampers and interrupts the continuity of national plans and strategies for sustainable development.

Thailand	Vision, leadership	Institutional coordination	Stakeholder engagement (cross-cutting)	Progress review
Practice	Own iteration: Sufficiency Economy; -Highest level leadership; NCSD chaired by PM	National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD); National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB); National Environmental Board (NEB);	-Right to participation embedded in constitution;	-Nat'l committee for implementation of A21; -Nat'l operation centres; -work on indicators;
Governance dimension	participatory; inclusive;	Integration bodies	participatory; inclusive;	
Challenge/remark	Lack of political continuity;	-sectoral distinction between environment and socio-economy		

Table 3: Examples from Thailand

Indonesia

Due to its unique geography characterized by having thousands of islands, decentralization of Indonesia's administration was initiated shortly before the turn of the millennium, when the Suharto regime gave way to democratization. Authority for public service provision is now delegated to around 400 different regencies in the country (UNDP Evaluation Office 2010). The national development planning agency (BAPPENAS) estimates the poverty rate in 2009 to be 14.2 percent, which is still far from the ambitious target of 8.2 percent set by the 2005-2025 Regional Long Term Development Plan (RPJM) (UNDP Evaluation Office 2010). Additional remaining challenges that require special focus relate to education, health, environment and communication. In the health sector, more awareness surrounding HIV/AIDS, malaria and other debilitating diseases is also required. For MDG 7 on environmental sustainability, challenges relate to the food/energy nexus and particularly to the decrease of forest cover to free land for commercial production of pulp and paper plantations and palm oil, thereby destroying significant carbon sinks as well as changing habitats in a biodiversity-rich area of the world. Additionally, access to sustainable water and sanitation remains a challenge, as does the provision of electricity, communication technologies, including the internet to remote areas (National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) 2010).

Leadership and Vision

Indonesia has developed rapidly over the last decades and is currently the fastest growing economy within the G20, the group that represents 85% of the world's economic activity. Additionally it is the largest Islamic state globally, and these two characteristics can provide the country with a strong position in terms of international leadership in political agenda setting, although not exclusively in the sustainable development context nor at the national level specifically. In the Asia-Pacific region, Indonesia played a leading role in the run-up to the Rio+20 conference, organizing the Solo High Level Dialogue on the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD) in June 2011, which brought together governments and civil society actors from all over the world - showing leadership in terms of generating political commitment for sustainable development in the recent Rio+20 preparatory process.

Additionally, the government has played a strong leading role in processes relating to the Post-2015 Development Agenda, particularly because Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) was one of the Co-Chairs of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The country also organized several consultations on the post-2015 development agenda and on sustainable development late in 2012 and early in 2013, committing significant human and financial resources to drive the international process forward. Such investments of resources have a positive effect on the Indonesian role in international and national sustainable development process, but at national level less evidence of the catalysing role of leadership on sustainable development can be identified.

Institutional Coordination

Some progress was made in mainstreaming sustainable development objectives to other ministries' portfolios in the years following the 1992 Earth Summit (UNDESA). Subsequently, in 2004 Indonesia held a national conference on sustainable development, which produced implementation plans for the sectors of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity. Sustainable development criteria have also been used for decision making in spatial planning, environmental impact assessments (EIAs), clean city programmes, as well as mainstreaming strategic environmental assessments (SEA). SEA was embedded into national legislation in 2009, making its inclusion mandatory for any regional development (Triarko Nurlambang 2010).

BAPPENAS has been primarily responsible for policy integration in Indonesia. It has succeeded in many respects in this role, exemplified by mainstreaming of the MDGs throughout the country's short, medium and long term plans. This includes the overall consensus development strategy encompassed by the National Long-term Development Plan (RPJPN) (2005-2025), which is broken into several National Medium-Term Development Plans (RPJMN) (2010-2014; 2015-2019; 2020-2024), the National Annual Development Plans (RPK), as well as documents of the State Budget (APBN) (National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas) 2010).

For the next medium term plan, the Government will focus mainly on socio-economic issues. The current RPJMN (2010-2014) has three main objectives: (i) continue to develop a prosperous Indonesia; (ii) strengthen democracy; and (iii) strengthen justice in all areas (Indonesia 2011).

The Government has stated that the current development plan has to follow the principle of mainstreaming (Ministry of National Development Planning 2010). BAPPENAS maintains that mainstreaming forms the operational basis for the implementation of all development activities in the country. The mainstreaming principle has to be reflected in the output of development policies, covering in particular: (i) mainstreaming of sustainable development, (ii) mainstreaming of good governance, and (iii) mainstreaming of gender.

In terms of finance and budgets, Indonesia has undergone fiscal decentralization since 2001 However discrepancies between different regions' capacities to undertake sound and transparent budgeting persist to this day, suggesting that the benefits of budgetary decentralization can be challenged by the lack of regional-to-central government accountability (Hakim and Dixon 2010).

The Presidential Working Unit for Supervision and Management of Development (UKP4) recently created an institutional coordination body to address some of these institutional challenges. Its main purpose is to help reform the Indonesian bureaucracy and "…dismantle impediments to investment" (Castleasia undated). This body has also been central in aiding the President in coordinating his work as a Co-Chair of the recent UN High level Panel on Post-2015 (Saragih 2012).

Integration is also important to the specific Indonesian context, as the sustainable development agenda has moved gravity point towards being approached though the lens of climate change. Indonesia's National Plan Addressing Climate Change (Indonesia 2007) covers all major sectors, including agriculture, forestry, marine, energy and others. Its objectives include: (i) institutional reform for better harmonization and integration; (ii) adjustment of budgetary, fiscal and monetary policies so that they are in line with and support the socio-ecological targets of climate change adaptation and mitigation; (iii) the importance of investing in the right sectors and provision of financial incentive systems for socially and environmentally sound investments; (iv) comprehensive information and outreach to cover purposes, actions, targets, and policies in all sectors and ensure that communication is equally comprehensive and aids integration; (v) that development should take into account local characteristics and ecosystems and (vi) utilize and involve the community economy in the learning process as a necessity to mainstream adaptation and mitigation throughout at all levels and in all sectors (State Ministry of Environment 2007). The objectives are laid out in detailed implementation plans, which clarify the role of each sector in this integrated effort. Additionally there are two other action oriented documents, namely the national mitigation action plan (RAN_GRK) and the national adaptation strategy (RAN-API), the latter which is currently being drafted. These specify the action to be taken for adaptation and mitigation in key sectors, such as transport, infrastructure, energy and others (Government of Republic of Indonesia 2011).

It seems reasonable to use a climate change lens to plan for sustainable development and embed known elements of sustainable development strategies within such national climate change plans, especially since both mitigation and adaptation are two important issues for Indonesia. Additionally however, there are other arguments for focus on blue-economy; given the fast that Indonesia is an archipelago with large coast line and much livelihood activities in close connection to the oceans.

Stakeholder Engagement

In 2006, the Indonesian Government joined the international Partnership for Principle 10 (PP10),[3] representing the first country in the region to join the partnership, which is coordinated by World Resources Institute under the Access Initiative. In 2008, the Act on Public Information Disclosure was passed, providing legal support for transparency and access to information. Thus, there seems to be sufficient political will and recognition of the importance of involving non-state actors in decision making.

In Indonesia participation is guaranteed by law. In particular, participation by means of consultation is a central tenet of EIAs. Project proponents must make their plans available to the public and respond to the input provided by them before developing the environmental impact analysis and proceed with a given project (Asian Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Network 2008). Even though participation is embedded in national regulations, the government does not provide for assistance programmes that the public can rely upon if participation is beyond their immediate means. In some cases, this can limit options for public participation.

The Indonesian government also recognizes the value of investing in development of human resources and indicates that institutional strengthening as well as public awareness raising is important enabling conditions to generate broad-based support of sustainable development (Ministry of National

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[3] Principle Ten is one of 27 key principles for sustainable development that came out of the Rio Conference in 1992. This particular principle concerns access to information, participation and access to justice in environmental matters.

Development Planning, 2010:20). More recently, external actors are working to increase the active involvement of non-state actors in implementation activities. For example, UNDP is involving civil society organisations (CSOs) in the management of grants and credits to households, and committing local communities to a rights-based approach to public services and access to justice (UNDP 2010).

Another good example of multi-stakeholder partnerships is the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI). It has a national coordinating committee (NCC) consisting of ministerial representatives several sectors, non-state actors, development partners and academic experts. Together they work on various marine-related development issues, including seascapes, fisheries, marine protected areas, climate change, and threatened species protection. There are two cross-cutting themes being monitoring and evaluation, and capacity building.

The private sector is also recognized as important partner of the Government, especially in infrastructure development (Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs 2010), and Indonesia has been a member of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development since 2011. Moreover, the call for Type I and II partnerships that came out of the commitments at WSSD in Johannesburg in 2002 resulted in registration of 58 United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development (UNCSD) partnerships of which Indonesia is a part. This accounts for more than half of total registered UNCSD partnerships in Southeast Asia (Pattberg 2012), underlining recognition of private sector stakeholder engagement in development.

Progress Review

Since 1996, the National Bureau of Statistics has collected data on the consumption of key natural resources to be able to measure, assess and manage its progress towards sustainable development. Indonesia has three tiers of development plans, of which the longest term is the National Long-term Development Plan 2005-2025 (RPJPN). This plan is divided into four stages of the National Mid-term Development Plan. Each stage provides details on how the subsequent stages of the mid-term plan can be achieved. There seem to be no provision for evaluation of overarching development plans or the shorter action plans in Indonesia. Instead, the sectoral activities specified as necessary are evaluated regularly, and BAPPENAS is producing annual implementation reports to parliament.

Indonesia has also since the early 1990s experimented with various forms of green accounting (Repetto et.al. 1989), where net domestic product is a result of economic output minus depletion of natural resources in a number of essential sectors of the country (timber, petroleum, soil). More recently work has been done on alternative indicator systems, including environmentally adjusted national income, integrated environmental economic accounting, genuine savings, as well as green GDP. Such broad-based indicator systems would enable integration of sustainability concerns into economic growth and make review of progress and monitoring much easier. Some data is available to calculate the level of sustainability in Indonesia and its provinces; however challenges to mainstreaming alternative indicator systems include lack of capacity, human resources as well as institutional hurdles that prevent inter-sectoral cooperation on further development of such indicators (Gustami 2012). It is unclear to what extent the discourse on alternative accounting systems has reached policy maturity, or whether the debate remains confined to the academic field.

Overall Prospects

Indonesia has exhibited leadership and vision particularly at the international level including through the key role of the government in the regional preparations for Rio+20 and in the co-chairing of the High Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda. This indicates that the international sustainable development agenda has been well integrated into the work of the Indonesian government. However, from the national level and downward, integration and ownership of sustainable development has been more difficult to trace. The recent establishment of the WBCSD in Indonesia shows that stakeholder involvement is on the agenda. Additionally, their membership in the international P10 network is a good sign that public access to information and participation and justice is being recognized. BAPPENAS's annual progress reports show that mechanisms for the learning stage of the policy cycle have been institutionalized.

Indonesia	Vision, leadership	Institutional coordination	Stakeholder engagement (cross-cutting)	Progress review
Practice	-Leading role in the run-up to the Rio+20 conference; -Leading role in processes relating to the Post-2015 Development Agenda; -Committed significant human and financial resources to drive the international process	-SEA was embedded into national legislation in 2009 -BAPPENAS has been primarily responsible for policy integration; -Integration through climate change lens;	-Joined the international Partnership for Principle 10 -Participation is guaranteed by law -External actors are working to increase involvement of non-state actors in implementation	-BAPPENAS is producing annual implementation reports to parliament
Governance dimension	participatory; inclusive;	Integration bodies	participatory; inclusive; transparent	transparent
Challenge/remark	-Strong international level leadership, but national level unknown;	Geographical challenges	-lack of funds to ensure participation of all;	-Lack of mainstreaming of alternative progress indicators;

Table 4: Examples from Indonesia

Philippines

The roots of sustainable development in the Philippines can be traced back to well before the Earth Summit in 1992. In the 1950s, civil society began rallying for alternative development strategies, which resulted in the creation of the 1952 Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM). The PRRM was established to develop rural communities' capacity in the fields of education, livelihoods, environment, health and others (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 2011). The Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development was created in 1987, shortly after the authoritarian regime had ceased to exist.

Generally the Philippines were often heralded as a 'best practice' in terms of institutionalizing the mechanisms necessary for sustainable development. As the following sections will exemplify, many interventions were undertaken to mainstream sustainable development into overall development planning. However, in the later years, some of this momentum seems to have been somewhat lost, as other development strategies have taken the helm.

Leadership and Vision

During the 1990s and early 2000 President Ramos led the Philippine Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD), established in 1992. His political commitment was instrumental for the political uptake of sustainable development goals and objectives among other sectoral ministries. Additionally, a large part of the Council's legal mandate - then as well as today - derives from governmental Memorandums and Orders. Anchoring goals and objectives in legal mandates shows the political commitment to sustainable development and can motivate broader governmental political support.

Other factors that demonstrate leadership concern the Philippine Agenda 21 (PA21) as the national framework for sustainable development. The Philippine Agenda 21 (PA21) has vision statements embedded in the Principles of Unity of Chapter 1 (Philippine Sustainable Development Network 2012), which guide the pursuit of sustainable development. According to that vision, society consists of three dimensions; culture, polity, and economy that interact on multiple levels. The environment provides the foundation for society and humans.

As one of the front-runners after UNCED 1992, the PCSD drafted the PA21, and with the governmental Memorandum Order 399 dated 26 September 1996, it officially became the highest strategy for development of the Philippines. Aside from providing the legal backing for PA21, the Memorandum Order also directed all government agencies to align their work with the goals and objectives of the PA21 (IIRR, LGSP, SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia 2000). The *Legislative-Executive Advisory Council* at the presidential level, with membership from within the government as well as from other stakeholders[4] works to align priorities of the respective stakeholders articulating compromises which all parts can agree to and take ownership. As it is at the presidential level there is potential for integration based upon strong top-down leadership and agenda setting power.

The establishment of the PCSD shows that the sustainable development agenda was seen as important. More recently, a Climate Change Act was adopted and institutional support mechanisms for its implementation were established, including the strengthening of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Coordinating Council. Many of the above examples are the results of committed leadership but also relate to the following section on institutional coordination.

Institutional Coordination

The PCSD is structured as follows (Philippine Council for Sustainable Development 2012):

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[4]   See   http://www.gov.ph/2011/02/28/briefer-on-the-111th-legislative-executive-advisory-council-meeting-february-28-2011/ for details on mandate and composition of the advisory board.
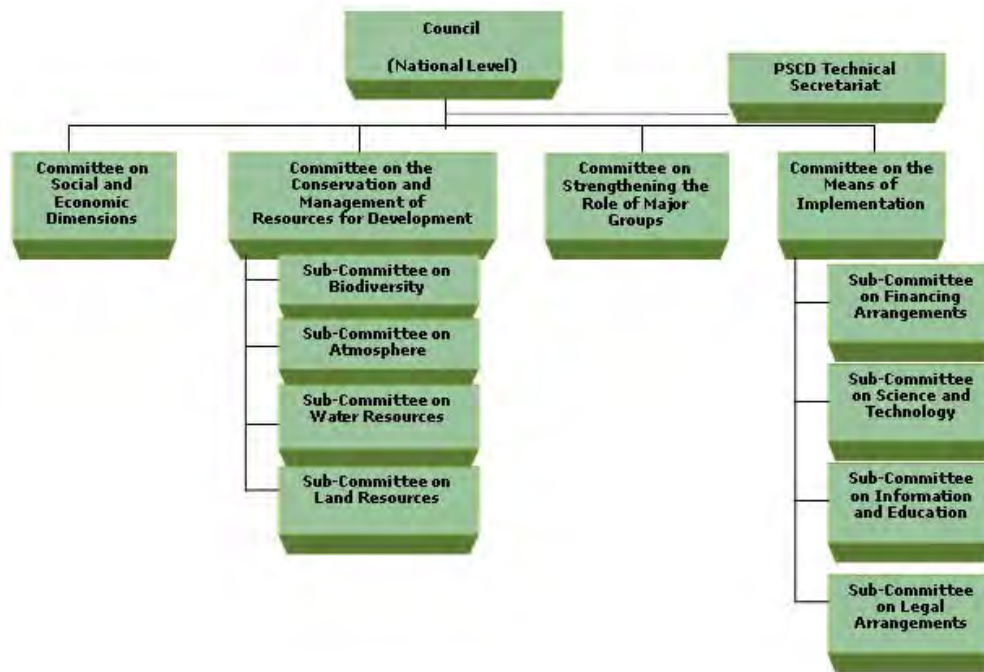
Figure 5: The Philippine Council for Sustainable Development

In terms of integration across sectors, the action agenda contained in Chapter 2 of PA21 contains details for implementation (including mechanisms for integration), so that duplication of related initiatives such as the Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development, Social Reform Agenda, and the Human and Ecological Security can be avoided. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) is the lead government agency responsible for the PCSD, and the two bodies are co- located, which facilitates the integration of sustainable development ideas into overall development planning.

Until the early millennium, the PA21 replaced the preceding Philippine Ecological and Human Security programme (EHSP) as the main development plan for the country. Some research even went as far as ascribing the PA21 overarching guidance influence to the point that the strategy was able to determine sectoral strategies and plans, as well as the overarching Philippine National Development Plan for the 21st Century (Plan 21), or Long-Term Philippine Development Plan 2000-2025 (LTPDP) (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2001).

However, since the drafting of the Medium Term Philippine Development Plans (MTPDP) (2004-2010) and (2010-2016), the PA21 seems to have undergone a gradual decline in influence. This happened despite the re-articulation of Agenda 21 through the issuance of the Enhanced Philippine Agenda 21 (EPA21), perhaps because the latter was never fully endorsed by NEDA.

Through NEDA, the Government integrated the sustainable development strategy and the national budgeting process. Involving budgeting and revenue-generation planning and processing institutionally with the sustainable development agenda can strengthen the integration of sustainable development concerns across sectors. In many other countries sustainable development has been delegated to the Ministry of Environment's portfolio but economic and developmental ministries and agencies such as

NEDA may be better positioned to encourage horizontal integration with other agencies, ministries and stakeholders.

To bolster vertical integration, the LGC was instituted in 1991 (Government of the Philippines 1991). The LGC called for PA21 to be integrated with the portfolios of LGUs, which reinforced their role in development administration and implementation. As such, local levels were intended to develop into self-reliant communities and act as reliable partners for the Government's national development plans (IIRR, LGSP, SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia 2000). Mirroring this development, the Philippines also institutionalized Local Agenda 21, including the creation of provincial and/or municipal councils for sustainable development (E. Antonio 2002).

Stakeholder Engagement

A central tenet of sustainable development in the Philippines has been its human-centred and inclusive focus. The 'people-power' can be observed also beyond the direct history of the sustainable development agenda in the country and may have roots in the abolishment of the authoritarian leadership under President Marcos and the subsequent establishment of a new constitution in 1987.

In terms of involvement in decision making, the creation of PA21 and the Principles of Unity involved many civil society organisations. Once created, more than 5,000 organizations used the PA21 as their common reference point for negotiations with government on several occasions, indicating that stakeholder engagement could enhance ownership. Moreover, the drafting of the framework, principles, and strategies of PA21 involved representatives from more than 300 CSOs throughout the country that congregated during more than 20 regional consultations and three national consultations were convened to discuss PA21 (IIRR, LGSP, SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia 2000).

The Government consistently acknowledges the importance of stakeholder engagement. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the Government of the Philippines stated that in order to humanize development, there must be interplay of market forces, state intervention, and civil society participation (IIRR, LGSP, SANREM CRSP/Southeast Asia 2000). Providing legal backing to such policy of engagement, the Philippines passed a resolution recognizing and advocating full participation of non-state actors and involvement in governance processes. More recently, Government Order 22 tasked PCSD with making the necessary preparations for effective country participation in Rio+20. Inclusive decision making and extensive stakeholder engagement is well developed, perhaps because much of PA21 was developed bottom-up and thus represented the interests of the people.

Progress Review

In chronological order, after the Principles of Unity and the Action Agenda, Chapter 3 of PA21 focuses on implementation and also contains detailed plans for the implementation and review part of the policy cycle (Philippine Council for Sustainable Development 2012). For a number of years, there have been plans to: (i) streamline and consolidate all existing monitoring, reporting and evaluation efforts; (ii) survey national plans and policies with a view to identify the extent of PA21 integration into national and local plans and implemented policies; (iii) strengthen existing sub-national monitoring mechanisms that involve stakeholders from multiple sectors; and (iv) devise and implement a system from national level to global level reporting (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2001, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2001).

It is not clear to what extent these intentions were implemented, as little information is available to assess the application of a comprehensive monitoring and assessment strategy. To be sure, the extent of implementation rests on local level capacity to implement, monitor and report back to national levels, most likely through the institutional mechanisms created for vertical coherence between the PCSD and the provincial and municipal councils for sustainable development (Philippine Council for Sustainable Development 2012).

Overall Prospects

Where other countries have appointed ministries of natural resources or environment agencies as lead coordinating agency for sustainable development, the Philippines has used NEDA. This positioning seems to have been beneficial for the integration of sustainable development in different sectors, in particular as both sustainable development and national budgeting processes were co-located. Situating the PCSD in the Headquarters of NEDA enhanced the integration and cooperation between the two bodies, much to the advantage of the sustainable development agenda and the funds it could receive for its activities.

Generally the Philippine experience with inclusive and participatory bottom-up processes in designing the PA21 were very important to local ownership. Another good example is the use of ecosystems approach in the PA21. This approach can aid the integration of different actors' traditionally separate portfolios and enable better judgment of trade-offs between different development priorities. Finally, LA21 stands as an important way to enhance vertical integration.

Philippines	Vision, leadership	Institutional coordination	Stakeholder engagement (cross-cutting)	Progress review
Practice	- President led the PCSD - Anchoring goals and objectives in legal mandates - *Legislative-Executive Advisory Council* at the presidential level, with membership from government and stakeholders	-Chapter 2 of PA21 contains mechanisms for integration; -PA21 was able to determine sectoral strategies and plans, LGC to bolster vertical integration was instituted in 1991;	- Drafting PA21 involved more than 300 CSOs; -Resolution recognizing participation of non-state actors;	- Chapter 3 of PA21 focuses on implementation and also contains detailed plans for review part of the policy cycle;
Governance dimension	Participatory; Inclusive; Highest level leadership;	Integration bodies	Participatory; inclusive; transparent; -Anchored in law	Transparent
Challenge/remark	-Strong leadership; -Challenge for long-term continuity;	-Influence of PCSD seems to have been waning over the years;		-Little updated information on review mechanisms;

Table 6: Examples from the Philippines

Republic of Korea

In the 1990s, the emerging institutional framework for sustainable development in the Republic of Korea derived mainly from the bottom-up. Civil society groups, academia and the media campaigned for the Government to establish a sustainable development special committee directly under the President.

Prior to this, the Republic of Korea had experienced decades of rapid economic growth and development, which had taken its toll on social cohesion and environmental quality.

The Republic of Korea is an interesting example because a switch in approach happened in 2009, when the President proclaimed "Low Carbon Green Growth" to be the new development strategy. Until then, the Republic of Korea, like many other countries, pursued the UN-driven sustainable development discourse, complete with national strategy for sustainable development (NSSD) and Presidential Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD).

The following section will not evaluate whether sustainable development or green growth have seemed to be more successful in the Korean context. The example can highlight how a country interpreted the need for aligning economic growth priorities more with environmental and social concerns. It also can provide insights into whether a specific interpretation of sustainable development that relates to a certain cultural, traditional, or developmental contexts may have a greater chance of being mainstreamed and generate broader ownership than a generic format adopted directly from the intergovernmental level.

Leadership and Vision

After the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, The Republic of Korea formulated a National Action Plan to implement Agenda 21 and subsequently created a presidential commission on sustainable development (PCSD). It received its legal powers and mandate through the Presidential Decree No. 16,946 (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2001). This decree was revised between 2000 and 2006, providing additional legal power to the commission and adding thematic focus areas to its scope. The PCSD's primary tasks were to act as advisory body for the president on agenda setting and policy formulation as well as oversee the drafting of strategy documents aimed at interministerial coordination, integration and implementation.

In its 2005 National Vision for Sustainable Development the Republic of Korea reaffirmed the importance of continuing strong economic growth, perhaps an early indication of the subsequent rebranding of Korean development strategies to Low Carbon Green Growth (Moon 2006). The participation of civil society was an integral part of this vision, in fact one of the tasks of the PCSD was to ensure consensus and avoid strife between opposing parties. The significant commitment by many governmental departments to work on NSSD was a result of the President of the Republic of Korea's leadership.
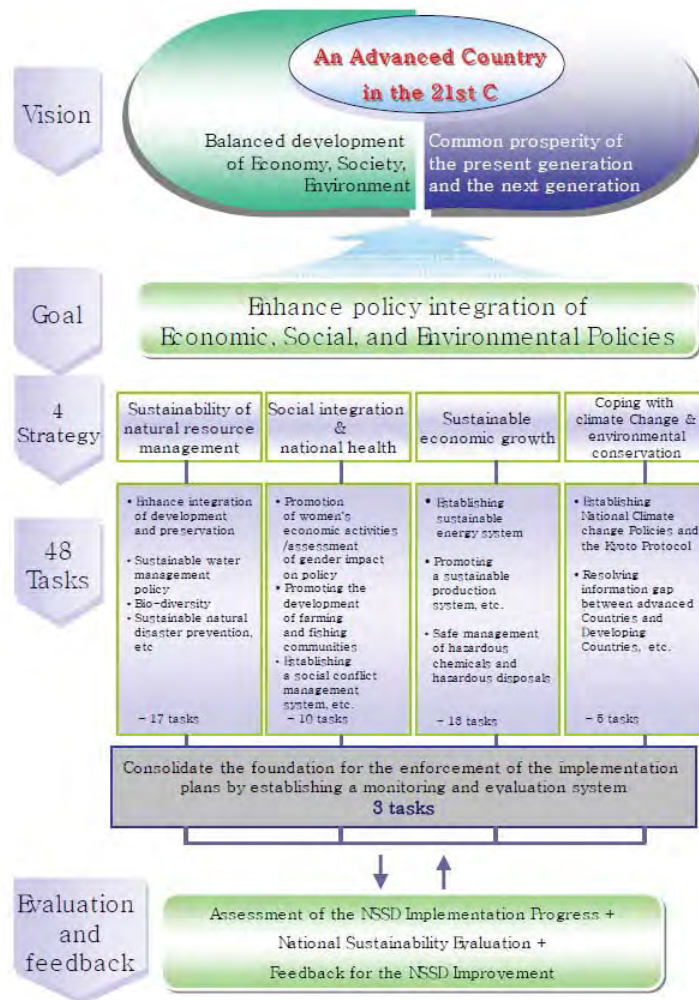
Chart 7: The Republic of Korea's Sustainable Development Vision

The vision of Low-carbon Green Growth is one of economic growth and environmental sustainability being inextricably intertwined, and which - if pursued - will lead to a more sustainable future (Jung 2011). The Republic of the Republic of Korea approaches the concept of green growth by defining it as "sustainable growth that mitigates greenhouse gas emissions and prevents environmental degradation" (Republic of Korea 2009). The vision has three main objectives, namely: (i) promotion of more eco-friendly growth models for the domestic economy; (ii) to increase peoples' quality of life; and (iii) to contribute to climate change abatement. On a more pragmatic note, the Republic of Korea also realized that deriving over 90% of its fossil fuel resources from imports creates a potential dependency problem. To increase energy independence and bolster resilience from external impacts, the vision emphasises new and renewable energy sources.

The Presidential Committee on Green Growth (PCGG) created in 2009 is working to facilitate the realization of the national vision of Low-Carbon Green Growth (Republic of Korea 2009). This committee has 47 members, consisting of representatives from ministries and research institutes. The five-year action plan on green growth, the long-term development blueprint called the National Strategy for Green Growth, as well as the framework Act on Low-Carbon Green Growth are among its cornerstone outputs.

The national strategy consists of 10 main policy directions that relate to climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy, resilience, environmentally sound technologies and industrial structures; green economy; land-water and transportation, green revolution and behavioural change among citizens, and becoming an international role model for green growth (Republic of Korea 2009).

Institutional Coordination

One of the first institutional arrangements in the republic of Korea was the creation of the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD) in 2000. It had five focus areas: (i) sustainable energy policy, (ii) sustainable water management policy, (iii) sustainable land and nature management policy, (iv) implementing a global key action plan for sustainable development, and (v) developing a conflict prevention and resolution system (Moon 2006). Four thematic committees and one special committee for Conflict Coordination were mandated to focus on the respective areas of the PCSD (Hwang 2006).

To increase integration across sectors, the PCSD recommended the establishment of 'green officers' in each ministry to aid integration and cooperation on the five main areas of focus. Moreover, actual cross-ministerial cooperation was emphasized. The PCSD's policy suggestions in various sectoral areas were only adopted after deliberation and approval in a cross-ministerial working group, which was chaired and coordinated by the President (Hwang 2006). On other occasions, the PCSD held consultations on the 'national SD vision and policy tasks' with twenty ministries and agencies, ministries of finance and economy.

In terms of integrated planning, the PCSD's main task was to draft the National Vision for Sustainable Development and oversee its implementation. Over the years, some of the revisions of the law supporting the PCSD were enacted to strengthen vertical integration and add members as well as a code of ethics. In 2007, the PCSD issued a Framework Act on Sustainable Development (United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2012), which further cemented the legal foundation for the pursuit of sustainable development. The National Sustainable Development Vision had a detailed implementation plan, which was created through the cooperation of 22 ministries. Its content included five core policy areas, 48 implementation tasks and 223 detailed tasks (Hwang 2006).

Large advances were made in terms of planning at local and municipal levels. Between 1996 and 2006, 92% of local governments established local agenda 21 (Moon 2006), thereby achieving the highest participation rate of the LA21 process globally at the time. But even though plans were drafted, the LA21 generally had limited budgets for implementation. However, in 2003 local committees for sustainable development were established in local governments, thereby improving vertical integration down to province and district levels.

In 2009 the Framework Act on Low-Carbon Green Growth was issued and enacted by the Korean National Assembly (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific 2010). This framework act overrode all other existing fragmented environmental legislation and acted as an integrating umbrella act. After the introduction of the green growth concept, the Republic of Korea returned to its earlier emphasis on five-year plans as implementation tools, which had worked well during industrialization.

The implementation plan was to run for four years between 2006 and 2010, but then in 2009, with new leadership the focus switched to Low Carbon Green Growth. This new concept established a Presidential Commission on Green Growth (PCGG) to set in motion a collaborative process involving line ministries, governmental organizations, as well as academia and civil society (Republic of Korea 2009).

The recent change of leadership in the Republic of Korea in late 2012 may have implications for the green growth approach and it remains to be seen whether the current administration will maintain support of this approach.

Stakeholder engagement

Citizen participation has been widespread in the Republic of Korea's pursuit of sustainable development. For instance, 72 stakeholder meetings were held between 2004 and 2006 (Hwang 2006) in the context of the sustainable development strategy and the PCSD. Moreover, before the National Sustainable Development Vision was approved, it went through two informal public consultations, where citizens had the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute to defining that vision. Moreover, the Government set up an Environmental Conservation Committee under the Framework Act on Environmental Policy, which had 200 members, of which 188 were from civil society and 12 were high ranking ministry officials. Unfortunately, the committee was eventually abolished and it is unclear whether similar participatory planning mechanism exists today.

Korean society has traditionally been split between technocrats that favour development and growth, and environmentalists, respectively. These two opposing parties have produced some notable conflicts throughout the development history of the country. In the context of the recent shift to green growth, citizens have been concerned that too much focus would be placed on turning the environment into an engine for economic growth, notwithstanding possible negative effects on social cohesion and quality of life.

At the national level, private sector engagement in sustainable development has been scarce. But at local levels, citizens and the private sector have been regularly involved through so-called 'residents committees' for consultations ahead of any large development projects (T. B. Kim 2010). Limitations are due to lacking stakeholder engagement and training can be useful to increase local level participation for political acceptance, ownership generation and consensus around large-scale development projects and long-term development visions.

The country's first five-year plan on implementing green growth was created through broad-based discussions and consultations among government, businesses and civil society (Republic of Korea 2009), although perhaps different outcomes could have been produced if stakeholder engagement went beyond consultations to actually involve non-state actors in decision shaping and decision making.

The recently founded Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) further enhances Korea's international links and contribution to global efforts on sustainable development. This initiative forges partnerships for capacity and knowledge sharing on green growth. Korea is also hosting the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development. Moreover, in the context of climate change the Green Climate Fund is hosted in Incheon, and the options for Korea to develop wider stakeholder engagement at international levels are vast.

Progress Review

And as can be seen in the figure describing the National Vision for Sustainable Development, monitoring and review actually was integral part of the vision. Moreover, it was intended that the different governmental departments would be evaluated according to their sustainable development performance every five years.

Since the NSSD was an evolving document, in its third and fourth revision, the implementation and monitoring sections were emphasized. The idea was to turn the NSSDS into a living document that accounted for reporting, reviews and inputs of ministries and stakeholders after each implementation phase, in order to review and improve for subsequent phases of implementation.

Overall Prospects

Already during the implementation of the Republic of Korea's NSSD, the considerable effort and capacity mobilized in the country was widely recognized. Thus the Republic of Korea became a model country in the region, and was requested by the UN to take a leading role in organising Shared Learning and Review of NSSDs (Hwang 2006). Additionally, the UN heralded the Korean version of Local Agenda 21 as a best case of sustainable development practice in 2002.

During the same period, the Northeast Asian Commission for Sustainable Development (NCSD) was established. It produced a Seoul Declaration for the 14th UNCSD; however it is unclear what has happened to this body since. Despite a focus on integration and the plans for equipping each ministry with green officers, sufficient integration and policy coherence remained a challenge. Although envisioned in their plans, the Korean government never succeeded in creating an interministerial delegate in charge of sustainable development mandated to work on integration of cross-cutting concerns.

The Republic of Korea has repeatedly been criticised for placing too much emphasis on economic and environmental dimensions, while neglecting social dimensions. This was the case both with activities under NSSD and the PCSD, as well as with NPGG and PCGG. Moreover, while the sustainable development processes were characterized with strong bottom-up initiative and ownership, the subsequent presidential green growth initiative was completely top-down, and its ability to create national ownership remains to be seen. To be sure, the more pragmatic focus on energy, climate, technology and resilience (among others) of the National Strategy for Green Growth may have been easier to communicate to the public than more vaguely defined concepts of sustainable development.

The shift from sustainable development to Low-Carbon Green Growth came with a change of presidency in 2009. It is too early to evaluate this shift, but the concept of green growth is worth highlighting in the context of country-specific interpretations of the global development agenda. Moreover, the Korean case is interesting, especially since the concept of green growth has received significant international attention and served to highlight the Republic of Korea's position as a global first mover. This in itself may generate ownership at national levels in the country.

Republic of Korea	Vision, leadership	Institutional coordination	Stakeholder engagement (cross-cutting)	Progress review
Practice	- Legal powers and mandate of SD body through Presidential Decree -National Vision for Sustainable Development; -Strong international leadership for green growth, climate change;	-Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development; -'Green officers' in each ministry -cross-ministerial working group -92% of local governments established local agenda 21;	- Early 2000s many consultations with CSOs on NSDS; -'Residents committees' for consultations prior to implementation;	-Monitoring and review integral part of National Vision for Sustainable Development
Governance dimension	-Participatory; -Inclusive; -Highest level leadership;	-Integration bodies; Locally reflected A21; -Leadership spurs integration;	-Participatory consultations	-Transparent
Challenge/remark	-Strong leadership ; -Challenge for long-term continuity-		-Participation waned at shift from SD to GG; -Participation mainly in form of consultations;	-Little updated information on functioning review mechanisms;

Table 8: Examples from the Republic of Korea

Bhutan

Bhutan is well-known for its good record of environmental protection, decentralization of authority, high levels of participation, and reverence of traditional Buddhist wisdom. Its unique geographical, historical, and cultural circumstances, however, may make the replication of good practices challenging in other countries. Nevertheless, the Bhutanese case demonstrates what can be done when determined and dedicated leadership is combined with long-term vision for the implementation of sustainable development with unique Bhutanese characteristics and strong local ownership.

Leadership and Vision

The vision towards holistically addressing development was first coined in the 1970s, when Bhutan's fourth king stated, "…happiness is more important than Gross National Product" (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012). The subsequent king, His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuk then played a great role in articulating Bhutan's first development strategy in the late 1980s and reorienting Bhutan's development agenda to pursue Gross National Happiness as overarching goal.

The extent of political commitment to sustainable development is clearly recognizable. In legal terms, it rests on the *Paro Resolution*, which in 1990 determined that a healthy and maintained natural resource base is the foundation to a sustainable and prosperous future. In 1998, this was reiterated in the National Environmental Strategy, entitled the *Middle Path* (National Environment Commission Royal Government of Bhutan 1998). More recently it has been stated that the overall objective of development takes place as a process to maximise happiness rather than economic growth (Planning Commission Secretariat: Royal Government of Bhutan 2000). The governmental vision is such that socio-economic development and environmental and cultural integrity are not conflicting but mutually reinforcing and so are critical to the long-term viability of Bhutan. Another critical defining component of Bhutan's development vision

stems from Buddhism. Accordingly, development entails overcoming the delusions arising from ignorance, aggression, greed and attachment, and the desire for consumption and acquisition (National Environment Commission Royal Government of Bhutan 1998).

Thus the vision enunciated by the Royal Family and the guidance provided by Buddhist tradition contribute to Bhutan's very own local interpretation of sustainable development, which takes into account a balanced pursuit of material, emotional and spiritual wellbeing (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012). This local version provides for strong ownership and devotion to balanced development, reflected for instance in the mandate to maintain a minimum of 60% forest cover at all times. In the late 1990s the country also issued a medium-term development strategy called *Bhutan 2020:"A Vision for Peace, Prosperity, and Happiness*, the objectives and goals of the overarching plans are implemented through the guidance provided by successive 5-year plans.

Institutional Coordination

Bhutan is a democratic constitutional monarchy. The King is the hereditary head of the state and plays a strong role in ensuring institutional stability and longevity, while the Prime Minister is the elected head of government. Parliamentary democracy has been practiced only since 2009.

Regarding cross-sectoral coordination, several governmental departments have administrative responsibility for sound development of the country, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Forestry Services Division, the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (Zurick 2006). The national level plans and strategies are overseen by the National Environment Commission (NEC), which is tasked with integrating concerns for economic development with environmental conservation (Zurick 2006). The more recent Gross National Happiness Commission is mandated to mainstream the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) throughout planning, budgeting, policy making and implementation.

The NEC also undertakes coordination for coherent policy and planning at the national level. This group is also responsible for drafting implementation plans, as for instance the National Environment Strategy (NES), a document with a "…dynamic, long-term vision to achieve sustainable development through improved environmental planning, policy making and management" (National Environment Commission Royal Government of Bhutan 1998). A designated task force ensures that environment is adequately reflected in the development strategy, the group consists of representatives from various line ministries as well as the private sector.

Coordination across municipal and local level administration is under the purview of so-called *dzonkhag* administrations and *gewog* administrations (locally elected bodies). There are altogether 20 *dzonkhag* and 205 *gewogs* in Bhutan (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012). Additionally, the NEC also focuses on vertical integration, realizing that to be implemented a working strategy must encompass the views and priorities of those living most closely to the natural resources at local levels.

Empowering local governments has a long history, starting in 1981 with District Development Committees, and Block Development Committees a decade later in 1991. However, the most significant step for decentralization started in 2002 when the Government decided to transfer some financial powers to local development committees, which means that project budgeting is decided at implementation level (Kinga 2004), a step that arguably increases ownership of development plans at the local level.

A number of local government acts (2007 and 2009) were enacted to further strengthen vertical integration by involving the local population in developing and managing their own social, economic and environmental concerns. Moreover, coherence between national and local levels has been increased by creating local development committees as well as transferring officials from the central level down to district levels.

Stakeholder Engagement

As result of Bhutan's recent preoccupation with GNH, the government undertook an extensive survey in 2010, questioning the population on key aspects related to the subjective experience of life satisfaction and happiness. This stands as a strong example of stakeholder engagement, when the government conducts extensive sampling of people's well-being. On a more operational level, people are involved in administration of Bhutan's vast national parks, and many groups are allowed to pursue their livelihood activities as a part of the park's conservation measures in addition to undertaking overall management tasks (Zurick 2006). Moreover, the importance stakeholder engagement is indirectly evident in the decentralization of authority to local administrations. At the local levels, the people are expected to not only feed into annual and five-year plans, and be responsible for their implementation; they are also encouraged to become empowered and "achieve self-reliance within the framework of national priorities, plans and policies" (Kinga 2004). Additionally, it is officially recognized to be the duty of every citizen to contribute to the conservation of the environment, protection of biodiversity and prevention of environmental degradation in Bhutan.

In terms of partnerships, Bhutan maintains regular meetings with its main development partners, where aid and policy support issues are discussed. The country declares this to be a very successful modality to align national development priorities and international assistance. From the donor side, generally Bhutan is considered to be one of the most successful examples of donor activity. Transparency and accountability is very high and corruption is low, making development work comparatively easy in the country, as long as national priorities are respected by the aid agencies. Furthermore, the country recognizes the importance of partnerships with the private sector, and in the recent country submission to Rio+20 Bhutan provides examples of existing public-private partnerships in solid waste management, training and marketing support for organic produce (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012).

Progress Review

Monitoring and evaluation is pursued in the current governmental initiative 'Accelerating Bhutan's Socioeconomic Development', which emphasizes coordination, monitoring and evaluation in selected development programmes (Royal Government of Bhutan 2012). There is also an online Planning and Monitoring System devised to connect national, local and sectoral programme implementation. Moreover, within the NEC there is an Environment Monitoring Division, which reviews and monitors all activities relevant to the quality of the environment in Bhutan.

Overall Prospects

One of the main advantages of Bhutan relates to its relative geographical isolation, which has provided the country a chance to quietly observe how development agendas have fared in the outside world. They have thus avoided many of the pitfalls of rapid industrialization and unsustainable natural-

resource based economic growth and enabled a precautionary approach to development planning (National Environment Commission Royal Government of Bhutan 1998).

The relative isolation has also meant that Bhutan does not have large external debts, which could have rendered it dependent on external development aid, structural adjustment programmes and economic liberalization. Finally, and similar to a few other countries in the Asian region, long-term leadership provided by a monarch has provided some degree of political continuity, which normal four-year political terms may not be able to deliver.

Internationally, the GNH concept has received increasing attention, as for example when the country at COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009 issued a declaration entitled: "Declaration of the Kingdom of Bhutan: The Land of Gross National Happiness to Save our Planet". Soon after, the 65th UNGA adopted the Resolution 65/309 titled "Happiness: toward a holistic approach to development' (United Nations 2011). Bhutan then convened the so-called: *High level meeting on wellbeing and happiness: defining a new economic paradigm.* Hence the GNH stands as a model for the international community, signifying the search for alternative targets and indicators of progress.

Bhutan	Vision, leadership	Institutional coordination	Stakeholder engagement (cross-cutting)	Progress review
Practice	- Gross National Happiness from royal family; -Strong roots in Buddhism *Bhutan 2020:"A Vision for Peace, Prosperity, and Happiness*;	- NEC coordinates other sectoral plans -Gross National Happiness Commission mainstreams the concept of GNH; - NEC also focuses on vertical integration; -Government transferred some financial powers to local development committees;	- Government conducts extensive sampling of people's well-being - Duty of every citizen to contribute to SD/GNH;	- 'Accelerating Bhutan's Socioeconomic Development', emphasizes coordination, monitoring and evaluation in selected development programmes;
Governance dimension	-Highest level leadership;	-Integration bodies; -Strong vertical integration;	-Participatory; -Inclusive; -Transparent;	-Transparent;
Challenge/remark	-Strong leadership;	-There could overlap between NEC and GNH Commissions;	-Questionnaires;	-Little updated information on functioning review mechanisms;

Table 9: Examples from Bhutan

Review and Analysis of Criteria identified in the Country Cases

The following section will provide a brief summary of the surveyed examples of governance governance. Findings will be provided in table-format for ease of overview and the table signifies those governance mechanisms that seem conducive to generate ownership and helpful for implementation.

Examples of good practices with institutions and processes			
Leadership and Vision	**Institutional Coordination**	**Stakeholder Engagement**	**Progress Review**
- Localized version of SD; - Long term leadership and vision; - Existence of holistic national goals (e.g. 60% forest cover at all times); - Embed SD in constitution; - Place SD body at highest governmental office	- Central planning/ development agency in charge; -Twining programmes between central and provincial governments; - Decentralization of financial powers to local levels; - Establish local development committees; - Co-locate SD and budgeting offices	-Formalized involvement of non-state actors in design and implementation of development strategy; - Stakeholder consultations, awareness raising and anti-dissidence campaigns; -Involve CSOs and citizen groups in managing grants, implementation, and progress reviews	- Institutionalized evaluation of overarching development plans or action plans; - Private sector reporting on environmental and social performance; - Alternative performance indicators

Table 10: Governance mechanisms contained in the reviewed NSDS

Findings

The following section summarizes the main research findings from case studies and emphasizes the interplay between different governance dimensions in the NSDS.

Leadership and Vision

The country case findings correspond with the literature findings (Döbel 2006 and OECD DAC 2001). Leadership and vision are instrumental for political commitment to sustainable development. Articulating a long-term vision that can go beyond the flux of four-year electoral cycles is particularly important. If a country has traditions or benevolent figureheads that can embody the iteration of a sustainable development vision sensitive to the culture of the country, it can be possible to embed that vision into long term goals to guide national development.

Some countries seem be able to draw an advantage from being monarchies with long term commitment although the realities differ greatly from country to country. If monarchies set agendas that correspond with the larger interest of the population, such institutions can provide the necessary continuity to implement measures towards the long-term goal of achieving sustainable development. Goals relating to sustainability such as well-being, sufficiency, moderation, integration etc. require a longer time span and political continuity to be implemented.

Other country examples showed that highest-level political and administrative support could be embodied in national councils and commissions. In these cases, the President or Prime Minister was shown to chair and/or lead the council or commission in charge of formulating the country strategy. Here leadership also determines the extent of political commitment that can be generated across sectors. High level representation can help integrate sustainable development goals and objectives throughout the policy management cycle and among different sectors, as other ministries tend to comply with executive orders from the highest national office. Equally, setting holistic national goals or providing an integration mandate to a dedicated governmental body is also among the stronger examples that can be helpful to enable implementation of sustainable development strategies and goals.

On the flipside, the lack of leadership can inhibit the uptake of sustainable development plans and goals, for example if the mandate for sustainable development is delegated to a subsidiary body that lacks greater decision making force, agenda setting capacity, budget or a combination thereof.

Institutional Coordination

As has been shown in the case studies, countries' development strategies tend to benefit from being coordinated by a central planning agency, as the examples from the Philippines and Indonesia vividly attest. This is not to say that the environmental ministries and agencies are not qualified for the task, it is just an unfortunate fact that the environmental ministries and agencies in most countries lack the political clout to act as an effective integrating agent. If the mandate to integrate sustainable development falls to environmental ministries only, then the risk is sustainable development may be misunderstood as being only about the environment.

Therefore, the best options seem to be that either stronger ministries with broader planning or development mandates play key institutional roles, or at least are heavily involved, or that smaller ministries or bodies are equipped with sufficient authority to coordinate other institutions. The Philippines National Economic and Development Authority, Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Commission, and Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) illustrate this point, showing how such agencies work towards integrated planning, as well as requiring coherence between sectors and vertical levels of government.

The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) in Thailand works in a similar fashion, but environmental sustainability is delegated to the National Environment Board (NEB). From an integration perspective, the Thai institutional arrangements may seem sub-optimal; at the same time, separating the environmental dimension could also provide additional impetus for the environmental dimension of development, if that is perceived to be especially challenged. A similar characteristic could be observed in the Bhutanese example, where two different commissions (National Environment Commission and the Gross National Happiness Commission) oversee planning, albeit in a much smaller government. The Republic of Korea's green officers placed strategically in other agencies seemed a useful institutional arrangement for enhancing coordination and integration. Such officers can help ensure that each agency's portfolio and actual work corresponds with the objectives of the overarching sustainable development strategies.

In terms of integration between different levels of government, Bhutan's example of circulating governmental officers to posts at provincial and municipal levels can be highlighted, as was the example from the Republic of Korea's Local Agenda 21, where 92% of the local administrations participated and drafted their own LA21. It remains to be seen whether the green growth agenda will be as effectively translated to local realities as the sustainable development case, or whether the Republic of Korea's priorities will change. The latter appears unlikely, as the country has established partnerships and offices in several countries. Promoting the local version of sustainable development (be it GNH or Green Growth) is a good way to establish that goal as a priority, create broad-based ownership and "brand" the country's development concept even beyond national borders.

Integration between levels of government seems to be a crucial step for bringing national level visions down to local realities and vice-versa. Aligning national development plans with local development priorities can be done either by providing avenues for decentralized planning and budgeting or by establishing local development committees. A two way information flow is a simple but powerful means to increase vertical integration and coherence. Ensuring functioning channels of communication top-down and bottom-up (including also the views of non-governmental stakeholders) is important for

planning and envisioning phases and for review after implementation, when reporting and evaluation is done.

Stakeholder Engagement

Multistakeholder participation is becoming an increasingly integral part of governance, and many of the reviewed strategies (Thailand, Philippines) show that engagement processes are indeed incorporated. If designed clearly with well-structured provisions of roles and responsibilities to representative non-state actors at national and local levels, engagement can add momentum to all stages of the policy cycle.

Awareness and anti-dissidence campaigns, such as those practiced in the Republic of Korea, are a step in the right direction to increase political acceptance of a policy towards behavioural change. These can include water or electricity-saving campaigns, institutionalization of sustainable procurement guidelines in public offices, or general education of public consumption choices.

Civil society groups can also lend a hand in grant management, for implementation as well as during progress reviews and report findings from the local and back to national levels. Allowing broader participation in these stages of policy cycle can also maintain a commitment to proposed goals. Governments can increase stakeholder engagement by providing financial support to those who cannot afford it on their own. It can increase ownership and benefit implementation of plans and strategies and can bolster government capacity. One way to pave the way for better stakeholder engagement is to guarantee public participation by law, as the Indonesian case shows; this can go hand-in-hand with providing legal backing for public access to information and public disclosure campaigns.

Progress Review

Related to participation, the recommendations for progress review also emphasize the value of involving stakeholders, including the private sector, NGOs and academia in tracking progress. Non-state actor involvement in monitoring and reporting may be useful for transparency, i.e. ensuring adherence to environmental and social safeguards. At the same time, the private sector should be brought in through schemes such as voluntary sustainability reporting or other CSR initiatives that raise awareness about private sector contributions to social and environmental development.

Any development plan needs goals and targets, which for purposes of review also must contain indicators. Most of the reviewed countries involve their national statistical offices and bureaus or create national committees for the implementation of the sustainability agenda. The Thai NSDS has detailed sections on implementation monitoring and evaluation of each of its four strategic areas and relies on national operation centres to collect data for monitoring and evaluation. The Republic of Korea has similar provisions for ministries and stakeholders to review implementation of their strategy every five years. In Bhutan, an online planning and monitoring system was devised to better connect national planning with local level implementation and review. Evidence of the actual use of these monitoring and evaluation protocols is nonetheless hard to find.

Governance Dimension	Indonesia	Thailand	Republic of Korea	Bhutan	Philippines
Leadership Agenda setting; Generate political commitment; Financial and human resources; Political and administrative support.	- Exhibited leadership/vision (though chiefly at the international level)	- The Royal Family/HM King's Sufficiency Economy - Political continuity and stability for implementation of long-term development strategies; - PM chaired NCSD;	- Model country in the region - Leading role in Shared Learning and Review of NSSDs - Established NCSD - Seoul Declaration 14th - UNCSD (but unclear what has happened to this body)	- Long-term leadership through monarchy - Provided degree of political continuity - Normal four-year terms not able to deliver;	- President led the Philippine Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD)
Institutional Coordination Across sectors; and scales; Integrated planning; Resource transfers to local levels; Key role of finance, planning ministries; Budget autonomy; Council or H/L body with H/L participants; Partnerships with local levels;	- From the national level and down integration/owner difficult to trace.	- Planning/strategizing produced overarching national sustainable development strategy/ consecutive five-year plans. - Social and economic issues were bundled - While environmental issues stayed separate in a different institution.	- UN heralded Korean version of Local Agenda 21 - Best case of SD practice in 2002; - Despite focus on integration coherence remains a challenge. - SD processes characterized with strong bottom-up initiative and ownership - Presidential green growth initiative was top-down	- Two bodies in charge of integrated issues: - National Environment Commission; - Gross National Happiness Commission;	- PCSD in Head Quarters of NEDA benefited integration; - Experience integrating and mainstreaming SD into local planning and implementation; - LA21 stands as an important example on how to enhance vertical integration and benefit implementation.
Stakeholder Engagement Awareness raising; Consultations; Involvement in decision making; Proxy for integration; Proxy for ownership; Burden sharing for implementation;	- Some stakeholder involvement (establishment of the WBCSD) - Some awareness-raising - not clear among non-governmental stakeholders		- More pragmatic focus on energy, climate, technology and resilience Green Growth may have been easier to communicate to the public than vaguely defined SD concepts;	- Involving local population in planning and implementing at appropriate levels;	- Especially the inclusive and participatory bottom-up processes PA21 - Good example: ecosystems approach in the PA21.
Progress Review Inclusive and transparent review mechanisms; Link short with long term to enable periodic reviews	-Experiments with alternative indicators of progress but no mainstreaming;	- NSDS has detailed sections on implementation monitoring and evaluation of each of its four strategic areas;	- Strategy reviewed every 5 years by multiple stakeholders;	- Emphasis on coordination, monitoring and evaluation in selected development programmes	

Table 11: Governance mechanisms in the case countries

Conclusions and way forward

This policy report began with the assertion that a core reason for the limited progress with the NSDS was an inattention to governance. At the most basic level, governance is essential to translating global goals into national actions. The report then developed a simple framework based on the policy implementation cycle literature as lens to look at four components of governance: leadership, institutional coordination, stakeholder engagement, and review of progress. In so doing, there was a deliberate effort to navigate between high-minded governance principles and an overcrowded laundry list of institutional intangibles. The policy implementation cycle framework was then used to view NSDS in five countries in Asia.

The five countries were selected because they have all encountered the environmental costs of rapid growth. They have all developed numerous plans and strategies to bring down these costs, including holistic development strategies such as the NSDS. Yet, while sharing similar experiences, they have arrived at a variety of potentially promising practices meant to aid implementation of development objectives.

Moreover, while they have indeed introduced a wealth of promising practices, the diverse cases can also illustrate some broader truths about the role of governance for implementation of NSDS and other plans. These broader truths will need additional research; they can be investigated in subsequent studies of a larger number of cases or a closer review of single country case studies. They may also have wider ranging implications for the design of the SDGs. This concluding chapter reflects upon some of identified good practices before moving to broader trends and closing with implications for the SDGs.

Good Practices

One of the strengths of case studies is their empirical richness. One can get deeper insights into reasons behind progress with the NSDS in particular instances. There is no shortage of appealing practices. Illustrative examples range from Philippines' insistence of a bottom-up processes to bring stakeholders into their PA 21; the Republic of Korea's widespread adoption of local agenda 21 and its subsequent top-level leadership showing commitment to green growth; Indonesia's ensuring the right to participation by law; Bhutan's invention and promotion of GNH as well as their practice with rotation of government officers from central administration to the provinces. Table 8 provides a listing of which countries offered the good practices in each of the four main governance categories.

Though less discussed, the case study chapters also illustrate undesirable practices. For one, high-level support has not always been sustainable. Change in leadership or political instability in Thailand; for example, interrupts long-term support of sustainable development strategies. Additionally, coordination with local governments appears to be challenging in several of the reviewed countries, especially those with challenging geographies (mountains or islands). Thus, while decentralization has made headway in several of the reviewed countries, it has not been as successful as initially assumed at local levels. Stakeholder engagement was and remains lacking in many countries; and the reality is that it seems to be selective with participation for only a few chosen stakeholders and that this engagement is done pro-

forma rather than to establish real and substantive stakeholder roles for development. In fact, when the good and less desirable practices are put together some more general trends become observable.

General Trends

A useful starting point for looking at these broader trends is that none of the countries devoted consistently high levels of attention to all four governance categories. This is, of course, partially attributable to the fact that the categories are roughly sequential; it may be less important to have solid progress review mechanisms in place before policies have actually been implemented. However, what is particularly noticeable is limited attention to stakeholder engagement and even less so to progress review, monitoring and evaluation, especially the types of review processes that were recommended in the beginning of the report. Given the lack of attention, it is not surprising that there has been a frequent cycling of different on NSDS and similar strategies.

An optimistic view of this cycling is that countries are searching for context-appropriate interpretations of the NSDS. From this view, countries are actively tailoring elements of the global sustainability agenda to varying contexts. This could the case with 1) climate change mitigation and adaptation in Indonesia; 2) the Sufficiency Economy philosophy in Thailand; 3) the extensive participatory processes to determine Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21 in the Philippines; 4) the Gross National Happiness concept in Bhutan; and 5) the more growth oriented environmental-economic agenda of green growth in the Republic of Korea. One might reasonably conclude that these examples illustrate how concepts are accommodated to national circumstances.

There is also a more pessimistic view of cycling however. Instead of devoting resources towards the implementation of NSDS often governments abandoned one strategy and spend considerable time and resources on new ones. This can occur either due to regime change or changing trends in the development community (from sustainable development to climate change to green growth/economy). This could indicate that new strategies were developed as a result of the preference to postpone the more difficult but crucial energy necessary for carrying through to a visible end. Supporting this view is the general preference to place greater weight on the leadership and institutional coordination dimensions and less on stakeholder engagement and progress and view dimensions. This may be attributable to a desire to claim credit for initiating a new strategy but to avoid being held to account for its performance. In short, there have been frequent shifts in terminology but limited traction with action.

Implications for the SDGs

Both the identification of good practices and assessment of broader trends may have implications for current discussions of the SDGs. Several of the key research institutes working on a post-2015 goal framework have recommended separate SDG governance goals; others have opined that governance could be a cross cutting issue embedded within goals focusing on sector specific issues. While the policy report does not come down on either side of this debate, it does have relevance for the structure of either a standalone governance goal or integrating governance into the structure of other SDGs. More specifically, it suggests that key elements of the policy implementation cycle may be built into such a goal, and related proposals, which IGES has been a part of are now seen where governance is suggested as

stand-alone goal as well as a part of means of implementation (ASEF 2014). Moreover, particular attention should be placed on stakeholder engagement and on progress review. Further, it may be useful to set up a governance window on a proposed SDG dashboard (Columbia Proposal). The governance window could be used to bring attention to good governance practices, perhaps emphasizing the stakeholder engagement and progress review dimensions. It may also include access to tools and training materials that help strengthen these dimensions of governance.

Finally the findings of this policy report can have implications for the operationalization of the SDGs and related research. Over the next decade, there will be ample experiences to look at how governance affects the SDGs. These experiences will help to look more closely at some of the conclusions drawn from the review of the NSDS. Possible questions might include: does the cycling from one strategy to another persist with the SDGs? Where and on what issues have countries been able to prevent this? There may also be opportunities to explore possible linkages between the institutions and processes in the implementation cycle used here and some of the higher-order principles, for example, looking at whether countries with a rule of law place greater weight on stakeholder engagement and progress review. Similarly, more thickly described case studies of how governance can affect an SDG at multiple levels across multiple stakeholders may help shed light on the validity of these findings in a multi-tiered and multi-actor framework. In all of the above instances, Asia and the Pacific will provide fertile ground to understand how to govern development more sustainably beyond 2015.

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