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**SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
GOVERNANCE: KEY PRINCIPLES AND GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES**

**ECONOMIE DURABILĂ ȘI GUVERNANȚĂ EFICIENTĂ ÎN DOMENIUL
MEDIULUI : PRINCIPII-CHEIE ȘI BUNE PRACTICI GLOBALE**

**УСТОЙЧИВАЯ ЭКОНОМИКА И ЭФФЕКТИВНОЕ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОЕ
РЕГУЛИРОВАНИЕ: КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ ПРИНЦИПЫ И ПЕРЕДОВАЯ МИРОВАЯ
ПРАКТИКА**

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ABSTRACT:

**SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE:
KEY PRINCIPLES AND GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES**

This research explores the integration of economic development and environmental sustainability, focusing on balancing present needs with future resource conservation. It investigates how green economies and governance practices can mitigate pollution, climate change, and resource depletion. Central to this study is how sustainable development can be achieved through practical governance and economic strategies promoting low-carbon, resource-efficient, and inclusive growth. Examining concepts like the circular economy and bioeconomy, the study addresses the urgent impact of globalization on national development and environmental issues. Through a comparative analysis of green public governance models and sustainable economic practices and case studies from Nordic countries, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, it identifies effective strategies. Findings show that sustainable growth can coexist with environmental preservation through green investments, supportive policies, and inclusive development. The research highlights the importance of transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and the rule of law in environmental decision-making to facilitate sustainable development globally.

Key words: *green economy, circular economy, bioeconomy, climate change, good environmental governance, public governance, sustainable development, human rights, globalization.*

JEL Classification: A11; K32; Q56

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REZUMAT:

**ECONOMIE DURABILĂ ȘI GUVERNANȚĂ EFICIENTĂ ÎN DOMENIUL MEDIULUI :
PRINCIPII-CHEIE ȘI BUNE PRACTICI GLOBALE**

Această cercetare explorează integrarea dezvoltării economice și a durabilității mediului, concentrându-se pe echilibrarea nevoilor prezente cu conservarea resurselor viitoare. Ea investighează modul în care economiile ecologice și practicile de guvernare pot atenua poluarea, schimbările climatice și epuizarea resurselor. În centrul acestui studiu se află modul în care dezvoltarea durabilă poate fi realizată prin strategii practice de guvernanță și economice care promovează o creștere cu emisii reduse de carbon, eficientă din punctul de vedere al utilizării resurselor și favorabilă incluziunii. Examinând concepte precum economia circulară și bioeconomia, studiul abordează impactul urgent al globalizării asupra dezvoltării naționale și asupra problemelor de mediu. Printr-o analiză comparativă a modelelor de guvernanță publică ecologică și a practicilor economice durabile, precum și prin studii de caz din țările nordice, Germania, Franța și Țările de Jos, acesta identifică strategii eficiente. Constatările arată că creșterea durabilă poate coexista cu conservarea mediului prin investiții ecologice, politici de sprijin și dezvoltare favorabilă incluziunii. Cercetarea evidențiază importanța transparenței, a responsabilității, a incluziunii și a statului de drept în procesul decizional privind mediul pentru a facilita dezvoltarea durabilă la nivel global.

Cuvinte cheie: *economie verde, economie circulară, bioeconomie, schimbări climatice, bună guvernanță de mediu, guvernanță publică, dezvoltare durabilă, drepturile omului, globalizare.*

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РЕЗЮМЕ:

**УСТОЙЧИВАЯ ЭКОНОМИКА И ЭФФЕКТИВНОЕ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОЕ
РЕГУЛИРОВАНИЕ: КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ ПРИНЦИПЫ И ПЕРЕДОВАЯ МИРОВАЯ
ПРАКТИКА**

В этом исследовании рассматривается вопрос о взаимосвязи экономического развития и экологической устойчивости с учетом баланса между текущими потребностями и сохранением ресурсов в будущем. Исследуется, как "зеленая" экономика и практика управления могут снизить уровень загрязнения, изменения климата и истощения ресурсов. Центральное место в этом исследовании занимает вопрос о том, как устойчивое развитие может быть достигнуто с помощью практических управленческих и экономических стратегий, направленных на обеспечение низкоуглеродного, ресурсосберегающего и инклюзивного прогресса. Изучая такие концепции, как циркулярная экономика и биоэкономика, в исследовании рассматривается неотложное воздействие глобализации на национальное развитие и экологические проблемы. С помощью сравнительного анализа моделей «зеленого» государственного управления и устойчивой экономической практики, а также тематических исследований, проведенных в скандинавских странах, Германии, Франции и Нидерландах, в исследовании определяются эффективные стратегии. Данные показывают, что устойчивый рост может сосуществовать с сохранением окружающей среды за счет «зеленых» инвестиций, поддерживающей политики и инклюзивного развития. Исследование подчеркивает важность прозрачности, подотчетности, инклюзивности и верховенства закона при принятии экологических решений для содействия устойчивому развитию в глобальном масштабе.

Ключевые слова: *зеленая экономика, циркулярная экономика, биоэкономика, изменение климата, эффективное экологическое управление, государственное управление, устойчивое развитие, права человека, глобализация.*

JEL Classification: A11; K32; Q56

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Introduction

Global and regional concepts on Green Economy. Sustainable development has become an important topic on the agenda for politicians, scientists, social activists, and business people. While environmental problems are becoming more and more prominent and the consequences increasingly urgent, topics such as pollution, climate change, ecological disasters, and the depletion of natural resources have made people start looking for solutions and writing different strategies.

In the second half of the 20th century, the world faced open questions about the scarcity of important resources for life and development. The UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an urgent call to action for all nations—both developed and developing—within a global partnership. These goals, proposed as a universal concept by the UN, recognize that eradicating poverty and other forms of deprivation requires comprehensive efforts. These efforts include combating climate change, protecting our oceans and forests, enhancing health and education, reducing inequality, and promoting economic growth. The SDGs highlight the interconnected nature of these challenges and emphasize the need for integrated solutions to achieve sustainable development for all.¹

The concept of sustainable development has existed for decades, with its modern interpretation first articulated in the Brundtland Report in 1987. The goal of sustainable development is to strike a balance between meeting the needs of the present generation and conserving resources for future generations. It emphasizes the relationship between economic growth, social well-being, and environmental protection. Sustainable development aims for long-term well-being by taking into account these three dimensions.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defined a green economy as “an economy that leads to improved human well-being and social justice while reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcity”. In simple terms, a green economy can be seen as low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive.² The UN documents note that “the green economy is a broad-based policy agenda and a tool to support the achievement of sustainable development with a focus on aligning economic objectives with social and environmental goals. The green economy agenda recognises the potential of new sustainable technologies and green sectors that can drive a new development path”.³

In the UN system, the concepts of “circular economy” and “bioeconomy” are two concepts related to the green economy. The circular economy is a concept with different origins and definitions. The circular economy (hereinafter referred as CE) aims to support the development of regenerative production-consumption systems, where inputs and outputs are minimized by ‘slowing, closing, and narrowing material and energy loops.’⁴ It means, that the focus is on minimising waste through resource efficiency, reuse, and recycling. Over the course of the past decade, researchers, businesses, policymakers, and other societal sectors have shown a renewed interest in the concept of CE, which has been shaped by contributions from academia and industry. The concepts of industrial ecology and industrial ecosystems serve as its foundation. At first, the main way that CE was viewed was in terms of cost savings for business and industrial development. But with the advent of the 1960s and growing concerns about pollution and excessive resource consumption, it became important.

In 2015, the European Commission adopted the Closed Loop Economy Package as a major policy initiative. The circular economy supports the transformation and development of industry and infrastructure towards sustainable consumption and production. In 2015, UNEP

¹ The 17 Goals. URL: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (accessed on 03.07.2024)

² ECE/FAO 2018, Measuring the Value of Forests in a Green Economy, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in progress. URL: https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/publications/DP-70_WEB.pdf (accessed on 03.07.2024)

³ UN Sustainable Development Goals. URL: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/ru/sustainable-development-goals> (accessed on 03.07.2024)

⁴ Geissdoerfer, M., Savaget, P., Bocken, N.M.P., Hultink, E.J., 2017. The circular economy – a new sustainability paradigm? *J. Clean. Prod.* 143, 757–768. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.12.048>.

recognised the circular economy as “a key component of an inclusive green economy”.¹ In general, CE places a strong emphasis on maximizing the value inherent in energy and materials, utilizing diversity and resilience, and integrating systems thinking into the processes of production and consumption. Improving the material and energy efficiency of production processes as well as product usage over the course of the product life cycle is necessary to achieve CE. This involves promoting cycles and cascades between various industries or uses, as well as within the same industrial process. The goal is to make sure that resources and energy don't end up in the environment before being put to worse uses.

Rethinking the design of goods and services to increase efficiency, lowering the amount of energy and materials required for manufacturing, and encouraging long-term maintenance and repair are all part of CE solutions. Other strategies include recycling and reclassifying waste into inorganic and biological components, using renewable energy sources, and sharing, reusing, refurbishing, remanufacturing, and repurposing products. Radical perspectives on CE also support a refusal to create unnecessary or duplicate goods and services.

The bioeconomy (hereinafter referred as BE) also addresses concerns about growing resource scarcity, but in this case, it focuses only on biological resources such as agricultural, forestry, and fisheries resources. BE, also known as the ‘bio-based economy’ or ‘knowledge-based bio-economy’, leverages biological resources from land and sea to develop and commercialize goods and services.² It seeks to replace activities reliant on fossil fuels with ones powered by living biomass, knowledge-based innovations, and biotechnology. This includes the technology needed to transform biomass into a range of goods, such as fuels and bioenergy, commodities and paper, textiles, chemicals, and medicines. It also entails developing novel or more sophisticated pharmaceuticals, improving crop performance through genetic engineering, and coming up with solutions for wastewater purification and bioremediation. It emphasises a shift towards the optimal and sustainable use of renewable biological resources such as materials and bioenergy. In 2012, the European Commission adopted the Bioeconomy Strategy, centred on innovation and technology development.³ From a simple perspective, the BE can be seen as referring to the biomass-based sectors of the green economy, while the CE is related to the more abiotic sectors of the green economy, such as industry and manufacturing. Although BE is policy-driven, it is well-received at the industrial level, particularly in the forest and agricultural sectors, where it acts as a catalyst for innovation and development.

The concept of the green economy has sparked much debate in political life and academic research. Opponents argue that “the concept of a green economy is just a myth made to be true”. Rational neoliberals have defined this process as “simply the result of wishful thinking”.⁴ Moreover, environmental economics, feminist economics, postmodernism, resource-oriented economics, environmental economics, anti-consumerism, anti-globalism, green anarchism, green politics, the theory of international relations, and other concepts pertaining to sustainable development and green economy issues are all included in the concept of the “green economy”.

However, the concept of a green economy came later than the concept of a sustainable economy. A green economy is an economy that “leads to improved human well-being and

¹ UNECE. Green Economy related concepts URL: <https://unece.org/green-economy-3#:~:text=A%20circular%20economy%20supports%20the,of%20an%20inclusive%20green%20economy%E2%80%9D>. (accessed on 01.07.2024)

² McCormick, K., Kautto, N., 2013. The bioeconomy in Europe: an overview. *Sustain.* 5, 2589–2608. ISSN 2071-1050

³ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, A bioeconomy strategy for Europe – Working with nature for a more sustainable way of living, Publications Office, 2013, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/17708>

⁴ Gupta J., Sanchez N. Global green governance: Embedding the green economy in a global green and equitable rule of law polity //Review of European Community & International Environmental Law. – 2012. – T. 21. – №. 1. – P. 12-22. ISSN 0962-8797

social justice while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcity”.¹ A green economy involves low carbon emissions, efficient use of resources, and social inclusion. The most crucial long-term objective is still sustainable development, but getting there will require turning the economy green. The three pillars of development—economic, social, and environmental—are given a thorough relationship under the sustainable development model. The goal of the environmental economic growth concept is to bring these three elements into greater harmony so that every nation, regardless of development level, can support it.

Human progress has always hinged on our technical ingenuity and capacity for cooperative action. These qualities have often been leveraged constructively to achieve both development and environmental progress, such as in controlling air and water pollution and increasing the efficiency of material and energy use. Many countries have succeeded in boosting food production and reducing population growth rates, and some technological advances, particularly in medicine, have been widely shared.

Many developed countries promote the concept of a “green economy” and consider it a basis for anti-crisis regulation. National programmes to upgrade environmental and technological bases, increase production efficiency, and resource conservation have been designed to improve the economic climate in the state. Successful implementation of state programmes of green transition will depend mainly on the political will, development of regulatory and institutional frameworks, and financing of traditional sectors of the economy.

Improving the green economy in a country, particularly within government frameworks, involves a structured, multi-stage process. Each stage addresses different aspects of natural resource management and landscape object optimization to promote sustainability and environmental health. Pyliavskiy proposed the stages of the process of improving the green economy in the country. They include:²

Stage 1: Analysis of the Current Situation

This initial stage involves a comprehensive analysis of the current state of the green economy, focusing on the management of natural resources and landscape objects. The goal is to identify problematic areas and potential opportunities for improvement. Key activities include: conducting a thorough examination of existing policies and practices; identifying gaps and inefficiencies in current management systems; highlighting prospects for enhancing processes and mechanisms related to natural resources and landscape management.

Stage 2: Introduction to Optimized Management

At this stage, optimized management strategies for natural resources and landscape objects are implemented at both the state and regional levels. Efforts are concentrated on aligning primary measures to enhance the green economy within the framework of public administration. Key activities include: introducing improved management practices and policies; ensuring coordination between different government levels and departments; monitoring the implementation process to assess immediate impacts; noting that this stage is not final, as it necessitates a follow-up assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented measures.

Stage 3: Analysis of Emerging Problems

During this stage, an in-depth analysis of any problems or challenges that arise from the optimization efforts in Stage 2 is conducted. The objective is to identify issues that hinder progress and develop solutions. Key activities include: assessing difficulties encountered during the optimization process; evaluating the impact of these challenges on overall goals; formulating necessary adjustments and improvements based on the analysis.

Stage 4: Consolidation and Adaptation of Results

¹ ECE/FAO 2018, Measuring the Value of Forests in a Green Economy, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in progress. URL: https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/publications/DP-70_WEB.pdf (accessed on 03.07.2024)

² Pyliavskiy I. et al. Modeling ways of improving green economy and environmental protection in the context of governance //Business: Theory and Practice. – 2021. – T. 22. – №. 2. – P. 310-317. ISSN 1648-0627

The final stage involves the generalization and consolidation of the results obtained from previous stages, adapting them to the current societal realities. This stage aims to create a cohesive and adaptable paradigm for improving the green economy. Key activities include: systematizing the results from earlier stages; forming a holistic and flexible model for green economy enhancement; ensuring the model is adaptable for implementation in various contexts and countries.

Each stage of this process represents a complex and interconnected set of actions. By systematically addressing each phase, governments can effectively improve their green economies, optimize resource management, and adapt to evolving environmental and societal needs.

SDGs and global warnings: Globalisation has played an important role in the issues under research. Globalisation has had a huge impact on the way of life of people and the development of nations in general. Globalisation has increased communication, accelerated access to technology, and increased innovation. Globalisation has also ushered in a new era of economic prosperity, created wide channels of development, and played an important role in bringing people of different cultures together. On the other hand, globalisation has created many problems, the most important of which is the impact on the environment. Globalisation has become a major topic of environmental debate. Environmentalists emphasise the far-reaching consequences of these processes. However, with growth and prosperity, the environmental consciousness of individuals and society is also growing. This gives hope and makes the main argument in favour of working to reduce environmental damage. Failures to manage the environment and sustain development threaten to overwhelm all countries. Environmental and developmental challenges are inextricably linked; one cannot thrive without the other. Development cannot continue on a deteriorating environmental resource base, and the environment cannot be protected when growth overlooks the costs of environmental destruction. Addressing these issues requires integrated solutions, as fragmented institutions and policies are ineffective.

Various chemicals have been added to the soil due to globalisation and industrialisation, leading to the emergence of many noxious weeds and plants. By disturbing the genetic composition of plants, toxic wastes have caused considerable damage to agriculture. All this has put pressure on easily accessible land and water resources. In many countries, different land surfaces are being affected. For example, mountain surfaces are being disturbed to make way for a passing tunnel or motorway. Huge tracts of desert land have been taken over to build new structures. Plastic, which is non-biodegradable, has been identified in several studies as one of the most harmful pollutants.¹ On the other hand, plastic is extensively used for packaging and preserving products for export. As a result, the use of plastic has increased dramatically, resulting in widespread pollution. Researchers cannot agree on the best way to quantify globalisation and its impact on environmental degradation in developing countries.

Global warming and other environmental problems are becoming extremely important, and globalisation and the growth of world trade with a glut of consumer goods are exacerbating the situation. There are many ways to stop the effects of global warming:

1) End deforestation and plant more trees; this is by far the easiest way to protect the world from the dangers of global warming. The main problem with global warming is the large-scale accumulation of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. On the other hand, planting trees can help absorb this toxic gas, regulate the amount of it in the atmosphere, and reduce global warming by reducing the greenhouse effect.

2) Reuse and recycle goods: reusing and recycling the many products that people use daily can also help in the fight against global warming. For example, recycling paper will ensure

¹ UNEP, *The Economics of Ecosystems & Biodiversity* (2008); UNEP, *Reforming Energy Subsidies Opportunities to Contribute to the Climate Change Agenda* URL: <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7754/-Reforming%20Energy%20Subsidies-2002150.pdf?sequence=3&%3BisAllowed=> (accessed on 05.05.2024)

that large-scale cutting of trees for paper production is stopped, and these trees will in turn absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and reduce global warming.

3) Use of organic products. One of the most effective strategies to combat global warming is to encourage the use of organic products. Organic soils have a much greater ability to absorb carbon dioxide than conventionally cultivated soils. It is estimated that switching to sustainable agriculture for food production could reduce CO₂ emissions by £580 billion.

4) Efficient use of transport vehicles. Vehicles emit significant amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, making them a major source of pollution. People can work towards reducing pollution significantly by adapting modern technology.

5) Utilising alternative energy sources: switching to renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power is one of the most discussed solutions to global warming. These natural resources can simply provide energy and replace fossil fuels. Simply giving up fossil fuels would help reduce the huge amount of carbon dioxide emitted into the sky every day.

The European Commission has adopted a series of proposals to ensure that the EU's climate, energy, transport, and tax policies are consistent with reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.¹

“The EU Green Deal” is a roadmap to a sustainable economy to ensure the resilience of the EU economy by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities in all policy areas and ensuring a fair and inclusive transition. The European Green Deal aims to improve resource efficiency by moving towards a clean, circular economy, halting climate change, restoring biodiversity loss, and reducing pollution. It describes the necessary investments and available financing instruments, and it explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. The European Green Deal covers all sectors of the economy, especially transport, energy, agriculture, construction, and industries such as steel, cement, ICT, textiles, and chemicals.²

The Republic of Moldova has incorporated the priorities of international strategies in the field of the green economy concept and is making every effort to ensure the transition to green economic development. The Republic of Moldova has established the Environmental Strategy for 2024-2030, which defines national and sectoral priorities in the fields of agriculture, transport, energy, industry, construction, regional development, education, and supply. Thus, in the Republic of Moldova, the green economy is promoted as an economy that leads to improved welfare and social justice and reduces environmental risks and constraints. It is a low-carbon economy, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive. On June 17, 2015, through General Order No. 107/66 of the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Economy, an inter-ministerial Working Groups was established to promote sustainable development.

The urgent need to address Earth's climate issues and human interaction with them in order to ensure global sustainability results in green governance. Green public governance is crucial for ensuring sustainable development and preserving natural resources for future generations. In the context of good democratic governance, it includes citizen participation, transparency, accountability, and compliance with laws directed at protecting the environment. Green governance offers a structure for incorporating different players into group decisions and activities. This strategy involves a wide range of public, private, and non-state actors operating at all levels, from the local to the global, in addition to states and governments.³ Green governance plays a crucial role in helping governments and other stakeholders achieve the globally agreed-upon goals for sustainable development by bringing in a wider range of participants.

¹ Project Europe 2030. URL: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30776/qc3210249enc.pdf> (accessed on 21.06.2024)

² European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, A bioeconomy strategy for Europe – Working with nature for a more sustainable way of living, Publications Office, 2013, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/17708>

³ Debbarma J., Choi Y. A taxonomy of green governance: A qualitative and quantitative analysis towards sustainable development //Sustainable Cities and Society. – 2022. – T. 79. – C. 103693. ISSN 2210-6707

Environmental management concepts: Environmental management refers to decision-making processes related to the control and management of the environment and natural resources. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines environmental governance as follows: 'Environmental governance involves a multi-level interaction (i.e., local, national, international, or global) among three main actors: the state, the market, and civil society. These actors interact with each other, whether in a formal or informal manner, in the development and implementation of policies responding to environmental needs and societal contributions. Environmental governance pertains to rules, procedures, processes, and generally accepted behaviour, embodying the principles of “good governance,” all aimed at achieving environmentally sustainable development.¹

The basic principles of environmental management include taking the environment into account at all levels of decision-making and action. They also involve conceptualizing cities and communities, economic and political life as a subset of the environment, and emphasizing the connection between people and the ecosystems in which they live. Additionally, these principles facilitate the transition from open-cycle or cradle-to-grave systems, such as waste disposal without recycling, to closed-cycle or cradle-to-cradle systems, like permaculture and zero waste strategies.

The basic Principles of Green Public Governance:

- **Transparency and accountability (transparent decision-making):** All environmental decisions should be open to the public, allowing citizens and organisations to participate in the process.

- **Accountability of public authorities:** Authorities should be held responsible for their actions in the field of environmental protection, ensuring that their performance is monitored and evaluated.

- **Participation of citizens and public organisations (public consultations and discussions):** Involvement of citizens in the decision-making process through public discussions and consultations. Support for NGOs and environmental movements: The state should support environmental NGOs and citizens' initiatives by providing them with platforms for expressing opinions and proposals.

- **Innovation and Sustainable Development (Investment in Green Technologies):** Supporting the development and implementation of environmentally friendly technologies and renewable energy sources.

- **Sustainable Development Programmes:** Developing and implementing strategies and programmes aimed at sustainable use of natural resources and reduction of negative environmental impact.

European best practices that may be useful for other countries striving for environmentally sustainable governance.

Scandinavian (Nordic) countries (Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, etc.). The Nordic nations have long been leaders in the field of sustainable social development. The foundational ideas of the Nordic welfare model include the promotion of health and well-being, justice, equality, equality, low levels of corruption, respect for human rights, and good governance.²

In line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, the Nordic Strategy for Sustainable Development acts as the broad, cross-sectoral framework that directs the activities of the

¹ European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, A bioeconomy strategy for Europe – Working with nature for a more sustainable way of living, Publications Office, 2013, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/17708>

² The Nordic Countries In The Green Transition – More Than Just Neighbours. URL: <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1197618/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (accessed on 15.06.2024)

Nordic Council of Ministers. The economic, social, and ecological facets of sustainable development are recognised as three connected dimensions of this strategy.

The Nordic nations exhibit a strong dedication to cooperative endeavors concerning environmental and climate-related matters, effectively incorporating this endeavor into their domestic ministries and agencies. Nordic cooperation makes it easier for participants to share networks, insights, and knowledge—all of which are extremely valuable. The Nordic countries, which are connected by geography, culture, and economy, gain from mutual learning and the capacity to enhance one another's skills and resources.

Even though Nordic cooperation has proven to be effective in addressing climate change and the environment, it is still largely unknown outside of the region. However, outside parties acknowledge that the Nordic nations have a great opportunity to set an example and work together to promote particular environmental and climate-related issues on global forums. The Nordic cooperation has a discernible tendency towards emphasizing knowledge production, which has significantly contributed to understanding a range of environmental and climate-related issues. The knowledge that has been produced encourages public discussion and supports early policy development.

Nordic cooperation on environmental and climate issues addresses a wide range of relevant themes, from wetland protection to circular economy business models, benefiting multiple sectors. The primary motivation for Nordic efforts in these areas must be the ambitious aspiration to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement on climate and the environment, as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Their best practices are:

- **Renewable energy:** There is a significant focus on the development of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar energy.
- **Zero Waste Policy:** Introduction of strict regulations and recycling programmes to help minimise the amount of litter.

Germany: Since 2016, the German Sustainable Development Strategy has been aligned with the 17 global goals of the 2030 Agenda. This strategy's goals require a major transformation, which is why the Federal Government is acting in critical sectors like housing, transportation, food, agriculture, the energy sector, the circular economy, and climate protection.¹

In September 2019, Heads of State and Government acknowledged at the SDG Summit that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Agenda could not be reached if current implementation trends remained unchanged. Effective progress on sustainability, including climate protection, is imperative during the Decade of Action.

Germany intends to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 65% from 1990 levels by 2030, in accordance with decisions made by the European Union and a recent decision by the German Federal Constitutional Court. By 2045, the German Federal Government hopes to attain neutrality in greenhouse gas emissions by setting annual reduction targets.

The coalition agreement of the Federal Government emphasizes the need to change a number of facets of the economy and society. The German government, under the direction of the Federal Chancellery, approved a new sustainability strategy in March 2021 that outlined revolutionary policies and actions in six areas to produce quantifiable advancements. Three levels of pursuit are involved with these policies and measures: on implementation and effect in Germany, on international impact and on supporting partner countries.

Germany is progressing positively, currently generating approximately 43 percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Germany's best practices are:

¹ Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Germany. URL: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279522021_VNR_Report_Germany.pdf (accessed on 15.06.2024)

- Energy transition (Energiewende): A programme to gradually shift to renewable energy sources and away from coal and nuclear power.
- Environmental Education: Introduction of environmental programmes and initiatives into the educational system, which contributes to the formation of an environmentally responsible society.

France: A high standard of living and good quality of life have been attained in France, thanks to policies that guarantee universal access to healthcare, basic goods and services like energy, water, and nutritious food, as well as inclusive social protection programmes like minimum social benefits, unemployment insurance, and redistributive measures. The nation has also established strong public and private infrastructures in the areas of innovation and research, communication, transportation, and cultural heritage.¹

France has established an Interministerial Representative for Sustainable Development and a General Commissioner for Sustainable Development in an effort to take the lead in accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This leadership culminated in the country's inaugural SDG report and the subsequent development of a national action plan. To promote citizen ownership of the SDGs, this plan consists of public engagement initiatives, public policy directives for sustainable development, governmental measures, and support for economic stakeholders.

Climate policy: Active participation in international climate agreements and development of national programmes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The country has long set a high priority on sustainable transport, as seen by urban design plans that give pedestrian and bicycle-friendly areas a top priority. Moreover, France has made significant investments in the infrastructure of public transport, with a focus on electric buses and trains. In addition to these initiatives, the government has implemented tax breaks to promote the purchase of hybrid and electric cars, and to gradually cease to sell petrol and diesel vehicles by 2040. These programmes seek to reduce air pollution and encourage environmentally friendly transportation options across the nation.

France's best practice is agriculture sector support, which includes the development of organic agriculture through subsidies and support for farmers adopting sustainable practices.

Netherlands: Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, the Netherlands has pursued a comprehensive approach to integrating action across all 17 goals. Emphasizing environmental priorities, the country's national agenda focuses on energy transition, climate action, and the enhancement of environmental protection and biodiversity to address current and future environmental challenges.

The Netherlands has emerged as a global leader in sustainable practices in recent years, demonstrating a strong commitment to environmentally friendly initiatives in day-to-day living. This commitment is seen in housing, lighting, and transportation, where efforts to cut carbon emissions are being led by a significant rise in electric vehicles. The focus of housing solutions is on smart technologies and energy efficiency, which improve sustainability. The widespread use of energy-efficient lighting is a sign of a larger cultural movement towards more ecologically friendly decisions. All things considered, these initiatives put the Netherlands at the forefront of the world's sustainability movement and show its dedication to a resilient and ecologically conscious future.

With a focus on environmental stewardship, the Netherlands is poised to inspire positive change and drive continuous improvement. As the country advances towards sustainability, its dedication to a greener future promises transformative impact across sectors, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient global community.

¹ Report on the implementation by France of the Sustainable Development Goals. URL: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30776/qc3210249enc.pdf> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/10726Report%20SDGs%20France.pdf> (accessed on 21.06.2024)

Netherlands' best practices are:

- Water management: An example of efficient water management and flood defence through innovative infrastructure projects.
- Urban Ecology: Developing green cities with a focus on public transport, cycle paths and urban parks.

Conclusions:

Environmental stresses and economic development patterns are intertwined. Agricultural policies can lead to land, water, and forest degradation. Energy policies contribute to the global greenhouse effect, acidification, and deforestation for fuelwood in many developing nations.¹ These stresses threaten economic development. Therefore, economics and ecology must be fully integrated into decision-making and lawmaking processes to protect and promote both the environment and development. The economy is not solely about wealth production, and ecology is not solely about nature protection; both are essential for improving human well-being. A green economy is one that aims for sustainable development without degrading the environment. It is characterized by low carbon emissions, resource efficiency, and social inclusivity. Transitioning to a green economy involves a holistic approach that integrates environmental sustainability with economic and social goals.

- Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability Can Coexist: A green economy demonstrates that economic growth does not have to come at the expense of the environment. By adopting sustainable practices, economies can grow while preserving natural resources for future generations.

- Investment in Green Technologies and Infrastructure: Investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and green infrastructure are crucial for the transition to a green economy. These investments create jobs, reduce environmental impact, and foster innovation.

- Policy Support and Regulatory Frameworks: Effective policies and regulatory frameworks are essential to guide and support the transition to a green economy. This includes incentives for green investments, subsidies for renewable energy, and regulations that enforce environmental standards.

- Inclusive Growth and Social Equity: A green economy must be inclusive, ensuring that all segments of society benefit from sustainable development. Policies should address social equity by providing opportunities for marginalized communities and ensuring fair distribution of resources.

- Market Mechanisms and Financial Instruments: Market mechanisms such as carbon pricing, green bonds, and environmental taxes can drive the green economy by internalizing environmental costs and incentivizing sustainable practices.

Good environmental governance involves the processes and institutions that guide how decisions about the environment are made and implemented. It includes transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and the rule of law. The transition to a green economy and the establishment of good environmental governance are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Together, they provide a pathway to sustainable development that balances economic growth with environmental protection and social equity.

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