

BEST PRACTICES

from the European Implementation
Reviews of Environmental Law in the
EU-28 Countries



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for protecting and improving the environment as a valuable asset for the people of Ireland. We are committed to protecting people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation and pollution.

The work of the EPA can be divided into three main areas:

Regulation: *We implement effective regulation and environmental compliance systems to deliver good environmental outcomes and target those who don't comply.*

Knowledge: *We provide high quality, targeted and timely environmental data, information and assessment to inform decision making at all levels.*

Advocacy: *We work with others to advocate for a clean, productive and well protected environment and for sustainable environmental behaviour.*

Our Responsibilities

Licensing

We regulate the following activities so that they do not endanger human health or harm the environment:

- waste facilities (*e.g. landfills, incinerators, waste transfer stations*);
- large scale industrial activities (*e.g. pharmaceutical, cement manufacturing, power plants*);
- intensive agriculture (*e.g. pigs, poultry*);
- the contained use and controlled release of Genetically Modified Organisms (*GMOs*);
- sources of ionising radiation (*e.g. x-ray and radiotherapy equipment, industrial sources*);
- large petrol storage facilities;
- waste water discharges;
- dumping at sea activities.

National Environmental Enforcement

- Conducting an annual programme of audits and inspections of EPA licensed facilities.
- Overseeing local authorities' environmental protection responsibilities.
- Supervising the supply of drinking water by public water suppliers.
- Working with local authorities and other agencies to tackle environmental crime by co-ordinating a national enforcement network, targeting offenders and overseeing remediation.
- Enforcing Regulations such as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and substances that deplete the ozone layer.
- Prosecuting those who flout environmental law and damage the environment.

Water Management

- Monitoring and reporting on the quality of rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters of Ireland and groundwaters; measuring water levels and river flows.
- National coordination and oversight of the Water Framework Directive.
- Monitoring and reporting on Bathing Water Quality.

Monitoring, Analysing and Reporting on the Environment

- Monitoring air quality and implementing the EU Clean Air for Europe (CAFÉ) Directive.
- Independent reporting to inform decision making by national and local government (*e.g. periodic reporting on the State of Ireland's Environment and Indicator Reports*).

Regulating Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Preparing Ireland's greenhouse gas inventories and projections.
- Implementing the Emissions Trading Directive, for over 100 of the largest producers of carbon dioxide in Ireland.

Environmental Research and Development

- Funding environmental research to identify pressures, inform policy and provide solutions in the areas of climate, water and sustainability.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- Assessing the impact of proposed plans and programmes on the Irish environment (*e.g. major development plans*).

Radiological Protection

- Monitoring radiation levels, assessing exposure of people in Ireland to ionising radiation.
- Assisting in developing national plans for emergencies arising from nuclear accidents.
- Monitoring developments abroad relating to nuclear installations and radiological safety.
- Providing, or overseeing the provision of, specialist radiation protection services.

Guidance, Accessible Information and Education

- Providing advice and guidance to industry and the public on environmental and radiological protection topics.
- Providing timely and easily accessible environmental information to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making (*e.g. My Local Environment, Radon Maps*).
- Advising Government on matters relating to radiological safety and emergency response.
- Developing a National Hazardous Waste Management Plan to prevent and manage hazardous waste.

Awareness Raising and Behavioural Change

- Generating greater environmental awareness and influencing positive behavioural change by supporting businesses, communities and householders to become more resource efficient.
- Promoting radon testing in homes and workplaces and encouraging remediation where necessary.

Management and structure of the EPA

The EPA is managed by a full time Board, consisting of a Director General and five Directors. The work is carried out across five Offices:

- Office of Environmental Sustainability
- Office of Environmental Enforcement
- Office of Evidence and Assessment
- Office of Radiation Protection and Environmental Monitoring
- Office of Communications and Corporate Services

The EPA is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern and provide advice to the Board.

Best Practices
from the European Implementation Reviews
of Environmental Law in the EU-28 Countries

**A report commissioned by the
Environmental Protection Agency Research Programme**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is published as part of the EPA Research Programme 2014–2020. The programme is financed by the Irish Government. It is administered on behalf of the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment by the EPA, which has the statutory function of co-ordinating and promoting environmental research.

The purpose of this report is to extract best practice examples from the individual country reports, prepared as part of the European Commission’s Environmental Implementation Review¹. Much of the information contained in this summary report has been sourced from the individual country reports compiled on behalf of the Commission, and related links.

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The EPA Research Programme addresses the need for research in Ireland to inform policymakers and other stakeholders on a range of questions in relation to environmental protection. These reports are intended as contributions to the necessary debate on the protection of the environment.

EPA RESEARCH PROGRAMME 2014–2020

Published by the Environmental Protection Agency, Ireland

ISBN: 978-1-84095-736-5

August 2017

Price: Free

Online version

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Summary | 1 |
| Section A: 26 potential highlights | 2 |
| Section B: Matrices of activities | 6 |
| Section C: Summary of selected activities by theme | 9 |
| Circular economy | 10 |
| SME/resource efficiency | 11 |
| Eco-innovation | 12 |
| Waste management | 13 |
| Nature and biodiversity | 13 |
| Natural capital | 15 |
| Green infrastructure | 15 |
| Soil protection | 16 |
| Air quality | 16 |
| Water quality and management | 16 |
| Enhancing the sustainability of cities | 17 |
| International agreements | 18 |
| Green taxation and environmentally harmful subsidies | 18 |
| Green public procurement | 19 |
| Investments: the contribution of EU funds | 20 |
| Effective governance with central, regional and local government | 20 |
| Compliance assurance | 21 |
| Public participation and access to justice | 21 |
| Access to information, knowledge and evidence | 21 |
| Section D: Detailed report on selected highlights from the European Implementation Review | 22 |
| Austria | 23 |
| Belgium | 26 |
| Bulgaria | 29 |
| Croatia | 30 |
| Cyprus | 32 |
| Czech Republic | 33 |
| Denmark | 34 |
| Estonia | 37 |
| Finland | 38 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| France | 42 |
| Germany | 47 |
| Greece | 50 |
| Hungary | 51 |
| Ireland | 53 |
| Italy | 55 |
| Latvia | 59 |
| Lithuania | 61 |
| Luxembourg | 62 |
| Malta | 64 |
| Netherlands | 65 |
| Poland | 68 |
| Portugal | 69 |
| Romania | 72 |
| Slovakia | 73 |
| Slovenia | 74 |
| Spain | 76 |
| Sweden | 78 |
| United Kingdom | 82 |
| | |
| List of Abbreviations | 84 |

Summary

This short report aims to extract the best practices from the EU-28 Environmental Implementation Review (EIR).¹

It contains the “Points of Excellence” examples highlighted in the Commission reports, together with some additional good examples of best practice, as selected by the authors from within the main body of the EIR reports. Where necessary, this has been supplemented with additional information from country sources in order to get a sense of what each best practice activity entails.

The report is structured in four sections, as follows:

Section A: 26 potential highlights

Twenty-six selected examples of good practice.

Section B: Matrices of activities

The two matrices relate the individual best practice activities identified for each country in the report (AT1, BE4, etc.) to heading categories in the Commission documents (circular economy, waste management, etc.) and to activity type (policy, activity, funding, etc.).

Section C: Summary of selected activities by theme

Following the themes and titles used in the Commission documents, the relevant best practice activities for each Member State are outlined.

Section D: Detailed report on selected highlights from the European Implementation Review

A more in-depth review on a country-by-country basis. Highlighted “good practice” activities and initiatives are briefly described. For each country, this starts with those highlighted by the Commission (usually two or three points) and then, where relevant, includes additional best practices highlighted by the authors of this report.

The authors of the Commission EIR reports highlighted “Points of Excellence” for each Member State. The authors of the current document have scrutinised the Commission reports and have highlighted a number of additional activities and initiatives deemed worthy of mention. These are the opinions of the authors, and other activities could also possibly have been selected. It should be noted that only positive activities have been selected.

It should also be noted that there is some variation in the detail and emphasis between different Member State reports. It is assumed that this is related to the individuals from each country who supplied the basic information that was used in the compilation of the EIR reports.

There may also be some errors (and indeed omissions) in the individual Commission EIR reports; for example, data on resource productivity in Ireland appear to be incorrect (see Ireland entry in Section D for more information).

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm

Section A: 26 Potential highlights

Section A contains 26 selected examples of good practice. They have been selected from the list of Points of Excellence in Sections C and D.

In the opinion of the authors, these stood out as being particularly interesting, innovative, ambitious or exciting, and they are examples to other Member States. There may of course be others.

26 Potential Highlights

Circular economy

Austria AT2

Developed successful good practices in the field of eco-innovation and the circular economy, such as the “Buy Aware” initiative.

Finland FI6

Measures to fund circular economy. One very interesting point to note is that the circular economy was selected as one of the key projects of the Prime Minister’s 2015 government programme, with a planned public investment of €40 million.

France FR9

Waste prevention measures – a target to reduce household waste production by 10% by 2020 (compared with 2010). Actions: deposit and return schemes; obligation for food retailers to donate unsold goods; and a “resource use hierarchy”.

Netherlands NL3

Mainstreaming green thinking in the financial sector, for example by the largest Dutch pension fund (ABP), which adopted a policy for sustainable investment in 2015.

Luxembourg LU2

Resource-efficiency and circular economy measures – including clever shopping initiative (labelling certain classes of products that have a low ecological impact) and Fit4Circularity to support companies.

SME/resource efficiency

Germany DE4

National Sustainable Development Strategy – a goal to double resource productivity; German Council for Sustainable Development; all ministries involved.

Hungary HU2

National target for reduction in material intensity to 80% of the 2007 level by 2020.

Eco-innovation

Sweden SE1

Environmental objectives and generational goal – “to pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved, without increasing environmental and health problems beyond Sweden’s borders.” Associated council and implementation measures.

Waste management

Croatia HR1

Eco Island Krk – an ecologically based system for the management of municipal waste. Represents an integrated model of waste disposal, the first of its kind in Croatia. Includes refunds for deposited polyethylene terephthalate (PET), glass and aluminium.

Italy IT6

National Plan on Food Waste and law for food donation/distribution. It should be noted that in Milan food waste is collected separately at a high level (93 kg/inhabitants/yr); it is recognised worldwide as a best practice in a city of 1 million inhabitants.

Nature and biodiversity

Belgium BE2

In terms of Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation, Flanders is outstanding in having all 38 Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) designated as SACs.

Natural capital

Netherlands NL4

Pioneering work on mapping and assessing the ecosystems and their services, and on developing a natural capital accounting system.

Green infrastructure

Belgium BE6

Since 2000, the regional programme “Green Neighbourhoods” (*Quartiers Verts/Groene Wijken*) has supported more than 200 local greening initiatives in the Brussels Region.

Finland FI12

Green infrastructure geographic information system (GIS)-based tool.

Soil protection

Belgium BE7

Each region has developed (or is currently updating) its own Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool. These regional tools help public and private neighbourhood planners.

Air quality

France FR4

Traffic and air pollution measures: restrictions on older cars; pedestrianising measures; plans to ban the sale of both diesel and petrol cars by 2040.

Enhancing the sustainability of cities

Germany DE6

Project for “sensible water use” – Frankfurt. Achieved aim of reducing water consumption by 20% by 2000.

Green taxation and environmentally harmful subsidies

Belgium BE5

Introduction of a kilometre charge for lorries in all Belgian regions as of April 2016 and changes to vehicle circulation and road taxes in Flanders.

Ireland IE6

Initiated an environmental fund in 2001. Primarily used to fund waste-related initiatives.

Netherlands NL5

Since January 2015, waste tax extended from waste deposit to waste incineration.

Green public procurement

Austria AT1

Established specific platform focusing on green public procurement (GPP), including a help desk for procurement officers to exchange experiences.

Denmark DK4

GPP. This includes criteria covering green requirements, use of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), social issues and innovation aspects. Various implementation tools are in use.

Netherlands NL1

The Dutch GPP approach is one of the most ambitious and successful in the European Union (EU), stimulating markets for sustainable products.

Sweden SE6

GPP. One interesting tool is an online wizard, which guides contracting authorities through the different environmental criteria available for a number of products.

United Kingdom UK3

Considered a front-runner in GPP. Various tools and measures under way.

Access to information, knowledge and evidence

Austria AT4

Resource Efficiency Action Plan to improve overall resource efficiency by 2020 by 50% compared with 2008.

Section B: Matrices of activities

These two matrices relate the best practice activities identified for each country in the report (AT1, BE4, CZ2, etc.) to heading categories used in the Commission review documents (circular economy, waste management, etc.) and to activity type (policy, activity, funding, etc.).

They act as an additional type of contents page and allow an overview of each country's activities according to the themes in the Commission documents and the activity type.

Section C: Summary of selected activities by theme

Following the themes and titles used in the Commission review documents, the relevant best practice activities for each Member State are outlined.

Thus, for example, under headings such as “circular economy”, “eco-innovation”, “waste management”, and so on, this section provides an at-a-glance overview of what best practice activities are highlighted across the Member States. There is also a reference to the page number in Section D, where a somewhat fuller explanation of each individual activity is provided.

1. Turning the EU into a circular, resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy

Circular economy

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|-------------|------|--|----------|
| Austria | AT2 | Developed successful good practices in the field of eco-innovation and the circular economy, such as the “Buy Aware” initiative. | 24 |
| Belgium | BE1 | Extensive activities at federal and regional levels in promoting the circular economy, demonstrating leadership to public and private stakeholders. Using ERDF Operational Programmes to promote the circular economy. | 27 |
| Denmark | DK1 | Integration of the circular economy into multiple policy areas. Measures include the Danish Green Investment State Loan Fund; the Eco-Innovation Programme; the Pool for Green Enthusiasts; a guide to sharing schemes in housing associations; a guide to green everyday choices; and plans to amend regulations for date labelling food. | 33 |
| Finland | FI6 | Measures to fund circular economy. One very interesting point to note is that the circular economy was selected as one of the key projects of the Prime Minister’s 2015 government programme, with a planned public investment of €40 million. | 40 |
| France | FR6 | Eco-innovation and circular economy measures – infrastructure, financial instruments, clusters. | 43 |
| France | FR9 | Waste prevention measures – a target to reduce household waste by 10% by 2020 (compared with 2010). Actions: deposit and return schemes; obligation for food retailers to donate unsold goods; and a “resource use hierarchy”. | 44 |
| Ireland | IE3 | National strategies and plans on resource efficiency and jobs. | 53 |
| Italy | IT7 | Budget legislation under Industry 4.0 for circular economy measures – hyper/super depreciation schemes, e.g. tax credits and a grant scheme. | 56 |
| Italy | IT17 | GPP – Remade in Italy scheme – an accredited certification scheme for verification of recycled content in products. | 56 |
| Luxembourg | LU2 | Resource-efficiency and circular economy measures – including clever shopping initiative (labelling certain classes of products that have a low ecological impact) and Fit4Circularity to support companies. | 62 |
| Netherlands | NL0 | Considered a front-runner in the circular economy: one of the first countries to present a programme (2014), followed in September 2016 by a government-wide programme for a circular economy by 2050. | 65 |

| | | | |
|-------------|-----|---|----|
| Netherlands | NL2 | “Green Deals” signed by government and stakeholders to overcome obstacles to green growth – very successful and can be seen as an EU good practice. | 66 |
| Netherlands | NL3 | Mainstreaming green thinking in the financial sector, for example by the largest Dutch pension fund (ABP), which adopted a policy for sustainable investment in 2015. | 67 |
| Portugal | PT2 | National strategy “Green Growth Commitment” adopted in 2015. | 69 |

ERDF, European Regional Development Fund.

SME/resource efficiency

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|----------|------|---|----------|
| Austria | AT4 | Resource Efficiency Action Plan to improve overall resource efficiency by 2020 by 50% compared with 2008. | 24 |
| Estonia | EE4 | Resource-efficiency support investments in SMEs and in manufacturing industry, €111 million allocated (population of Estonia 1.3 million). | 37 |
| Finland | FI10 | Measures to promote uptake of resource-efficiency audits in companies. Companies may receive economic incentives for audits. | 40 |
| France | FR8 | CO ₂ reduction measures in the Energy Transition for Green Growth Act. A mix of regulations, tax incentives and financial instruments and the newly created Institute for Energy Transition. | 45 |
| Germany | DE4 | National Sustainable Development Strategy – a goal to double resource productivity; German Council for Sustainable Development; all ministries involved. | 48 |
| Hungary | HU2 | National target for reduction in material intensity to 80% of the 2007 level by 2020. | 51 |
| Hungary | HU3 | Eco-mapping and brainstorming resource efficiency. | 51 |
| Ireland | IE3 | National strategies and plans on resource efficiency, jobs and GPP including several programmes focusing mainly on SMEs that aim to support the development of the green economy. | 53 |
| Italy | IT9 | SME loans for environmental sustainability. | 57 |
| Latvia | LV5 | Green investments – green technology incubator. | 60 |
| Portugal | PT4 | Ecoproductin project: to design and develop production processes that avoid the waste of raw materials and energy, providing companies with productivity gains and increased competitiveness. | 70 |
| UK | UK1 | GIB to deliver supports to offshore wind, onshore renewables and energy efficiency. | 82 |

GIB, Green Investment Bank.

Eco-innovation

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Austria | AT2 | See above: developed successful good practices in the field of eco-innovation and the circular economy, such as the “Buy Aware” initiative. | 24 |
| Estonia | EE1 | Strong start-up culture assisting eco-innovation with business incubators and a support programme. Innovation examples include bike-parking system BIKEEP and an e-planner for public transport. | 37 |
| Finland | FI5 | Support measures for green industry – funding for strategic sectors. | 38 |
| Finland | FI7 | Nordic Council Platform: “Green Growth the Nordic Way”. Various actions: policy, training, funding. | 40 |
| France | FR6 | See above: eco-innovation and circular economy measures – infrastructure, financial instruments, clusters. | 44 |
| France | FR7 | New Industrial France policy includes actions on new resources, sustainable cities and transport. | 44 |
| Germany | DE9 | Renewable energy finance guarantee – a risk-sharing facility for loans to renewable energy projects in Germany and France. | 49 |
| Greece | GR2 | Green Fund – to stimulate growth through protecting the environment and providing support for environmentally friendly projects and initiatives. | 50 |
| Italy | IT8 | Environmental Footprint Programme and voluntary “Made Green in Italy” scheme. | 56 |
| Italy | IT10 | Increases in renewable and non-fossil energy generation. In March 2017, Italy had already surpassed its 2020 EU target for renewable energy. | 57 |
| Italy | IT12 | National Council of the Green Economy – 64 business organisations that represent the green economy in Italy, in collaboration with the Environment and Economic Development Ministries. | 57 |
| Malta | MT4 | Mainstreaming sustainability in different training programmes. | 64 |
| Sweden | SE1 | Environmental objectives and generational goal – “to pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved, without increasing environmental and health problems beyond Sweden’s borders.” Associated council and implementation measures. | 78 |
| Sweden | SE5 | Green investment fund for early stage capital to businesses in the climate and energy technologies and service sectors. | 80 |
| Sweden | SE11 | Environmental technology strategy – to increase commercialisation of innovative environmental technology, firm growth and exports. | 81 |

Waste management

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|----------------|------|--|----------|
| Austria | AT7 | All EU recycling targets already met, including packaging waste recycling. | 24 |
| Belgium | BE3 | Progress in improving recycling rates since the 1990s. Already complying with the 50% recycling target for 2020. | 27 |
| Bulgaria | BG1 | Well-structured and coherent Waste Management Plan, used as a model by other Member States. | 29 |
| Croatia | HR1 | Eco Island Krk – an ecologically based system for the management of municipal waste. Represents an integrated model of waste disposal, the first of its kind in Croatia. Includes refunds for deposited PET, glass and aluminium. | 30 |
| Czech Republic | CZ1 | Well-established extended producer responsibility scheme for municipal waste packaging. | 33 |
| Hungary | HU5 | WEEE coupons – a coupon/voucher when consumers take back e-waste to an EEE selling point to use when purchasing next item of EEE. | 51 |
| Italy | IT6 | National Plan on Food Waste and law for food donation/distribution. In Milan, food waste is separately collected at a high level (93 kg/inhabitants/yr); it is recognised worldwide as a best practice in a city of 1 million inhabitants. | 56 |
| Italy | IT13 | Biowaste reuse – farmers receive subsidies to promote the use of compost. | 57 |
| Slovenia | SI2 | State-of-the-art regional waste management centre in Ljubljana. | 74 |
| Sweden | SE3 | Very good performance in waste recycling. Government has decided to use economic instruments through taxation to stimulate repair and reuse. | 79 |

EEE, electric and electronic equipment; WEEE, waste electric and electronic equipment.

2. Protecting, conserving and enhancing natural capital

Nature and biodiversity

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Belgium | BE2 | Belgian Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 sites, which will improve governance, capacity building and collaboration between the federal and regional authorities. In terms of SAC designation, Flanders is outstanding in having all 38 SCIs designated as SACs. | 27 |
| Belgium | BE4 | Related to BE2 – LIFE funding for Natura 2000 projects. | 27 |

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|------------|------|---|----|
| Cyprus | CY1 | Highest percentage of Natura 2000 network in EU for land area. | 32 |
| Estonia | EE2 | Strong Prioritised Action Framework ensuring Natura 2000 site funding from different EU funds. | 37 |
| Estonia | EE3 | High rate of favourable habitat and species assessments. | 37 |
| Finland | FI2 | Particularly advanced in Natura 2000: a new planning and monitoring system for protected areas with periodic assessment; Forest Biodiversity Programme restoring forest and bogs; EMSs in commercially managed forests; valuable habitats excluded from commercial forestry and linked by ecological corridors. | 39 |
| France | FR10 | Agriculture initiatives on nature, including reducing the use of pesticides. | 45 |
| France | FR14 | Targets for reducing non-agricultural pesticide use. | 46 |
| France | FR2 | Green and Blue Trail: a network of biodiversity corridors and reservoirs that go beyond Natura 2000. | 43 |
| France | FR3 | Innovative and participative governance tools to protect biodiversity – dedicated structures and tools for Natura 2000, individual plans and regional nature park policy. | 43 |
| France | FR15 | Inclusive decision process for spending EU budgets on agro-environmental climate measures. | 46 |
| Luxembourg | LU3 | Measures for implementing Natura 2000, including green infrastructure measures. | 63 |
| Romania | RO2 | Lower Danube Green Corridor: a large-scale ecological corridor of up to 1 million ha of existing and new protected areas and 223,600 ha of areas proposed to be restored to natural floodplains. | 72 |
| Slovakia | SK1 | Territorial System of Ecological Stability of the Landscape. | 73 |
| Slovenia | SL6 | High number of Natura 2000 sites – largest percentage of land area in EU: 38% (vs 18% EU average). | 75 |
| Spain | ES6 | Largest terrestrial surface contribution to the Natura 2000 Network (more than 137,000 km ²). Also at the forefront of marine contribution to the Natura 2000 network (more than 86,000 km ²). | 77 |
| Sweden | SE7 | Land purchase and compensation to protect forests and biodiversity. | 80 |

EMS, environmental management system.

Natural capital

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|-------------|------|--|----------|
| Estonia | EE5 | Ecosystem services in seven classes defined and prioritised according to relative socio-economic importance and vulnerability to climate change. | 37 |
| Finland | FI13 | Developing national ecosystem service indicators. | 41 |
| France | FR11 | French national ecosystem services. A governance structure and an economic assessment. | 45 |
| Germany | DE7 | Ecosystem Services Partnership Germany. Work ongoing to integrate ecosystem services into the national environmental accounting system. | 49 |
| Italy | IT3 | A high level of interest in natural capital and environmental accounting. A decree was issued in 2016 on estimating ecosystem and environmental capital. | 56 |
| Netherlands | NL4 | Pioneering work on mapping and assessing the ecosystems and their services, and on developing a natural capital accounting system. | 67 |
| Latvia | LV4 | Nature as future capital, a priority under the Sustainable Development Strategy. | 59 |
| Lithuania | LT3 | Goal to halt biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems and services. | 61 |
| Luxembourg | LU4 | Ecosystem services measures: 12 ecosystem services prioritised and mapped. | 63 |
| Slovakia | SK2 | Measures on ecosystem services – assessment for selected ecosystems performed in four national parks. A national assessment planned in 2018. | 73 |
| Sweden | SE2 | Strategy for biodiversity and ecosystem services – most important services identified. Regional action plans for green infrastructure. | 79 |
| UK | UK4 | Natural capital accounting measures including published natural capital accounts. | 83 |

Green infrastructure

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|---|----------|
| Austria | AT3 | Green Infrastructure Strategy promotes systematic integration of natural ecosystems and their services into spatial planning. | 24 |
| Belgium | BE6 | Since 2000, the regional programme “Green Neighbourhoods” (<i>Quartiers Verts/Groene Wijken</i>) has supported more than 200 local greening initiatives in the Brussels Region. | 28 |
| Denmark | DK6 | Green infrastructure measures: programme for natural forests; interconnected nature areas; Green Map of Denmark. | 35 |

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|----------|------|---|----|
| Finland | FI12 | Green infrastructure GIS-based tool. | 41 |
| Germany | DE2 | Advanced approach to green infrastructure – national green infrastructure concept due in 2017. | 47 |
| Hungary | HU7 | Flood prevention measures include natural water retention measures, nature-based solutions for flooding and green infrastructure. | 52 |
| Italy | IT14 | Green infrastructure measures – various examples. | 57 |
| Portugal | PT6 | Green infrastructure projects – Green Corridor Lisbon and WWTP green roof. | 70 |

WWTP, wastewater treatment plant.

Soil protection

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|---|----------|
| Belgium | BE7 | Each region has developed (or is currently updating) its own Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool. These regional tools help public and private neighbourhood planners. | 28 |
| Germany | DE3 | Goal to limit the rate of land take. | 48 |

3. Ensuring citizens' health and quality of life

Air quality

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|------------|------|---|----------|
| France | FR4 | Traffic and air pollution measures: restrictions on older cars; pedestrianising measures; plans to ban the sale of both diesel and petrol cars by 2040. | 43 |
| Luxembourg | LU5 | Traffic and air pollution measures – including tax reform and replacement of diesel buses. | 63 |

Water quality and management

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Austria | AT8 | Capable water management administration and developed river basin management plans for 2009 that are largely in compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Almost all surface water bodies and heavily modified and artificial water bodies and 98% of groundwater bodies achieve at least good chemical status. 98% of groundwater bodies are in good quantitative status. | 25 |
| Denmark | DK7 | Reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus loadings to the marine environment. | 36 |

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|---------|------|---|----|
| Denmark | DK8 | Sustainable urban wastewater drainage. Storm water handled separately from household wastewater in an urban setting. | 36 |
| France | FR12 | Wastewater policy and governance based on river basin agencies with local representation and own funding. | 45 |
| Italy | IT11 | Water services – new pricing system to promote efficiency. | 57 |
| Italy | IT15 | Recovery/preservation of the seabed as part of the National Plan on Ports. | 57 |
| Malta | MT3 | Water-efficiency audit and grant scheme. Includes voluntary water audits in companies and a grant scheme to support investments targeting water efficiency. | 64 |
| Sweden | SE8 | Good practice in establishing GES criteria for marine waters. | 80 |
| UK | UK7 | Tool for characterising farm pollution and quantifying effects of control options. | 83 |

GES, Good Environmental Status.

Enhancing the sustainability of cities

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Belgium | BE7 | Each region has developed (or is currently updating) its own Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool. These regional tools help public and private neighbourhood planners. | 28 |
| Belgium | BE8 | Allocated €141.9 million, or 15% of its ERDF allocation, excluding technical assistance, to SUD. | 28 |
| Denmark | DK5 | High rate of commuting by bike in Copenhagen – cycle superhighways, traffic light and intersection improvements, campaigns and training at schools. | 35 |
| Finland | FI3 | Network of carbon-neutral municipalities – HINKU project. Committed to reducing their emissions by 80% by 2030 compared with 2007. A working group helps each municipality to create a roadmap of measures. | 39 |
| Finland | FI4 | Sustainable communities network – FISU. Targets for 2050: become carbon neutral and waste free, and institute sustainable consumption. Residents, enterprises and the city's working groups created a common vision and roadmap. | 39 |
| Finland | FI11 | Greening cities – tool for setting goals; a green growth centre; research and demonstration. | 40 |
| France | FR13 | Measures on sustainable cities – EcoQuartier label; €881 million under ERDF to sustainable urban development. | 46 |
| Germany | DE6 | Project for “sensible water use” – Frankfurt. Achieved aim of reducing water consumption by 20% by 2000. | 49 |

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|----------------------|------|--|----|
| Germany | DE8 | Essen – Green City initiative. | 49 |
| Italy | IT5 | The BES set of indicators for fair and sustainable wellbeing. | 56 |
| Italy | IT16 | New strategy for transport infrastructure and logistics. | 57 |
| Latvia | LV2 | Electric transport promotion – financial support for implementation of 102 projects where electrical vehicles were purchased and public charging infrastructure was installed. | 59 |
| Lithuania | LT4 | Closer cooperation with the European Investment Bank to finance sustainable urban development – US\$105 billion over next 5 years for sustainable transport, clean energy, water and smart cities. | 61 |
| Latvia and Lithuania | LV6 | Green cities initiatives – nine border municipalities in Latvia and Lithuania cooperate under the motto “Let’s make our cities greener”. Twenty Latvian cities have set GHG reduction targets for a period up to 2020. | 59 |
| Poland | PL5 | Mapping and assessing urban ecosystems to protect and develop green infrastructure in cities. | 68 |
| Slovenia | SL4 | Ljubljana – zero waste strategy, urban mobility measures, green infrastructure. | 75 |
| Spain | ES3 | Sustainable urban model established in cities such as Vitoria-Gasteiz, European Green Capital in 2012. | 77 |
| Sweden | SE9 | Sustainable transport measures in Swedish cities. | 80 |
| Sweden | SE10 | Access to green urban areas – a “Green Target” planning tool. | 81 |

ERDF, European Regional Development Fund; GHG, greenhouse gas; SUD, sustainable urban development.

International agreements

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|-------------|------|--|----------|
| Netherlands | NL6 | Performing as one of the best in the EU with regard to signing and ratifying MEAs. | 67 |

MEA, multilateral environmental agreement.

4. Market-based instruments and investment

Green taxation and environmentally harmful subsidies

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|---|----------|
| Belgium | BE5 | Introduction of a kilometre charge for lorries in all Belgian regions as of April 2016 and changes to vehicle circulation and road taxes in Flanders. | 28 |
| Denmark | DK3 | Changes to environmental taxation for cars to incentivise hydrogen and electric cars. | 35 |

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|-------------|-----|--|----|
| Finland | FI8 | Environmental taxation – increasing energy and waste taxes, reducing petrol/diesel tax differential. | 40 |
| Germany | DE5 | Taxation measures for vehicles, aviation and nuclear power. | 48 |
| Hungary | HU4 | Environmental product fee – applied to a range of products: batteries, packaging, EEE, tyres, plastic bags, plastics, office paper, advertising papers, soaps, washing powders, cosmetic products and PV panels. | 51 |
| Ireland | IE6 | Initiated an environmental fund in 2001. Primarily used to fund waste-related initiatives. | 54 |
| Netherlands | NL5 | Since January 2015, waste tax extended from waste deposit to waste incineration. | 65 |
| Poland | PL3 | Ring-fencing of taxes on pollution and resources for environmental funds. | 68 |
| Slovenia | SL3 | EU wide, one of the highest contributions of revenues from environmental tax. | 74 |
| Sweden | SE4 | Taxation measures – a green tax shift reform programme to reallocate taxes from labour to environmentally harmful activities. | 79 |

EEE, electric and electronic equipment; PV, photovoltaic.

Green public procurement

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|-------------|------|--|----------|
| Austria | AT1 | Established specific platform focusing on GPP, including a help desk for procurement officers to exchange experiences. | 23 |
| Belgium | BE9 | According to a 2011 survey, Belgian authorities included at least one of the EU core green criteria in 81% of GPP-relevant contracts, and 55% of the contracts included all relevant EU core green criteria. Belgium was the best performer for both indicators. | 28 |
| Denmark | DK4 | GPP. This includes criteria covering green requirements, use of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), social issues and innovation aspects. Various implementation tools are in use. | 35 |
| Finland | FI9 | Promoting Innovation Procurement – a programme of financial and other support. | 40 |
| France | FR17 | GPP of innovative solutions. | 46 |
| Netherlands | NL1 | The Dutch GPP approach is one of the most ambitious and successful in the EU, stimulating markets for sustainable products. | 66 |
| Sweden | SE6 | GPP. One interesting tool is an online wizard, which guides contracting authorities through the different environmental criteria available for a number of products. | 80 |

| | | | |
|----|-----|---|----|
| UK | UK3 | Considered a front-runner in GPP. Various tools and measures under way. | 82 |
|----|-----|---|----|

Investments: the contribution of EU funds

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|---|----------|
| Austria | AT6 | Compared with other Member States of similar size, Austria has been very successful in obtaining LIFE-Nature funding, in particular for Alpine river restoration projects. | 24 |
| Belgium | BE1 | Extensive activities at federal and regional levels in promoting the circular economy, demonstrating leadership to public and private stakeholders. Using ERDF Operational Programmes to promote the circular economy. | 27 |
| Belgium | BE4 | Related to BE2 – LIFE funding for Natura 2000 projects. | 27 |
| Belgium | BE8 | Allocated €141.9 million, or 15% of its ERDF allocation, excluding technical assistance, to sustainable urban development. | 28 |
| Spain | ES1 | High levels of experience and performance in preparing and managing projects co-financed by the LIFE programme. | 76 |

ERDF, European Regional Development Fund.

5. Effective governance and knowledge

Effective governance with central, regional and local government

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| France | FR1 | Good administrative capacity – the autonomous national environmental authority provides opinions on EIA of major public plans and projects at national level. | 43 |
| France | FR5 | Integration of environmental issues into all government policies via the National Ecological Transition Council. Involves all ministries and stakeholders. Departments accountable to Council for progress of commitments. | 44 |
| Spain | ES2 | Spanish Network of Environmental Authorities, created in 1997, as a technical forum to foster environmental integration into the EU Cohesion Policy. | 77 |

EIA, environmental impact assessment.

Compliance assurance

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Finland | FI14 | Compliance promotion activities – including police officers and prosecutors specialised in combating environmental crime; a specialised administrative court; and training programmes for police officers. | 41 |
| France | FR18 | Training police officers on environmental crime. | 46 |
| Germany | DE10 | Good example – voluntary take-up of insurance under the Environmental Liability Directive. | 49 |
| Romania | RO3 | Environmental Volunteer Corps – 1000 registered volunteers who notify identified breaches of environmental law to the competent authorities; also raise awareness. | 72 |
| UK | UK8 | Compliance tools and guidance on penalties. | 83 |

Public participation and access to justice

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|--|----------|
| Denmark | DK2 | Good implementation of public participation in environmental decision-making, including three independent appeal boards. | 35 |

Access to information, knowledge and evidence

| Country | Code | Item | Page no. |
|---------|------|---|----------|
| Austria | AT5 | Good performance on implementation of the INSPIRE Directive as an enabling framework to actively disseminate environmental information to the public. | 24 |

Section D: Detailed report on selected highlights from the European Implementation Review

A more in depth review on a country-by-country basis. Highlighted “good practice” activities and initiatives are briefly described. For each country, this starts with those highlighted by the Commission (usually two or three points), and then, where relevant, includes additional best practices highlighted by the authors of this report.

Austria²

| Austria | | |
|---|--|--|
| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
| AT1 | Established specific platform focusing on GPP, including a help desk for procurement officers to exchange experiences. | GPP, policy, activity |
| AT2 | Developed successful good practices in the field of eco-innovation and the circular economy, such as the “Buy Aware” initiative. | Eco-innovation, circular economy, activity |
| AT3 | Green Infrastructure Strategy promotes systematic integration of natural ecosystems and their services into spatial planning. | Planning, ecosystems, green infrastructure, policy |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| AT4 | Resource Efficiency Action Plan to improve overall resource efficiency by 2020 by 50% compared with 2008. | Resource efficiency, policy, activity |
| AT5 | Good performance on implementation of the INSPIRE Directive as an enabling framework to actively disseminate environmental information to the public. | Public dissemination |
| AT6 | Compared with other Member States of similar size, Austria has been very successful in obtaining LIFE-Nature funding, in particular for Alpine river restoration projects | LIFE funding, nature |
| AT7 | All EU recycling targets already met, including packaging waste recycling. | Waste management, recycling |
| AT8 | Capable water management administration and developed River Basin Management Plans for 2009 that are largely in compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. Almost all surface water bodies and heavily modified and artificial water bodies and 98% of groundwater bodies achieve at least good chemical status. 98% of groundwater bodies are in good quantitative status. | water quality and management |

AT1 – Green public procurement and help desk for procurement officers

In Austria, a national action plan for GPP, named *Aktionsplan zur nachhaltigen öffentliche Beschaffung*, was adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2010. It determines that the Federal Procurement Agency, under instruction from the Ministry of Finance, must include the national GPP requirements for 14 products [textile products and leasing, transport, information and communication technology (ICT) equipment, cleaning products and services, furniture, food and catering services, indoor lighting, energy-using appliances, infrastructure, construction, electricity, gardening products and services, office supplies, paper, event management] for which GPP criteria were established.

In addition, in 2016, the provincial governments of Austria passed a resolution in relation to the GPP criteria of the national action plan as the basis of minimum requirements for all municipalities and provinces (recommendation).

² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_at_en.pdf

To exchange experience of procurement officers with GPP at the different governmental levels (federal, regional and local), a specific platform, including a help desk, was established.

AT2 – Eco-innovation and circular economy

Austria has many good practices in the field of eco-innovation and circular economy. One is “Bewusst kaufen” (i.e. “Buy Aware”): the initiative is the first web portal for sustainable consumption in Austria. It aims to increase consumer awareness of sustainable products and provides extensive information on options for conscious, sustainable consumption.

AT3 – Green infrastructure strategy

The Austrian Biodiversity Strategy 2020+ includes actions to strengthen habitat connectivity. Austria has specific targets for integrating biodiversity and ecosystem services in spatial planning, with measures such as incorporating ecological infrastructure in spatial planning, consideration of functional connectivity and the habitat network when establishing compensating areas, increase of grasslands in urban areas, abandoned buildings and the provision of features that promote biodiversity in newly established green areas, and the preservation of unfragmented areas and migration corridors. Most activities are executed at the local or federal province level and are funded by a variety of sources, including EU support.

AT4 – Resource Efficiency Action Plan

In 2012, Austria adopted a Resource Efficiency Action Plan to improve overall resource efficiency by 2020 by 50% compared with 2008. Since in a business-as-usual scenario the productivity of resources is expected to grow at an annual rate of 1.2%, additional efforts will be needed to meet the target established in the action plan.

As regards providing targeted resource efficiency information and advice to companies, Austria has the long-established ÖKOPROFIT programme, which was launched in 1991. It aims to help companies to implement environmental measures, thereby reducing industrial emissions, decreasing the operational costs for companies and strengthening the partnership between public agencies, companies and experts.

AT5 – Public dissemination (INSPIRE Directive)

Compliance performance in the field of environment is good (with a relatively low number of cases and complaints) and corresponds to the overall very good state of the environment. Challenges remain in the field of nature, water and governance.

In general, the existing rules and provisions in Austrian law concerning access to both administrative appeal and judicial review are predictable and transparent.

Austria’s performance on the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive as an enabling framework to actively disseminate environmental information to the public is good.

In some of the environmental cases where individuals or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have gained access before the national courts over the past years, the Austrian judges referred several requests for preliminary rulings to the Court of Justice of the EU. This represented a valuable contribution to the development of EU environment law, as preliminary rulings enable the Court of Justice to give a coherent interpretation of the EU law.

AT6 – Success in obtaining LIFE-Nature funding

Compared with other Member States of similar size, Austria has been very successful in obtaining LIFE-Nature funding, in particular for Alpine river restoration projects. Austrian regional river administrations are well suited for preparing and implementing such projects, successfully combining nature conservation and flood protection.

AT7 – Recycling rates

As of 2014, the recycling rate of municipal waste was relatively high (58%, of which 32% is composting) and was well above the EU average (44%). The landfilling rate in Austria is very low (4%) and is far below the EU average (28%). Austria has complied with both the 2006

and the 2009 landfill diversion targets. In 2009, Austria already had a ban on landfilling of biodegradable municipal waste in place.

AT8 – Water quality

Austria has capable water management administration and developed River Basin Management Plans for 2009 that are largely in compliance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

Almost all surface water bodies and heavily modified and artificial water bodies and 98% of groundwater bodies achieve at least good chemical status. Of the groundwater bodies, 98% are in good quantitative status.

Belgium³

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| BE1 | Extensive activities at federal and regional levels in promoting the circular economy, demonstrating leadership to public and private stakeholders. Using ERDF Operational Programmes to promote the circular economy. | Circular economy, EU funding, policy, activity |
| BE2 | Belgian Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 sites, which will improve governance, capacity building and collaboration between the Federal and regional authorities. In terms of SAC designation, Flanders is outstanding in having all 38 SCIs designated as SACs. | Natura 2000 implementation, activity |
| BE3 | Progress in improving recycling rates since the 1990s. Already complying with the 50% recycling target for 2020. | Recycling, waste management |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| BE4 | Related to BE2 – LIFE funding for Natura 2000 projects. | LIFE funding, Natura 2000, networking, activity |
| BE5 | Introduction of a kilometre charge for lorries in all Belgian regions as of April 2016 and changes to vehicle circulation and road taxes in Flanders. | Environmentally harmful subsidies, tax, transport, fuels |
| BE6 | Since 2000, the regional programme “Green Neighbourhoods” (<i>Quartiers Verts/Groene Wijken</i>) has supported more than 200 local greening initiatives in the Brussels Region. | Green infrastructure, community, activity |
| BE7 | Each region has developed (or is currently updating) its own Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool. These regional tools help public and private neighbourhood planners. | Planning, soil protection, sustainability, tool |
| BE8 | Allocated €141.9 million, or 15% of its ERDF allocation, excluding technical assistance, to sustainable urban development. | Enhancing the sustainability of cities, EU funding |
| BE9 | According to a 2011 survey, Belgian authorities included at least one of the EU core green criteria in 81% of GPP-relevant contracts, and 55% of the contracts included all relevant EU core green criteria. Belgium was the best performer for both indicators. | GPP, policy, activity |

ERDF, European Regional Development Fund

³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_be_en.pdf

BE1 – Promoting the circular economy

Belgium has made substantial progress towards promoting a circular economy. The 2014 federal roadmap resulted in 21 draft proposals in 2016 from the Federal Ministry for Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development.

In 2015, the Marshall Plan 4.0 promoting clean energy and the circular economy is one of five priority areas for action in Wallonia.

In March 2016, Flanders approved “Vision 2050”, with the circular economy as one of the seven transitions. The transition policy is further shaped through the continuation of the Flanders’ Materials Programme as a circular economy platform focusing on innovation.

In March 2016, the government of the Brussels Region adopted a Circular Economy Regional Plan laying out a strategy to transition from a linear to a circular economy. The plan contains 111 measures in four fields.

BE2 – Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 sites

The LIFE Belgian Nature Integrated Project supports implementation of the Belgian Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 sites, which will improve governance, capacity building and collaboration between the federal and regional authorities.

By late 2016, the Belgian Natura 2000 terrestrial network was considered to be largely complete: 12.7% of the national land area of Belgium is covered by Natura 2000 sites (EU average 18.1%), with Birds Directive Special Protection Areas (SPAs) covering 10.4% of the national territory (EU average 12.3%) and Habitats Directive SCIs covering 10.7% (EU average 13.8%).

In terms of SAC designation, Flanders is outstanding in having all 38 SCIs designated as SACs, with quantified conservation objectives set both at regional level and for each individual SAC. The situation with SAC designation has improved considerably elsewhere in Belgium.

By the end of 2016, all 240 SCIs in Wallonia were designated as SACs. Detailed management plans for each SAC should lead to an improvement of the conservation status.

The Walloon regional government also adopted a legal act defining conservation objectives at biogeographic regional level.

All three SCIs of the Brussels Region have now also been designated as SACs, with conservation objectives set at the level of each individual SCI.

BE3 – Recycling rates

Belgium is among the top performers in the EU regarding waste management, with a recycling rate for municipal waste of 55% in 2014 (EU average 44% in 2014). The Flanders region was performing markedly better, at 70% in 2014.

Belgium is already complying with the 50% recycling target for 2020 and has already eliminated landfilling of biodegradable waste. Belgium has only one Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) plant in operation as a result of efficient separate collection.

BE4 – (Related to BE2) – LIFE funding for Natura 2000 projects

Belgium has benefited from EU funding under LIFE-Nature, thanks to a strong network of Nature NGOs and public authorities pursuing a strong restoration agenda. Conservation strategies in Belgium are strongly based on land purchase and habitat restoration.

An extensive range of Natura 2000 sites restoration measures have been carried out since 2003 in the frame of six coordinated LIFE projects covering several thousands of hectares of peat bogs and wetlands in the Belgian Ardennes. As a result of these, the Belgian authorities were able to report, in 2013, significant positive trends in the conservation status of a dozen different habitat types and associated species protected by the EU Habitats Directive.

BE5 – Vehicle taxes (environmentally harmful subsidies)

The 2015 tax shift made limited progress towards a more environmentally friendly tax shift and the removal of environmentally harmful subsidies. The most positive changes have been the introduction of a kilometre charge for lorries in all Belgian regions as of April 2016 and changes to vehicle circulation and road taxes in Flanders. No decision has yet been taken to extend the tax to passenger cars. The tax shift also provides for a steady increase in excise duties on diesel and a reduction on those on petrol between 2016 and 2018 to reach parity. Recently, the federal government has decided on a number of changes to the company car system.

BE6 – Green infrastructure

Since 2000, the regional programme “Green Neighbourhoods” (*Quartiers Verts/Groene Wijken*) has supported more than 200 local greening initiatives in the Brussels Region. It concerns the greening of public space through small-scale citizens’ initiatives.

BE7 – Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool

To stimulate the reconversion of brownfields, to prevent urban sprawl and the further covering over of scarce greenfields (Brussels Region and Wallonia), and to (re)connect and indirectly enhance green corridors (Brussels Region), each region has developed (or is currently updating) its own Neighbourhood Sustainability Assessment Tool. These regional tools help public and private neighbourhood planners in localising the construction sites with less environmental impact and in the design and build of future sustainable neighbourhoods.

BE8 – Enhancing the sustainability of cities

Belgium has allocated €141.9 million, or 15% of its European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) allocation, excluding technical assistance, to sustainable urban development (SUD).

For Wallonia, the ERDF will be used to encourage an industrial transition towards green growth, eco-innovation, management of environmental performance, urban environmental improvement, reducing air and noise pollution, rehabilitation of contaminated land and reduction in soil sealing.

For Flanders, the ERDF will be used for reducing air and noise pollution, rehabilitation of contaminated land and the reuse of old landfills (so called “urban mining”). Eco-innovation, including circular economy, is covered.

For the Brussels Region, the ERDF is to be used for supporting the development of a circular economy and a rational use of resources, encouraging the development of renewable energy, rehabilitating contaminated land and improving the energy performance of buildings.

BE9 – Green public procurement

Since 2014, a detailed strategy on sustainable public procurement (SPP) for the federal departments has been established, combining green and social aspects. Further specific regulations exist for SPP for wood (2005), vehicles (2009 and 2010) and energy efficiency (2013). Specific policy documents exist in the three Belgian regions and at federal level.

Federal GPP/sustainable criteria have been developed for about 70 product and service groups.

In Flanders, there is a target of reaching 100% SPP at the level of the Flemish Region by 2020. The region has furthermore established a target to have procurement of 100% green electricity for the regions’ buildings and also has targets for the environmental performance of vehicles, including electric/low-emission cars.

In the Brussels Region, targets are defined every third year. Targets for 2017 are 20% of financial volume of public procurements and 20% of the (number of) public procurement with environmental clauses. Since 2015, Brussels has had a ban on diesel [cars and multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs)], and targets for procurement of electric cars (minimum of 15% for local and 25% for regional authorities).

Bulgaria⁴

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| BG1 | Well-structured and coherent Waste Management Plan, used as a model by other Member States. | Waste management, policy, funding |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| BG2 | A big mapping project of €12.5 million was recently implemented under the Environmental Operational Programme. | Natura 2000, SCIs/SACs, activity |

BG1 – Waste Management Plan

Bulgaria has adopted a Waste Management Plan and a Waste Prevention Programme. The Waste Management Plan is well structured and coherent, and includes specific policy measures to reach the 2020 recycling targets, responsibilities for their implementation and the necessary budget. In 2016, several calls to use Cohesion Policy Funds were published, targeting green and other biodegradable waste collection and treatment.

BG2 – Habitats Directive

A big mapping project of €12.5 million was recently implemented under the Environmental Operational Programme. It covers all Natura 2000 sites, so there is no lack of data and the information is publicly available.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_bg_en.pdf

Croatia⁵

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| HR1 | Eco Island Krk – an ecologically based system for the management of municipal waste. Represents an integrated model of waste disposal, the first of its kind in Croatia. Includes refunds for deposited PET, glass and aluminium. | Waste management, recycling, activity |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| HR2 | Croatia's <i>Green Book</i> for the development of a low-carbon strategy 2030–2050. This strategy sets out the path towards a competitive low-carbon economy. It applies to all sectors of the economy and human activities, but is related in particular to energy, industry, transport, agriculture, forestry and waste management. | Low-carbon economy, policy |

HR1 – Eco Island Krk

Eco Island Krk is an ecologically based system for the management of municipal waste. It represents an integrated model of waste disposal and is the first of its kind in Croatia. In 2015, the municipality separated 50% of its waste and prepared it for reuse and recycling, thereby already meeting the 2020 target set in the Waste Framework Directive. Great importance is placed on the promotion of the system and education of users.

Eco Island Krk represents a complete model of waste management, which treats all types of waste. In total, 6500 containers have been installed in 1400 places on the island in order to ensure the successful operation of the scheme. Domestic waste is collected in five separate containers (organic waste, paper, PET waste, glass and other). The island of Krk also has seven POSAMs, which are special collection areas (each local autonomy unit has one) where citizens may drop off larger household waste, old furniture, white goods, old cars, car tyres and dangerous waste free of charge. In these special collection areas, citizens are recompensed with HRK 0.50 (€0.07) for each packaging product (PET waste, glass, aluminium).

The island of Krk gathers around 19,500 tonnes of communal waste per year, of which 12,000 tonnes is gathered during the summer season. Currently 30% of all waste is source segregated.

The aim is to increase the percentage of sorted waste by 5% each year.

Source-segregated waste is taken to the recycling forecourt, where it is sorted further, pressed and baled. The relevant categories are cardboard, office paper, newspaper, glass, aluminium cans, tins, pet packaging, other plastic packaging, hard plastic, foil and nylon bags.

HR2 – *Green Book*

The Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Ministry for Environment and Natural Protection, prepared the *Green Book*: the technical basis for the development of a low-carbon strategy for Croatia for the period until 2030, and looking ahead to 2050. Working groups were established to debate new objectives and measures to be undertaken in order to achieve Croatia's 2020 goals and to draft projections for the year 2050.

This strategy sets out the path towards a competitive low-carbon economy. It applies to all sectors of the economy and human activities, but is related in particular to energy, industry, transport, agriculture, forestry and waste management. It is superior to the sector strategies, although operationally implemented through the individual sectors.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_hr_en.pdf

In addition, the *Green Book on Energy*, prepared in 2008, made projections through the year 2030 of three varying scenarios – each of them projecting investments in nuclear energy, coal energy, natural gas or a mix of these technologies.

Cyprus⁶

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| CY1 | Highest percentage of Natura 2000 network in EU for land area. | Nature, biodiversity |
| CY2 | Excellent bathing water quality. | Water |

CY1 – Highest percentage of Natura 2000 network in EU in terms of land area

The Natura 2000 network in Cyprus covers 28.8% of the land area, which is one of the highest percentages in the EU (EU average 18.1%), with Birds Directive SPAs covering 26.7% (EU average 12.3%).

CY2 – Excellent bathing water quality

According to the EEA report *European Bathing Water Quality in 2015*, of the 113 bathing waters in Cyprus, 99.1% were of excellent quality.

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_cy_en.pdf

Czech Republic⁷

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| CZ1 | Well-established extended producer responsibility scheme for municipal waste packaging. | EPR, packaging, waste |
| CZ2 | Czech Republic is an advanced player in the field of international cooperation (e.g. CITES). | International Agreements |

CITES, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; EPR, extended producer responsibility.

CZ1 – Extended producer responsibility scheme for municipal waste packaging

The Czech Republic has a well-functioning extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme for packaging and overachieves the relevant packaging targets. According to data for 2015 provided by the national authorities, more than 270,000 containers for separate streams of municipal waste (plastics, glass, paper, metal, cardboard) are available to citizens.

CZ2 – International Agreements

There are bilateral agreements signed with all four neighbouring countries, and the Czech Republic is a party to international commissions for protection of the rivers Elbe, Danube and Oder, which cover all Czech river basins. Implementation and enforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations are cited as other examples.

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_cz_en.pdf

Denmark⁸

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| DK1 | Integration of the circular economy into multiple policy areas. Measures include the Danish Green Investment state loan fund; the Eco-innovation Programme; the Pool for Green Enthusiasts; a guide to sharing schemes in housing associations; a guide to green everyday choices; and plans to amend the regulations for date labelling food. | Circular economy, investment fund, waste prevention |
| DK2 | Good implementation of public participation in environmental decision-making, including three independent appeal boards. | Public participation |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| DK3 | Changes to environmental taxation for cars to incentivise hydrogen and electric cars. | Tax, transport, diesel, air pollution, climate, health |
| DK4 | GPP. This includes criteria covering green requirements, use of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), social issues and innovation aspects. Various implementation tools are in use. | GPP |
| DK5 | High rate of commuting by bike in Copenhagen – cycle superhighways, traffic light and intersection improvements, campaigns and training at schools. | Transport, infrastructure, climate, health, cities |
| DK6 | Green infrastructure measures: programme for natural forests; interconnected nature areas; Green Map of Denmark. | Biodiversity, health, flood defence |
| DK7 | Reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus loadings to the marine environment. | Nitrogen, phosphorus, marine pollution |
| DK8 | Sustainable urban wastewater drainage. Storm water handled separately from household wastewater in an urban setting. | Wastewater, urban drainage, storm water |

DK1 – Promotion of the circular economy and integration into multiple policy areas

This point noted Denmark’s integration of the circular economy into multiple policy areas, mentioning waste prevention, eco-innovation and green investment in particular.

The Danish Green Investment Fund is an independent state loan fund with the purpose of co-financing economically viable projects that facilitate the sustainable development of society in Denmark. The fund is provided with up to DKK 5 billion (€0.7 billion) of loan capital. Loans are granted to companies of all sizes, non-profit housing associations, public companies and institutions to implement green projects, as well as to financing suppliers who develop and deliver technologies.

The Danish Eco-Innovation Programme (MUDP) dates from 2007. MUDP promotes developing and applying new, efficient solutions to environmental challenges while supporting growth and employment. It includes water; climate change adaptation; circular economy and recycling of waste; cleaner air; less noise; fewer hazardous chemicals; industrial environmental performance; and ecological and sustainable construction. Priorities include promoting the water technology industry for export markets.

Copenhagen has made public–private partnerships central in its approach to eco-innovation and sustainable employment. For example, its North Harbour project includes a “green laboratory” focusing on eco-technologies.

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_dk_en.pdf

Denmark's strategy for waste prevention has two cross-cutting topics: transition in Danish businesses; and green consumption. It also has five action areas: food waste; construction; clothing and textiles; electrical and electronic equipment; and packaging. Aspects of note include financial support to businesses working to develop and sell green technologies, including technological solutions to enhance resource efficiency; the Pool for Green Enthusiasts, which will grant subsidies for local projects and activities that help promote more efficient use of resources, e.g. through subsidising clothing libraries, exchange markets, and sewing and repair shops; a guide to sharing schemes in housing associations; a quick guide to green everyday choices; and plans to amend the regulations for date labelling food products.

DK2 – Public participation in environmental decision-making

Of particular note here are three independent appeal boards, including for environmental appeals. These were linked to the Ministry of Environment and Food, but are now part of the Ministry for Business and Growth.

DK3 – Environmental taxation for cars

Environmental tax revenues relative to gross domestic product (GDP) in Denmark are high compared with the EU average. In an effort to incentivise the purchase of newer and more efficient cars, car registration taxes have been lowered. This is offset by the gradual extension of car registration taxes to cover hydrogen and electric cars. To incentivise the use of such cars, the diesel "countervailing charge" has increased by 52%, with exemptions for lorries, buses and tractors.

DK4 – Green public procurement

Denmark has a well-functioning procurement system that is quite advanced, as it includes green, SME, social and, to a lesser extent, innovation criteria. Procurement is conducted primarily at the local level; the central government and the regions have smaller shares of procurement. EU GPP criteria are used along with criteria for electricity-using products, timber and transport (small and large vehicles).

To support the uptake of GPP, initiatives such as knowledge-sharing networks, partnerships for front-runners, total cost of ownership tools, best practice examples and a GPP task force have been used at national level. The implementation of GPP was investigated for 2013 and it was found that, in 24% of tenders covered, all relevant green criteria had been applied, and that, in 71% of tenders, one or more criteria had been applied.

DK5 – High rate of bike commuting in Copenhagen

In Copenhagen, 40% of the population commute by bicycle (including 63% of members of parliament). This has been achieved with 400 km of bike lanes, traffic lights timed for bikes, safer intersections, car-free areas, cycle superhighways being constructed to commuter towns, a strong tradition of cycling, education/training measures in schools, and political initiatives and marketing. The savings associated with improved health are estimated as €40 million/year for the superhighways. Cycling has become engrained in the culture. This feeds into Copenhagen's ambition to become the first carbon-neutral capital in the world by 2025.

DK6 – Green infrastructure measures: programme for natural forests; interconnected nature areas; Green Map of Denmark

The development of ecological corridors/networks has been integrated into the spatial planning system. In recent years, Danish municipalities have started creating green and sustainable cities using green infrastructure as a broader concept.

The 2016 Danish Nature Programme (*Naturpakken*) focuses on natural forests and allocates new areas to natural forests (up to 25,000 ha). It also establishes initiatives for local projects and new interconnected nature areas for the benefit of threatened species. The programme encourages nature areas close to cities to be developed and opportunities for the population to enjoy nature through outdoor activities to be promoted. The programme attaches great

priority to stimulating farmers to manage and protect nature through subsidies for hedgerows and possibilities to redistribute land in order to protect vulnerable nature areas and better use non-vulnerable areas. The programme revises the regulatory framework for nature protection to create a more efficient and less bureaucratic administration. The programme includes an additional 13,300 ha high-natural-value forest in the national forests (owned by the government) and at least 900 additional hectares in privately owned forests. Funding for 2016–2022 is DKK 87.9 million (€12 million) and DKK 20 million (€2.7 million) annually from 2021 (not including EU-funding). There are also measures for reconversion of non-indigenous, non-resilient plantations to stands of native tree species.

An innovation is a “Green Map” of Denmark, which will provide both a strategic framework for nature policy and will function as an actual map for planning purposes. It will contribute to targeting ongoing and new initiatives with the greatest impact in terms of ecosystem services. It will show where existing valuable nature is and where new potential areas that can create connectivity could be. Municipalities must designate areas of the map, based on a common base map and common criteria.

DK7 – Reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus loadings to the marine environment

With wastewater plans, plans for the aquatic environment and nature restoration projects, Denmark has achieved large reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus loadings to the marine environment. Natura 2000 sites have been designated totalling 18% of Denmark’s marine area.

DK8 – Sustainable urban wastewater drainage

The Ørestad district in Copenhagen, founded in 1996, covers an area of 150 ha. Household wastewater is discharged into a central treatment plant, roof water is discharged into recreational canals, and road water is treated locally before also being discharged into canals.

Estonia⁹

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| EE1 | Strong start-up culture assisting eco-innovation with business incubators and a support programme. Innovation examples include bike-parking system BIKEEP and an e-planner for public transport. | Eco-innovation, start-up, support |
| EE2 | Strong Prioritised Action Framework ensuring Natura 2000 site funding from different EU funds. | Policy, Natura 2000, funding |
| EE3 | High rate of favourable habitat and species assessments. | Habitats, Natura 2000 |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| EE4 | Resource-efficiency support investments in SMEs and in manufacturing industry, €111 million allocated (population of Estonia 1.3 million). | Resource-efficiency, fiscal, funding, industry |
| EE5 | Ecosystem services in seven classes defined and prioritised according to relative socio-economic importance and vulnerability to climate change. | Ecosystem services, policy |

EE1 – Strong start-up culture assisting eco-innovation

The country's strong start-up culture has contributed to the rapid development of eco-innovation activities in Estonia, with support structures such as the Tehnopol business incubator, Mektory (Innovation and Business Centre of Tallinn University of Technology) and Tartu Science Park having led the way in providing initial support for start-ups. An Energy and Environmental Technology Development Centre (RoheTAK) was established in 2014, with the aim of supporting the growth of viable companies in the energy and environmental technology areas. The Green Industry Innovation support programme started in 2013 with the donor partner Innovation Norway and has successfully supported its first 15 companies. Innovation initiatives have led to examples in the area of smart cities, such as the bike-parking system BIKEEP and an e-planner for public transport.

EE2 – Prioritised Action Framework ensuring funding for Natura 2000 sites from EU funds

Estonia has provided one of the most complete Prioritised Action Frameworks, which has been used successfully to ensure funding to Natura 2000 sites from EU funds, e.g. the RDF. It has been active in applying for LIFE funding to manage its Natura 2000 sites.

EE3 – High rate of favourable habitat and species assessments

Estonia is one of the few Member States with more than 50% of the assessments of its habitats and species being reported as favourable.

EE4 – Resource-efficiency support investments

In the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014–2020, Estonia decided to support investments for more resource-efficient solutions, mainly in SMEs and the manufacturing industry, with €111 million allocated. The country has 1.3 million inhabitants. Activities include raising companies' awareness, training resource specialists/auditors, supporting resource audits, and investments in resource-efficient solutions. Financial support schemes are scheduled.

EE5 – Ecosystem services prioritisation

The Estonian "climate change adaptation strategy" and "action plan on biodiversity and bioeconomy" have defined ecosystem services in seven ecosystem classes. Services are prioritised according to relative socio-economic importance and vulnerability to climate change.

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_ee_en.pdf

Finland¹⁰

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| FI1 | LIFE project example implementing the Water Framework and Nature Directives. | Water, habitats, LIFE funding |
| FI2 | Particularly advanced in Natura 2000 – a new planning and monitoring system for protected areas with periodic assessment; Forest Biodiversity Programme restoring forest and bogs; EMSs in commercially managed forests; valuable habitats excluded from commercial forestry and linked by ecological corridors. | Natura 2000 |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| FI3 | Network of carbon-neutral municipalities – HINKU project. Committed to reducing their emissions by 80% by 2030 compared with 2007. A working group helps each municipality to create a roadmap of measures. | Cities, carbon reduction, networks, targets, voluntary |
| FI4 | Sustainable communities network – FISU. Targets for 2050: become carbon neutral and waste free, and institute sustainable consumption. Residents, enterprises and the city's working groups created a common vision and roadmap. | Communities, sustainability, networks, voluntary |
| FI5 | Support measures for green industry – funding for strategic sectors. | Policy, green industry, funding, investment |
| FI6 | Measures to fund circular economy. One very interesting point to note is that the circular economy was selected as one of the key projects of the Prime Minister's 2015 government programme, with a planned public investment of €40 million. | Policy, funding, circular economy |
| FI7 | Nordic Council Platform: "Green Growth the Nordic Way". Various actions: policy, training, funding. | Policy, green growth |
| FI8 | Environmental taxation – increasing energy and waste taxes, reducing petrol/diesel tax differential. | Policy, taxation, transport, CO ₂ , waste |
| FI9 | Promoting Innovation Procurement – a programme of financial and other support. | Policy, procurement, innovation, fiscal |
| FI10 | Measures to promote uptake of resource-efficiency audits in companies. Companies may receive economic incentives for audits. | Fiscal, resource efficiency |
| FI11 | Greening cities – tool for setting goals; a green growth centre; research and demonstration. | Urban, policy, sustainability |
| FI12 | Green infrastructure GIS-based tool. | Green infrastructure, tool |
| FI13 | Developing national ecosystem service indicators. | Ecosystem services, indicators |
| FI14 | Compliance promotion activities – including police officers and prosecutors specialised in combating environmental crime; a specialised administrative court; and training programmes for police officers. | Compliance |

EMS, environmental management system.

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_fi_en.pdf

FI1 – LIFE project example implementing the Water Framework and Nature Directives

The large-scale (€20 million) LIFE Integrated Project “FRESHABIT” is considered an important demonstration project on how to engage different sectors in implementing the Water Framework and Nature Directives; the results of this study could be widely applied in future. It will develop a new methodology and indicators for assessing the conservation status of freshwater habitats, to improve the ecological status, management and sustainable use of freshwater Natura 2000 sites, by tackling the problems the sites face at water catchment level.

FI2 – Particularly advanced in Natura 2000

Finland is particularly advanced in designating protected Natura 2000 sites as SACs. Finland has developed a new planning and monitoring system for its protected areas, which includes specified periodic assessment of the status of the sites’ habitats and species. Management plans are linked to this system. Most Natura 2000 sites are managed by one state-owned organisation, Metsähallitus, which develops the use of state-owned land and waters. Metsähallitus has a special legal obligation to protect biological diversity on state lands. Via the Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland (METSO), Metsähallitus has restored forests and bogs in protected areas representing 0.1% of land area.

Ecological values in commercially managed forests are secured with environmental management standards. Valuable habitats are excluded from commercial forestry and are linked by ecological corridors and stepping stones. The ecological network includes various buffer zones, such as environmentally valuable forests and biodiversity enhancement areas.

Targeted conservation actions are bringing results, as shown by increasing populations of some species, e.g. golden eagle and white-tailed sea eagle.

FI3 – Network of carbon-neutral municipalities – HINKU

HINKU is a network of Finnish carbon-neutral municipalities committed to the goal of reducing their emissions by 80% by 2030 compared with 2007. The municipal authorities, business representatives, local residents, research institutes and experts work together to devise and tailor new cost-effective solutions to reduce emissions, especially in transportation, housing and food. The working group helps each municipality to create a roadmap of measures. It is coordinated by the Finnish environment institute SYKE.

An example of one outcome from HINKU is a leasing-based joint procurement process for solar power for interested municipalities and public bodies. The solar power stations are to be leased, which means municipalities do not need to invest in the plants or provide any additional operating costs.

FI4 – Sustainable communities network – FISU

FISU (Finnish Sustainable Communities) is a network of municipalities, whose targets for 2050 are to become carbon neutral and waste free, as well as to institute sustainable consumption. In order to achieve these goals, residents, enterprises and the city’s working groups created a common vision and a roadmap towards resource wisdom in 2015. The goals were approached from five different perspectives: energy production and consumption; mobility and the community structure; food consumption and production; water use and water bodies; and consumption and material cycles.

FI5 – Support measures for green industry

The bio-economy and clean solutions are key high-level policy priorities in the Finnish government’s strategic programme from 2016 onwards, with many related national and regional initiatives. Both start-ups and established companies are generating technologies, products and services in several sectors relevant to eco-innovations and the circular economy. The Finnish government has allocated an extra €300 million to fund strategic development and investments in the bio-economy (timber), the circular economy and cleantech for the period 2016–2018.

The Ministry of Employment and Economy's 2014 Strategy to Promote Cleantech Business in Finland continues to guide policymaking and business initiatives. Additional strategies and programmes include the Finnish Bioeconomy Strategy (2014), the Finnish Material Efficiency Programme (2014) and the national Roadmap for Circular Economy (2016).

FI6 – Circular economy funding measures

A new circular economy focus area was introduced in 2016 into the Finnish Innovation Fund (Sitra). A Sitra report estimates that the circular economy represents an opportunity of €1.5–2.5 billion for Finland. Some companies will benefit indirectly from efficient use of material flows while others will be able to sell products and services based on new business models that take advantage of the circular economy. The key sector-specific opportunities are paper industry side streams; opportunities in the food industry to reduce loss of value; business potential of private consumption; and opportunities in construction and manufacture of machinery.

The circular economy was selected as one of the key projects of the Prime Minister's 2015 government programme, with a planned public investment of €40 million. Related initiatives, supported by Sitra, include trial projects that aim to facilitate the building of concrete business models as well as the sharing of best practices in the country. The functioning and feasibility tests of different business models are currently under way in the textile industry, nutrient cycling, cities, and technology and export companies.

There is a working group proposal for a national material efficiency programme, prepared in a collaboration of the Ministry of Employment and Economy and the Ministry of Environment.

FI7 – Platform on “Green Growth the Nordic Way”

This platform for green growth has emerged through the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. Activities include working on developing Nordic test centres for green solutions such as energy technologies; education, training and research for green growth; promoting flexible consumption of electricity and implementation of smart networks, including electricity meters; green-technology norms and standards for the most important areas in construction; GPP; textile waste as a resource; reducing food waste; promoting integration of environmental and climate considerations into development aid; and coordinating and improving funding for green investment and companies.

FI8 – Environmental taxation

Finland's revenue from environmental taxation, 2.9% of GDP in 2014, was above the EU average of 2.5%. Taxes on CO₂ from heating, power plants and machinery as well as the waste tax have all been gradually increased. Regarding environmentally harmful subsidies, the petrol/diesel tax differential in Finland has diminished over time and is compensated by a fixed tax imposed on diesel vehicles.

FI9 – Promoting Innovation Procurement

The Smart Procurement Programme was started to create favourable conditions and necessary financial and other support for innovation procurement. Note that the EU defines innovation procurement as any kind of public procurement practice (pre-commercial or commercial) that may help the market uptake of innovative products and services.

FI10 – Measures to promote uptake of resource-efficiency audits in companies

Motiva Ltd is a state-owned company that specialises in energy and material efficiency and provides efficiency-auditing services for companies. The government funds the auditing programme and companies may receive economic incentives for audits.

FI11 – Measures for greening cities

Out of those cities that applied for the 2017 Green Capital Award, Lahti has the most cycle paths, with 3.8 m per inhabitant. Lahti has also pioneered a peer review tool for developing its own environmental work activities and sustainable development goals. The town has also

assisted a number of European cities in their mutual environment and sustainable development peer reviews.

Tampere has included environmental and sustainable development criteria in its public procurement. Furthermore, Tampere has an environmental target for organic and fair-trade products – 155 Tampere kitchens have joined the “Stairs Create” and other programmes committed to using organic products on a regular basis.

The EcoSairila project, funded by the ERDF, aims to create a new growth centre for green industry in Mikkeli. The project will develop and pilot new techniques and concepts for the circular economy and eco-efficient treatment in 100 ha of new industrial area alongside a waste treatment centre. Nearby, the Green Energy Showroom is a network of green energy organisations that aims to provide an opportunity for local enterprises to develop and market innovative high-tech solutions in the fields of energy, environmental technology and sustainable development.

In 2016, Sitra, the metropolitan region cities and ministries founded the Helsinki Metropolitan Smart and Clean Foundation to turn the Helsinki metropolitan area into an internationally important reference area for ecological and smart solutions. Its main fields of action are traffic and movement, construction, energy, waste and water, and consumer cleantech.

FI12 – Green infrastructure GIS-based tool

There is a project to develop a new GIS-based tool to guide decision-making on land use and green infrastructure. The tool aims to identify the key areas for green infrastructure by comprehensively assessing the prerequisites for provision of a multitude of ecosystem services.

FI13 – Ecosystem service indicators

Finland is developing national ecosystem service indicators.

FI14 – Compliance promotion activities

Finland’s compliance promotion measures include regular dialogue with the regulated community and co-financing with business associations of environmental management studies. National-level negotiations with representatives of specific industrial sectors are also organised on a regular basis.

There is a high degree of specialisation along the compliance assurance chain, including police officers and prosecutors specialised in combating environmental crime and a specialised administrative court in Vaasa. Advanced training programmes for environmental inspectors and police officers are in place.

France¹¹

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|--|
| FR1 | Good administrative capacity – the autonomous national environmental authority provides opinions on EIA of major public plans and projects at national level. | Implementation, enforcement, EIA |
| FR2 | Green and Blue Trail: a network of biodiversity corridors and reservoirs that go beyond Natura 2000. | Biodiversity, nature, policy |
| FR3 | Innovative and participative governance tools to protect biodiversity – dedicated structures and tools for Natura 2000, individual plans and regional nature park policy. | Policy, biodiversity, public participation, tools, Natura 2000 |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| FR4 | Traffic and air pollution measures: restrictions on older cars; pedestrianising measures; plans to ban the sale of both diesel and petrol cars by 2040. | Policy, air pollution, urban, transport, petrol/diesel vehicles |
| FR5 | Integration of environmental issues into all government policies via the National Ecological Transition Council. Involves all ministries and stakeholders. Departments accountable to Council for progress of commitments. | Policy, sustainability, integration, governance |
| FR6 | Eco-innovation and circular economy measures – infrastructure, financial instruments, clusters. | Policy, eco-innovation, circular economy, fiscal |
| FR7 | New Industrial France policy. This includes actions on new resources, sustainable cities and transport. | Policy, industry |
| FR8 | CO ₂ reduction measures in the Energy Transition for Green Growth Act. A mix of regulations, tax incentives and financial instruments and the newly created Institute for Energy Transition. | Policy, efficiency, renewables, buildings, transport, fiscal, tax |
| FR9 | Waste prevention measures – a target to reduce household waste production by 10% by 2020 (compared with 2010). Actions: deposit and return schemes; obligation for food retailers to donate unsold goods; and a “resource use hierarchy”. | Policy, resource efficiency, waste prevention target, food, deposit and return |
| FR10 | Agriculture initiatives on nature – including reducing the use of pesticides. | Policy, agriculture, nature, pesticides |
| FR11 | French national ecosystem services. A governance structure and an economic assessment. | Ecosystem services |
| FR12 | Wastewater policy and governance based on river basin agencies with local representation and own funding. | Policy, governance, wastewater |
| FR13 | Measures on sustainable cities – EcoQuartier label; €881 million under ERDF to sustainable urban development. | Sustainable cities, label, fiscal |
| FR14 | Targets for reducing non-agricultural pesticide use. | Policy, pesticides |
| FR15 | Inclusive decision process for spending EU budgets on agro-environmental climate measures. | Policy, funding, agriculture |
| FR16 | Measures to phase out coal power. | Policy, tax, coal |

¹¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_fr_en.pdf

| | | |
|------|--|-----------------------------|
| FR17 | GPP of innovative solutions. | Policy, GPP |
| FR18 | Training police officers on environmental crime. | Implementation, enforcement |

EIA, environmental impact assessment.

FR1 – Good administrative capacity

France has good administrative capacity, e.g. inspection bodies specially dedicated to environment protection and an environmental authority involved in the assessment of plans and programmes. The autonomous national environmental authority (*Conseil général de l'environnement et du développement durable*; CGEDD) provides opinions on the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of major public plans and projects at national level. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has highlighted the importance of this body.

FR2 – Green and Blue Trail

The Green and Blue Trail (*Trame verte et bleue*) aims to create a network of biodiversity corridors and reservoirs. These go beyond Natura 2000 requirements.

Many actors are already implementing the trail at national, regional, departmental and local levels. The state sets the framework. The state and the regions develop the “regional ecological coherence schemes”, which are put to public consultation. Local authorities take into account ecological continuity in spatial planning. Companies can act by managing their sites to preserve ecological continuity, as well as by reducing their environmental impact. Citizens have the possibility to act individually in their gardens or as part of an association.

Other nature initiatives include *Séquence “éviter–réduire–compenser”* (a No Net Loss initiative) and “Grands Prix Natura 2000”. The former is a mitigation hierarchy, a tool to preserve natural habitats. In developments, impacts must be avoided, then minimised and, as a last resort, offset or compensated for.

FR3 – Innovative and participative governance tools to protect biodiversity

Innovative and participative governance tools protect biodiversity, such as dedicated structures for Natura 2000 and a regional nature park policy (*Parcs Naturels Régionaux*) for protecting the environment while ensuring the sustainable development of human activities.

The good implementation of Natura 2000 includes public participation and individual site management plans. The Natura 2000 network in France is a means to mobilise the public on biodiversity, as the French system extensively involves the public and stakeholders. Indeed, in France each Natura 2000 site has one COPIL (i.e. a dedicated ad hoc steering committee), which is the governance body responsible for establishing conservation objectives and conservation measures through a DOCOB (i.e. a dedicated ad hoc Natura 2000 management plan). All of this is run by local authorities under the supervision of the state and it is implemented through a dedicated Natura 2000 site manager, financed by European and national funds. So far in France, Natura 2000 has created around 800 full-time equivalent jobs. The Natura 2000 derogation system is correctly used, consulting the public where needed.

France also has many tools and materials to streamline the Natura 2000 approach nationally, such as dedicated sectoral assessment methodologies for habitats and species at site level, a national guidance document for establishing the Natura 2000 management plans, dedicated Natura 2000 training sessions and “technical exchange days”.

A bill on the restoration of biodiversity, nature and landscapes was adopted in July 2016.

FR4 – Traffic and air pollution measures

In 2017, Paris unveiled plans to restrict traffic and pedestrianise the city centre to attempt to halve the number of private cars on the roads. Since July 2016, Paris has forbidden circulation between 8am and 8pm of a large range of pre-1997 vehicles and pre-1999

motorbikes/scooters; other diesel-oriented restrictions will be implemented progressively by 2020.

In addition, the French government has announced long-term plans to ban the sale of both diesel and petrol cars by 2040 (the announcement occurred after the date the EIR reports were published).

FR5 – Integration of environmental issues into all government policies

To ensure the coherence and integration of environmental issues into all government policies, France has set up a system involving all ministries and stakeholders in society. The National Ecological Transition Council (CNTE) includes representatives of environmental protection associations, trades unions, employers' organisations, associations representing civil society, local authorities and parliamentarians. The CNTE is consulted on national legislation and strategies on sustainable development.

The implementation of the roadmaps the government produces are subject to regular monitoring by the members of CNTE, to which each department is accountable for the progress of commitments. More generally, the Interministerial Delegate for Sustainable Development coordinates public policy for ecological transition through the network of Senior Officials for Sustainable Development in each ministry.

FR6 – Eco-innovation and circular economy measures

The French government has strongly supported the development of eco-industries, eco-innovation and the circular economy by deploying a number of policy initiatives and support programmes. These complement existing support schemes, including schemes that are not fully dedicated to eco-innovation but target innovation as a whole.

Some of the main priorities of the Investment for the Future Programme (PIA) are energy and ecological transition. The PIA finances researcher development innovation (RDI) programmes (including demonstrators), infrastructure and institutes as well as financial instruments (mainly equity and loans) for innovative projects that target different eco-industry-related issues, with the objective of supporting companies' growth. By 2015, the PIA had dedicated €2,850 million to clean energy and the circular economy. Half of the total amount of the second PIA, which is currently active, is dedicated to various programmes that consider eco-conditionality criteria.

France has created local competitiveness clusters around different eco-innovation-related issues to promote public-private projects, through cooperation between public research, SMEs and large firms (sector leaders). These act as test-beds for the emergence of eco-innovations, and help bring together public and private partners around common issues. In 2010, new clusters were added, dedicated to environmental technologies focusing on efficient use of resources, sustainable city and mobility, renewable energy, energy efficiency and green chemistry.

The PIA has also supported the establishment of several Institutes for Energy Transition and Institutes for Technological Research. They gather a limited number of (mostly large) companies and public laboratories on a specific subject related to eco-innovation: bio-sourced materials, eco-buildings, energy efficiency, eco-technologies and biomass-based plant chemistry. They complement competitiveness clusters, as they target more long-term innovation.

The PIA has put in place financial instruments in support of companies engaging in eco-activities, such as the Ecotechnology Fund, run by the French Public Investment Bank, Bpifrance.

FR7 – New Industrial France policy

New Industrial France (*Nouvelle France Industrielle*) dates from 2015, when the government announced nine "French Industrial Solutions", which conform to France's industrial policy priorities. Of these, some focus on new resources (new bio-based and recycled materials for industrial production), sustainable cities (smart grids, building renovation, circular economy), green mobility (including electric cars, cars consuming less than 2 l/100 km, electric charging

stations, life-long batteries) and transport for the future (faster trains, ecological ships and hybrid planes).

FR8 – CO₂ reduction measures

The Energy Transition for Green Growth Act sets ambitious goals for cutting CO₂ emissions, reducing energy consumption, improving material resource efficiency, reducing fossil energy consumption and increasing the use of renewable energy. It targets the following sectors: (eco)buildings, clean public and private transport, circular economy and renewable energies. It includes a mix of regulations, tax incentives (e.g. a tax break for energy-related improvements in households), support to RDI programmes and dedicated green financial instruments (e.g. green private equity funds). This act targets companies, citizens and public bodies (support for GPP). It also introduces the national low-carbon strategy.

The field of low-impact buildings and retrofitting of buildings is strong in France. The above act has set objectives in this area. The newly created Institute for Energy Transition (*Institut pour la transition énergétique*, INEF4) is supporting open-innovation programmes in the field of eco-building and retrofitting activities to develop these activities and companies.

FR9 – Waste prevention measures

The Energy Transition for Green Growth Act also establishes a waste prevention target, namely to reduce household waste production by 10% by 2020 (compared with 2010). It features a number of actions, including a definition of the legal notion of “planned obsolescence”, which becomes a crime; promotion of deposit and return schemes; obligations for food retailers to donate their unsold goods to charities to reduce food waste; and a “resource use hierarchy” inspired by the waste hierarchy and fostering waste prevention.

The decree also requires that the waste management plans should identify *shared* facilities for the collection and treatment of bio-waste from household, organisations *and* agriculture.

FR10 – Agriculture initiatives on nature

A recent environmental initiative taken by the agriculture ministry is the introduction of an agro-ecology project (national and regional), which sets out significant measures and plans. For example, it includes the implementation of the Ecophyto II plan aiming to reduce the use of pesticides (€41 million each year from 2008 to 2015), the extension in 2016 of the 2013 plan for sustainable bee keeping, the launching of a new plan to develop agroforestry, and the promotion of sustainable and collective action among groups of farmers through new organisations called *groupements d'intérêt économique et environnemental* (GIEE). All these initiatives aim to promote more sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

FR11 – French national ecosystem services

The French national ecosystem assessment project (*L'Évaluation Française des Écosystèmes et des Services Écosystémiques*, EFESE) has carried out work on physical and ecological assessment of ecosystems services, ongoing exploratory works for the development of accounts and a valuation of ecosystem services.

A governance structure has been set up to deal with the mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services. An economic assessment has delivered a conceptual framework and the assessment of pollination services. Other values are being explored and concern less tangible benefits such as spiritual and mental wellbeing.

FR12 – Wastewater policy and governance

France has established a transparent wastewater policy and a well-organised water governance system, based on river basin agencies with local representation and their own funding. This ensures that decisions relative to water management are taken at a level close to the users, but also that all water users contribute to the cost of mitigation and restoration measures. Even if improvements are possible in terms of implementation, the system in place is, in many respects, a good example at European level.

FR13 – Measures on sustainable cities

France has a label (EcoQuartier) that certifies the sustainability of city areas based on the quality of governance (judged based on a range of criteria), the promotion of responsible management of resources, and adaptation to climate change. So far, 49 areas have been labelled.

France has allocated €881 million under the ERDF to SUD, in which the share dedicated to environmental issues is predominant. As of now, 250 cities have sustainable strategies for urban development. For example, the Île-de-France region (which includes Paris) will dedicate 20% of its whole operational programme to SUD.

In 2015, the institute for sustainable cities (Vivapolis) was created, composed of a network of actors to bring sustainable solutions for cities by combining different approaches and fostering interdisciplinary solutions among the industry and public actors. It will also focus on research and training.

FR14 – Targets for reducing non-agricultural pesticide use

In its Energy Transition Act of 2015, France has included an objective of zero pesticide use in all public spaces of urban areas in France. The law forbids the use of pesticides by the French state, local authorities and public bodies for the maintenance of public spaces, forests and the road network since January 2017. Derogations exist for cemeteries and sports grounds. The sale of pesticides to amateur gardeners will also be banned from January 2019. With the vast majority used in professional agriculture, the law will cut overall use of pesticides by 10%.

FR15 – Decision process for spending EU agro-environmental climate budgets

For spend on agro-environmental climate measures, the national framework contains 70 types of operation (TOs) validated by the Commission, addressing various environmental issues. These measures have been discussed since 2012 with all stakeholders: ministries of agriculture and environment, managing authorities, farmer representatives, NGOs, scientists and technical experts.

Each managing authority specifies the strategy of intervention for its region in the Rural Development Programme [according to needs identified by SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis], by identifying the areas with environmental issues and the TOs that can be used in these areas to address them. In addition, some national framework TOs can be adjusted for (sub)regional specificities.

Within each region, local operators submit agri-environmental climate projects within the areas identified by the managing authority, in response to calls. The managing authority selects the projects most relevant to the environmental issues of the territory.

FR16 – Measures to phase out coal power

As noted in the report, a carbon price was to be implemented in the French coal power sector. However, this has been postponed on account of industry lobbying and protests in the towns with coal-fired stations. The government has committed to shutting down all coal power plants by 2023, but coal only represents 3% of power generation in France in any case.

FR17 – Green public procurement

Public stakeholders are working on solutions that would provide legal security for public procurers to purchase innovative solutions and for solution providers to gain access to major public markets. Public procurement reform in 2015 explicitly inserted new provisions on environmental clauses in procurement specifications.

FR18 – Training police officers dealing with environmental crime

Support for technical specialisation, including training for police officers dealing with environmental crime.

Germany¹²

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| DE1 | High recycling rate for municipal waste; very low landfill rate. | Waste, recycling |
| DE2 | Advanced approach to green infrastructure – national green infrastructure concept due in 2017. | Green infrastructure, biodiversity, policy |
| DE3 | Goal to limit the rate of land take. | Policy, land use, land take |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| DE4 | National Sustainable Development Strategy – a goal to double resource productivity; German Council for Sustainable Development; all ministries involved. | Resource productivity, indicators, sustainable development, policy |
| DE5 | Taxation measures for vehicles, aviation and nuclear power. | Transport, fiscal/tax, nuclear |
| DE6 | Project for “sensible water use” – Frankfurt. Achieved aim of reducing water consumption by 20% by 2000. | Water conservation, community, public campaign |
| DE7 | Ecosystem Services Partnership Germany. Work ongoing to integrate ecosystem services into the national environmental accounting system. | Ecosystem Services, research, environmental accounting |
| DE8 | Essen – Green City initiative. | Urban, green infrastructure, biodiversity |
| DE9 | Renewable energy finance guarantee – a risk-sharing facility for loans to renewable energy projects in Germany and France. | Renewable energy, fiscal |
| DE10 | Good example – voluntary take-up of insurance under the Environmental Liability Directive. | Insurance, voluntary, environmental liability |

DE1 – High recycling rate for municipal waste; very low landfill rate

There is a high recycling rate for municipal waste and very low levels of landfilling. In 2005, measures were taken to effectively ban landfilling of waste with a high calorific value. EPR systems are in place for different waste streams.

DE2 – An advanced approach to green infrastructure

The approach to green infrastructure is advanced, with a national green infrastructure concept and a Federal Blue Ecological Network Programme both planned.

The national green infrastructure concept will be published in Germany in 2017. All relevant federal nature conservation strategies, objectives and concepts will be brought together to improve the integration of nature conservation policy in all federal activities, e.g. flood protection, federal transport infrastructure, etc. Germany’s National Natural Heritage scheme covers outstanding natural and cultural landscapes of national conservation interest. About 155,000 ha should be transferred to the control of local state governments, the German Federal Environmental Foundation, nature conservation organisations or foundations, to be conserved in perpetuity.

In 2012, the German government adopted the Federal Defragmentation Programme, aimed at maintaining and restoring green infrastructure across the national German road network. The programme aims to reconnect habitat corridors for flora and fauna focusing primarily on the existing road network, but also on new planned federal roads, nature conservation and

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_de_en.pdf

landscape management as well as integrated spatial planning to facilitate the reconnection of a national habitat network.

In 2009, Germany presented a *Status Report on German Floodplains*, which documented their dramatic decline. The German government is preparing a Federal Blue Ecological Network Programme, which will deal with the restoration of rivers and floodplains in Germany. Some federal states have included investments for the management and prevention of floods by using green infrastructure measures in the regional programmes supported by the EU structural funds.

An important initiative for green infrastructure in urban areas started in 2015 with the “Green in Cities – for a liveable future” conference at which a green paper was presented outlining the importance and multiple functions of urban green infrastructure and current challenges and perspectives. A planned white paper will recommend actions to be taken to improve green infrastructure in urban areas.

DE3 – Goal to limit the rate of land take

The Sustainable Development Strategy has a goal of limiting the rate of land take to 30 ha/day by 2020. As a comparison, Ireland’s land take was at 0.24% in 2012, while Germany was at 0.21% or 69 ha/day in 2012.

DE4 – National Sustainable Development Strategy – selected highlights

Since 2002, the German government has continuously updated its National Sustainable Development Strategy. Some selected highlights include:

DE4.1: a goal to double resource productivity

The goal to double resource productivity by 2020 compared with 1994 has been embedded in the Sustainable Development Strategy since 2002. In 2012, Germany set up its ProgRes programme in order to promote resource efficiency, the latest version of which is ProgRes II (2016–2019). The waste and circular economy policy realm remains a focus, but aspects of “sustainable building and sustainable urban development” as well as “resource efficiency of ICT products” have been included. This approach to resource efficiency is supported by additional programmes, measures and actions at the regional level. Information most relevant to SMEs is provided by the VDI Centre for Resource Efficiency (VDI ZRE), a competence centre of the Association of German Engineers. The German green tech sector is expected to continue developing in the coming years.

DE4.2: German Council for Sustainable Development

To provide external expertise the government put in place the German Council for Sustainable Development in 2001. The Council advises the Federal Government on all matters relating to sustainable development.

DE4.3: All ministries are involved in shaping and implementing the strategy

DE4.4: GPP

Guidelines, criteria lists and vendor questionnaires for several products and services (heat supply, office equipment, furniture, consumer electronics, cleaning and hygiene) have been developed.

DE5 – Taxation measures for vehicles, aviation and nuclear power

In 2009, vehicle taxation was restructured on the basis, at least in part, of CO₂ emission performance. An aviation tax and a tax on nuclear fuels were introduced in 2011.

DE6 – Project for “sensible water use” – Frankfurt

The “Sensible water use in Frankfurt am Main” project was developed in 1990 to remove the link between water consumption and population and economic growth. The water-saving campaign became known as the “Frankfurt Way” and relied on citizens understanding the need to use water sensibly. The measures were designed to encourage a sensible approach to water and to publicise the opportunities for upgrading water-saving devices in the home. The aim of the campaign – to reduce water consumption by 20% by 2000 – was achieved via initiatives such as 100% of the water consumed by business and private customers being metered. Water lost from leaks is 3.3% of that distributed.

DE7 – Ecosystem Services Partnership Germany

The Ecosystem Services Partnership Germany (ESP-DE) is an initiative of the scientific community to develop new strategic partnerships between researchers and practitioners to apply the concept of ecosystem services in favour of the protection and sustainable use of natural resources. There is also work ongoing to integrate Ecosystem Services into the national environmental accounting system.

DE8 – Essen – Green City initiative

Essen is making big efforts to establish itself as a “City in transformation”, overcoming an industrial history to reinvent itself as a “Green City”. It has built green and blue corridors in the city and is investing in green infrastructure. In addition, it has implemented a range of practices to protect and enhance nature and biodiversity. Future plans focus on the greening of the city and on the promotion of biodiversity in new green areas – in particular on species that are resilient to climate change.

DE9 – Renewable energy finance guarantee

The renewable energy finance guarantee, a risk-sharing facility for loans to renewable energy projects in Germany and France, is under assessment under the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). Under the same umbrella, agreements with an intermediary bank have been signed for SME financing provided by the European Investment Fund amounting to €203 million.

DE10 – Good example of voluntary take-up in the insurance market under the Environmental Liability Directive

While Germany has not introduced mandatory financial security, the insurance market appears to work effectively, with good levels of voluntary take-up, providing a model for other Member States of how a voluntary approach can work.

Greece¹³

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|--|--|---|
| GR1 | Good use of LIFE funding for Natura 2000 sites, building expertise and putting in place effective measures. | Natura 2000, LIFE, habitats, biodiversity |
| Also mentioned good bathing water and drinking water results | | |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| GR2 | Green Fund – to stimulate growth through protecting the environment and providing support for environmentally friendly projects and initiatives. | Fiscal |

GR1 – Good use of LIFE funding for Natura 2000 sites

Greece has made good use of LIFE funds for a substantial national list of sites for Natura 2000. In some cases, close collaboration between the authorities and conservation NGOs has enabled the building of expertise and has put in place effective measures in specific areas.

GR2 – Green Fund

Greece established a Green Fund in 2010. The objective is to stimulate growth through protecting the environment and providing support for environmentally friendly projects and initiatives.

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_el_en.pdf

Hungary¹⁴

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|---|
| HU1 | National Research, Development and Innovation Fund includes the environmental field. | Fiscal, innovation, research |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| HU2 | National target for reduction in material intensity to 80% of the 2007 level by 2020. | Resource efficiency, material intensity, policy |
| HU3 | Eco-mapping and brainstorming resource efficiency. | Companies, resource efficiency |
| HU4 | Environmental product fee – applied to a range of products: batteries, packaging, EEE, tyres, plastic bags, plastics, office paper, advertising papers, soaps, washing powders, cosmetic products and PV panels. | Products, fiscal, tax, packaging, batteries, EEE, tyres, paper, certain chemical products |
| HU5 | WEEE coupons – a coupon/voucher when consumers take back e-waste to an EEE selling point to use when purchasing next item of EEE. | WEEE, fiscal, compliance |
| HU6 | The National Ecological Network – Natura 2000 sites and other areas – accounts for 36% of the country. | Biodiversity, policy |
| HU7 | Flood prevention measures includes natural water retention measures, nature-based solutions for flooding and green infrastructure. | Flood, water, policy |

EEE, electric and electronic equipment; PV, photovoltaic; WEEE, waste electric and electronic equipment.

HU1 – National fund for research, development and innovation

The recently established unified National Research, Development and Innovation Fund allocates state support for research, development and innovation including in an environmental field. There is a National Environmental Technology Innovation Strategy 2011–2020.

HU2 – A national target for reduction in material intensity

In the 2011 National Environmental Technology Innovation Strategy, which is part of the Hungarian National Reform Programme, Hungary stipulates reducing its material intensity to 80% of the 2007 level by 2020.

HU3 – Eco-mapping and brainstorming resource efficiency with company employees

A resource-efficiency initiative involves eco-mapping of companies and brainstorming with employees to identify a list of measures which could help to achieve environmental savings.

HU4 – Environmental product fee

The environmental product fee is applied to a wide range of products including batteries, packaging materials, electric and electronic equipment (EEE), tyres, plastic bags, plastics, office paper, advertising papers, soaps, washing powders, cosmetic products and (rather surprisingly) photovoltaic panels.

HU5 – The WEEE coupon

The waste electric and electronic equipment (WEEE) coupon is to be used when consumers take back e-waste to an EEE selling point. The consumer then gets a coupon/voucher that can be used when the next item of EEE is purchased (ranges from €0.16 for a lamp to €22.70 for a fridge). Note that this draft system is being lobbied against by manufacturers. If

¹⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_hu_en.pdf

a returned device is reusable without pre-treatment, the producer must send it to an EEE reuse centre.

HU6 – National Ecological Network

The National Ecological Network, incorporating protected areas and Natura 2000 sites, complemented with other natural/semi-natural adjacent areas, accounts for 36% of the country.

HU7 – Flood prevention measures

Flood risk areas cover nearly 50% of the country's territory. The Hungarian Partnership Agreement includes natural water retention measures, nature-based solutions for flooding, and green infrastructure (habitat protection and ecosystem – floodplains – restoration). The flood measures protect national wealth responsible for about one-third of GDP.

The Vásárhelyi Plan provides a national framework for flood management investments in Hungary since 1999. Revised in 2003, the principle is for potentially damaging surplus floodwater to be diverted in a controlled way into retention reservoirs constructed along the river.

Ireland¹⁵

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|---|
| IE1 | Waste sector management. To comply with a ruling by the Court of Justice, Ireland implemented a major reform of its waste sector, closed illegal landfills and financed costly clean-up and remediation works. | Waste management/ effective governance/capacity to implement rules |
| IE2 | Highly effective complaints management system. Ireland has taken a proactive approach towards managing complaints in the environmental sector. | |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| IE3 | Besides national strategies and plans such as those on resource efficiency, jobs and green procurement, there are several programmes focusing mainly on SMEs (Green Offer Programme, Green Business Programme, SMILE), which aim to support the development of the green economy. | Circular economy/green economy |
| IE4 | Ireland has a resource productivity value of €2.37/kg, which is higher than the EU-28 average. | Resource productivity |
| IE5 | Ireland ranks third in Europe in the Eco-Innovation Scoreboard (2015), with a composite index of 134 relative to the EU average index of 100. | Eco-innovation |
| IE6 | Initiated an environmental fund in 2001. Primarily used to fund waste-related initiatives. | Green taxation |

IE1 – Waste sector reform

To comply with a ruling by the Court of Justice, Ireland implemented a major reform of its waste sector, closed illegal landfills and financed costly clean-up and remediation works. This exercise has transformed the waste sector in Ireland, providing useful lessons for other countries. Over 10 years ago, Ireland established the Network for Ireland’s Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (NIECE) to ensure an effective, national approach to enforcing environmental legislation.

IE2 – Complaints management

The Irish authorities have cooperated closely with the Commission and have taken a proactive approach towards managing complaints referred back to the environmental sector. This has allowed certain cases to be solved successfully at national level without close involvement of the Commission.

IE3 – Circular economy

Ireland has made significant progress across a range of environmental policy areas and has taken important steps towards a circular economy.

Besides national strategies and plans such as those on resource efficiency, jobs and green procurement there are several programmes focusing mainly on SMEs (Green Offer Programme, Green Business Programme, SMILE), which aim to support the development of the green economy.

IE4 – Resource productivity

The Country Report for Ireland states that “Ireland is performing below average in the EU as regards resource productivity (how efficiently the economy uses material resources to produce wealth), with 1.88 EUR/kg (EU average is 2.0) in 2015.” In fact, according to the

¹⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_ie_en.pdf

Eurostat data source,¹⁶ Ireland has a resource productivity value of €2.37/kg, which is higher than the EU-28 average.

Furthermore, the Country Report states that “Resource productivity is lower in countries with heavy service-based economies, like professional services in Ireland.” The reverse is, in fact, true. Countries with a large service sector use fewer mass resources than those with a strong manufacturing presence. Thus, resource productivity tends to be higher.

IE5 – Eco-innovation

Ireland ranks third in Europe in the Eco-Innovation Scoreboard, with a composite index of 134 relative to the EU-average index of 100. This represents a substantial improvement compared with 2013, when Ireland ranked 11th and was close to the EU average with a composite index of 95.4.

On the technological side, Ireland enjoys a strong research and development (R&D) base for developing and testing green technologies, products and applications, as well as a comparative advantage in key enabling technologies such as engineering, ICT and biotechnology.

In November 2012, the government announced its commitment to promote the Green Economy in a communication entitled *Delivering Our Green Potential*.

More recent policy initiatives supporting eco-innovation and the circular economy include a national strategy on resource efficiency (*Towards a Resource Efficient Ireland*), an Energy Policy White Paper (*Ireland’s Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future*), an Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan, and a new strategy for R&D, science and technology (*Innovation 2020*). These strategic documents will set the framework for policy actions related to eco-innovation and the circular economy in forthcoming years.

IE6 – Environment Fund

The high landfill levy and suite of regulations on household waste collection currently in place (as well as the current reforms being undertaken to strengthen the existing regulatory structure) have driven change and have potential to enable compliance with the current EU Directive targets. In 2001, the Environment Fund was established. Revenues from levies on plastic shopping bags and the landfill of waste are paid into that fund and can be used mainly for assistance on waste-related measures (general schemes or producer initiatives to prevent/reduce waste, implementation on waste management plans).

16

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsdpc100&plugin=1>

Italy¹⁷

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|--|
| IT1 | Integrated environmental assessments and user-friendly web implementation. | Integrated EA, EIA, SEA, online, implementation/procedures |
| IT2 | Regional Administrative Reinforcement Plans for ESIF and national funding. | Fiscal, EU funding, implementation |
| IT3 | A high level of interest in natural capital and environmental accounting. A decree was issued in 2016 on estimating ecosystem and environmental capital. | Natural capital, environmental accounting |
| IT4 | Innovative approaches developed by LIFE projects. | Innovation, LIFE funding |
| IT5 | The BES set of indicators for fair and sustainable wellbeing. | Indicators, sustainability |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| IT6 | National Plan on Food Waste and law for food donation/distribution. In Milan, food waste is collected separately at a high level (93 kg/inhabitant/yr); it is recognised worldwide as a best practice in a city of 1 million inhabitants. | Policy, law, food waste, food donation |
| IT7 | Budget legislation under Industry 4.0 for circular economy measures – hyper/super depreciation schemes, e.g. tax credits and a grant scheme. | Fiscal, loans, tax policy, circular economy |
| IT8 | Environmental Footprint Programme and voluntary “Made Green in Italy” scheme. | Eco-labelling, voluntary, environmental footprint |
| IT9 | SME loans for environmental sustainability. | Fiscal, loans, sustainability, SMEs |
| IT10 | Increases in renewable and non-fossil energy generation. In March 2017, Italy had already surpassed its 2020 EU target for renewable energy. | Renewable energy, solar |
| IT11 | Water services – new pricing system to promote efficiency. | Water, pricing, efficiency |
| IT12 | National Council of the Green Economy – 64 business organisations that represent the green economy in Italy, in collaboration with the Environment and Economic Development Ministries. | Policy, green economy |
| IT13 | Biowaste reuse – farmers receive subsidies to promote the use of compost. | Biowaste, circular economy |
| IT14 | Green infrastructure measures – various examples. | Green infrastructure |
| IT15 | Recovery/preservation of the seabed as part of the National Plan on Ports. | Policy, marine, monitoring |
| IT16 | New strategy for transport infrastructure and logistics. | Transport, policy |
| IT17 | GPP – Remade in Italy Scheme – an accredited certification scheme for verification of recycled content in products. | GPP, recycled content, products |

SEA, strategic environmental assessment.

¹⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_it_en.pdf

IT1 – Integrated environmental assessments and user-friendly web implementation

A noted point of excellence was integrated environmental assessments through coordinated procedures as well as the user-friendliness of the Ministry of the Environment's national web portal on EIA and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

IT2 – Regional Administrative Reinforcement Plans for ESIF and national funding

Regional Administrative Reinforcement Plans cover European Structural and Investment Funds and national funds.

IT3 – A high level of interest in natural capital and environmental accounting

The Ministry of the Environment has set up a natural capital committee and launched an environmental accounting project for protected areas in Italy to provide a framework for pursuing a natural capital accounting process at the national level. A decree was issued in 2016 on estimating ecosystem and environmental capital.

IT4 – Innovative approaches developed by LIFE projects

Innovative approaches developed by LIFE projects were noted. The Ministry of the Environment is a partner of several projects implemented through the Rural National Network Programme [co-financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)], including one focused on complementarity between the LIFE programme and Rural Development policies. The Knowledge Platform – Best Practices for the Environment and Climate Action project is collecting results from EU co-financed projects through various programmes and developing networking capabilities.

IT5 – BES set of indicators for fair and sustainable wellbeing

The Benessere equo e sostenibile – Wellbeing, Equal and Sustainable (BES) set of indicators set out 130 sub-indicators in 12 fields. Indicators are to be attached to the Budget. Annual reporting on these trends is included.

IT6 – National Plan on Food Waste and law for donation/distribution

There has been a National Plan on Food Waste since 2014, and a law to encourage the donation and distribution of food products and reduce waste has been adopted.

In Milan food waste is collected separately at a high level (93 kg/inhabitant/yr). It has been recognised worldwide as a best practice in a city with a population over 1 million inhabitants.

IT7 – Budget legislation under Industry 4.0 for circular economy measures

This budget sets out measures within its Industry 4.0 strategy to promote the circular economy, including allowing investments in environmental technologies for reuse and recycling of products, energy-saving systems, reducing processing losses/waste, etc. to benefit from hyper/super depreciation schemes (companies are allowed to deduct 250% of the value of investments in technologies instrumental to the digitalisation and innovation of their industrial processes, or 140% for related investments), as well as other incentives such as tax credits for internal research and for innovative investments. It also includes a €3 billion grant scheme, ECOBONUS, for hotels and apartment buildings for energy upgrades and solar panels.

The Industry 4.0 strategy aims to modernise production processes and move Italian firms up in the value chain. It covers such things as financing innovative start-ups, venture capital funds, and partly covering SMEs' interest expenditure on bank loans to invest in new equipment.

IT8 – Environmental Footprint Programme and voluntary “Made Green in Italy” scheme

The Environmental Footprint Programme, by the Ministry of the Environment, concerns the environmental footprint of goods/services in terms of carbon footprint and water footprint. The Collegato Ambientale is establishing a wider use of Product Environmental Footprinting with the voluntary “Made Green in Italy” scheme for environmental certification of products,

which it drew up in 2016.

IT9 – SME loans for environmental sustainability

The EFSI has financed an SME loans project in Italy promoting environmental sustainability.

IT10 – Increases in renewable and non-fossil energy generation

It is noted that there have been major developments in the area of renewable and non-fossil energy. This includes bioenergy and in particular solar power. In March 2017, Italy had already surpassed its 2020 EU target for renewable energy according to Eurostat data.

IT11 – Water services – new pricing system to promote efficiency

In Italy, water services are regulated by an independent authority, AEEGSI, which approves the tariff plans of water utilities. AEEGSI has introduced a new tariff method for integrated water services for 2016–2020 with an increasing tariff system related to consumption, to provide adequate incentives for users to use water efficiently. Furthermore, the 2016 Budget Law created a fund to improve water infrastructure, financed by the new tariff.

IT12 – National Council of the Green Economy

The States General of the Green Economy has been promoted by the National Council of the Green Economy – 64 business organisations that represent the green economy in Italy, in collaboration with the Environment and Economic Development Ministries.

IT13 – Biowaste reuse

Emilia-Romagna reached 19% organic recycling of total municipal waste production in 2010. In order to promote the use of compost, farmers receive subsidies of €150–180 per hectare. Nationally, a decree has been adopted in 2016 on measures to create an adequate integrated system for the organic fraction of waste. It is estimated that €20 million/year is saved through biowaste contributing to the circular economy.

IT14 – Green infrastructure measures

In its 2014–2020 ERDF and EAFRD regional programmes, Italy is planning to invest in nature-based solutions to deal with flood control in addition to grey infrastructure.

The importance of linkages between culture and nature that is a central feature of Italian policy is exemplified by the Corona Verde project in Piedmont. The project with 93 municipalities is designed to develop green infrastructure integrating the Corona di Delitie system of royal residences within the Turin green belt. Project benefits include protection against soil erosion, enhancement of tourism and air pollution reduction.

The EcoSistema Filtro is a constructed wetland in Sardinia and a Natura 2000 site, built in 2004 to filter treated water.

In 2012, over 86% of the residents of Reggio-Emilia lived within 300 m of recreational green areas, helped through planning policies such as a green belt.

IT15 – Recovery/preservation of the seabed as part of the National Plan on Ports

The new National Plan on Ports includes activities for recovery and preservation of the seabed and starting up monitoring programmes of protected sites near ports.

IT16 – New strategy for transport infrastructure and logistics

Connecting Italy (*Connettere Italia*), the new strategy for transport infrastructure and logistics, includes a target of a 20% increase in kilometres of trams and metro lines per inhabitant by 2030, a 40% target for public transport and a 10% target for softer transport modes (e.g. cycling). Furthermore, it is planned to have a 30% increase in the population served by high-speed trains by 2030, a 50% increase in railway freight transport by 2021 and a maximum time of 2 hours to reach ports and airports in the core network.

Reggio Emilia had over 1 m of cycle path per inhabitant, the highest among the 2016 Green Capital Award contenders. Bologna is using ESIF funding for the construction of cycling paths among other measures in the city.

IT17 – GPP – Remade in Italy scheme

One good GPP practice cited is Remade in Italy, an accredited certification scheme specifically aimed at the verification of recycled content in a product.

Latvia¹⁸

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|---|
| LV1 | Good compliance record | |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| LV2 | Electric transport promotion – financial support for implementation of 102 projects where electrical vehicles were purchased and public charging infrastructure was installed. | Transport, electric vehicles and infrastructure |
| LV3 | Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission – addressing issues like urban mobility and climate change. | Cooperation |
| LV4 | Nature as future capital, a priority under the Sustainable Development Strategy. | Nature |
| LV5 | Green investments – green technology incubator | Fiscal |
| LV6 | Green cities initiatives – nine border municipalities in Latvia and Lithuania cooperating under the motto “Let’s make our cities greener”. Twenty Latvian cities have set GHG reduction targets for a period up to 2020. | Urban, green infrastructure, GHG targets |

LV1 – Good compliance record

Latvia has a good compliance record, with only a few complaints and infringements.

LV2 – Electric transport promotion

In 2014, the Ministry of Transport launched the Electromobility Development Plan for Latvia 2014–2016. The plan has been prepared with a long-term view to fully integrate this area into transport policy as a way to decrease the use of fossil fuels, CO₂ emissions and noise levels. Through the Climate Change Financial Instrument, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development has provided financial support for the implementation of 102 projects where electrical vehicles were purchased and public charging infrastructure was installed.

LV3 – Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission

The Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission is a voluntary network of member cities of the Baltic Sea Region. There are about 100 member cities. There is a Sustainability Action Programme addressing issues such as urban mobility, climate change. An example is a project to improve the quality of local waters and the Baltic Sea by reducing nutrient load.

LV4 – Nature as future capital

In the Sustainable Development Strategy for Latvia until 2030, one of the priorities is “Nature as future capital”, which aims to position Latvia as a leader in protection, promotion and sustainable use of ecosystem services.

The richness of natural capital such as forests, soil and water is also identified by Latvia as a driver of eco-innovation. Almost half of the territory is made up of natural ecosystems. Low population density and relatively low levels of industrial pollution highlight the “green image” of the country, making it a good destination for eco-tourism and travel.

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_lv_en.pdf

LV5 – Green investments

The Latvian Smart Specialisation Strategy emphasises the focus on developing bioeconomy, smart materials and sustainable energy solutions as three of five key areas for RDI investment.

In 2014, with the support of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism's programme "Green Industry Innovation", the green technology incubator was launched in Latvia, which was the first innovation support instrument specifically dedicated to the development of eco-innovative companies and eco-innovative entrepreneurship in the country.

LV6 – Green cities initiatives

Nine border municipalities in Latvia and Lithuania are cooperating under the motto "Let's make our cities greener" in order to restore urban parks and green infrastructure; improve the wellbeing, awareness and engagement of citizens to maintain green areas in their neighbourhood; and enable city planners to integrate green infrastructure in urban space.

Under the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, 20 Latvian cities have set greenhouse gas reduction targets for a period up to 2020.

Lithuania¹⁹

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|---|
| LT1 | Good compliance record. | n/a |
| LT2 | Certain eco-innovation strengths – biotechnology and laser technology. | Eco-innovation |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| LT3 | Goal to halt biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems and services. | Policy, ecosystems and services, biodiversity |
| LT4 | Closer cooperation with the European Investment Bank for financing sustainable urban development – US\$105 billion over next 5 years for sustainable transport, clean energy, water and smart cities. | Fiscal, sustainable urban development |

n/a, not applicable.

LT1 – Good compliance record

Lithuania has a good compliance record, with a low number of complaints and infringements.

LT2 – Certain eco-innovation strengths

While eco-innovation in general in Lithuania is noted as needing further efforts, the country has strengths in certain areas, such as biotechnology and laser technology. Biotechnology is a priority area for agro-innovation and food technologies, while laser technology is used in biomedical applications.

LT3 – Goal to halt biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems and services

The Action Plan on Conservation of Landscape and Biodiversity for the period 2015–2020 sets a strategic goal for Lithuania to halt biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems and their services and, where possible, to restore them.

LT4 – Closer cooperation with the EIB for financing sustainable urban development

In 2009, Lithuania signed an agreement with the European Investment Bank to strengthen cooperation in financing SUD. The EIB's New Urban Agenda launched in autumn 2016 with support for SUD of US\$105 billion over the next 5 years through new investment in sustainable transport, clean energy, water and smart cities.

¹⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_lt_en.pdf

Luxembourg²⁰

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| LU1 | Best EU performer in resource productivity | Resource productivity |
| LU2 | Resource efficiency and circular economy measures – including clever shopping initiative (labelling certain classes of products that have a low ecological impact) and Fit4Circularity to support companies. | Policy, governance, resource efficiency, circular economy, waste, eco-innovation |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| LU3 | Measures for implementing Natura 2000, including green infrastructure measures. | Natura 2000, urban development, green infrastructure |
| LU4 | Ecosystem services measures: 12 ecosystem services prioritised and mapped. | Ecosystem services |
| LU5 | Traffic and air pollution measures – including tax reform and replacement of diesel buses. | Traffic, air pollution, taxation |

LU1 – Best EU performer in resource productivity

Luxembourg is the best performer in the EU in terms of resource productivity, i.e. how efficiently the economy uses material resources to produce wealth. CTC note: of course, the nature of the LU economy is based on services, to an extreme degree (86% of GDP), which will lead to a favourable resource productivity value.

LU2 – Measures on resource efficiency and the circular economy

An interministerial committee “Strategic group for a circular economy” was set up in 2015 under the governance of the secretaries of state for economic and environmental affairs to unite all relevant stakeholders, coordinate their actions and share information.

Among coordinated actions was an international conference under the 2015 Luxembourg EU Presidency and the InnovFin Advisory programme on financing the circular economy.

Circular economy and renewable energy initiatives include the SuperDreckskëscht and Fit4Circularity schemes. SuperDreckskëscht, a trademarked banner, aims to incentivise citizens and businesses to better manage their waste, and rationalise their resource consumption. It consists of activities and campaigns by the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure and the Chambers of Trade and Commerce on national waste management. Activities include:

- Education and awareness campaigns and materials for schools (e.g. Superspillmobil – a display truck with seven different games for young children on waste, water, energy and environment protection).
- A scheme for companies to implement improvements and to document these via product flow balances. Such companies are awarded a label certified to EN ISO 14024 (on environmental labels).
- The “clever shopping” (Clever Akafen) initiative with retailers labelling certain classes of products that have a low ecological impact, e.g. environmentally friendly cleaning products, personal care products, paper hygiene products.

Efforts to promote eco-innovation in Luxembourg are mainly structured around the Eco-Innovation Cluster, LuxInnovation. Fit4Circularity is a support scheme created in 2015 by LuxInnovation targeting SMEs (following Fit4Digital and Fit4Innovation initiatives). Fit4Circularity is dedicated to helping those SMEs willing to make a more substantial commitment to sustainable development practices and to implement a circular economy approach. The objectives are to limit the use of raw materials, maximise the use of

²⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_lu_en.pdf

renewable sources, develop innovative products and services for sustainable growth, reduce energy consumption and increase reusability. The Fit4Circularity programme is designed to support companies in changing their business models from linear to circular.

LU3 – Measures for implementing Natura 2000

The adoption of conservation measures for Natura 2000 sites was lagging behind, but the process of establishing management plans for all sites has been considerably accelerated. In 2015, the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure launched a national communication campaign for Natura 2000, with the aim of improving public awareness, and acceptance, of Natura 2000. The financing of the conservation measures has been included in an updated Priority Action Framework.

The National Nature Protection Plan (PNPN2) aims to protect, conserve and restore terrestrial and aquatic migration corridors (green and blue trails), which are affected by urbanisation and habitat fragmentation. It identifies and protects core sites and restores ecological corridors through the construction of wildlife crossings. It provides for biodiversity contracts as a core biodiversity-enhancing measure. About 5000 ha are managed under biodiversity contracts, and buffer and core areas have been identified. The plan includes further programmes for the restoration of 15% of wetlands, semi-open landscapes and dry grasslands, as well as for reducing landscape fragmentation through better planning of urban development (*Plans sectoriels*). However, measures taken so far have not been sufficient to halt the loss of such habitats and landscape fragmentation.

River restoration and natural flood risk management measures constitute important aspects in green infrastructure. Luxembourg aims to coordinate measures identified in flood risk management plans and in river basin management plans. Luxembourg has launched initial studies with the aim of completing a river restoration project for 22 km of the Alzette river, thereby addressing one of the most populated flood plains in the country. This will be a showcase for new ways of dealing with green infrastructure in densely populated areas.

LU4 – Ecosystem services measures

A methodological guide for Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and Their Services was completed. Based on this guide, 12 ecosystem services were prioritised and mapped in 2014. Updates of the Habitat Quality Mapping (ecosystem assessment with a methodology developed for the restoration of ecosystems using fine-scale datasets) and the Ecosystem Services Mapping is ongoing.

LU5 – Traffic and air pollution measures

Addressing air pollution (NO₂) in the city of Luxembourg is reported to be on the right track following the replacement of diesel buses and construction of a tram line. Nevertheless, further investments in sustainable mobility and measures to reduce the share of diesel passenger cars are needed, in order to maintain the downwards trend in such emissions and to achieve full compliance with air quality standards.

The general tax reform to take effect during 2017 includes measures to encourage “sustainable mobility”, supporting the purchase of green cars, pedelecs (electric bicycles) and bicycles. For company cars, the valuation of the benefit in kind will be differentiated depending on CO₂ emissions. However, Luxembourg is starting from a low base with car registration tax of only €50 regardless of car type/emissions and low fuel taxes, with diesel favoured disproportionately.

Malta²¹

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| MT1 | Protection of traditional stone walls as part of the green infrastructure strategy. | Green infrastructure |
| MT2 | National flood relief project. | Flooding, infrastructure |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| MT3 | Water-efficiency audit and grant scheme. Includes voluntary water audits in companies and a grant scheme to support investments targeting water efficiency. | Water conservation, audit, fiscal |
| MT4 | Mainstreaming sustainability in different training programmes. | Training, sustainability, green jobs |

MT1 – Protection of traditional stone walls

The protection of traditional stone walls across Malta as part of the green infrastructure strategy is delivering multiple benefits for agriculture and the environment.

MT2 – National flood relief project

A national flood relief project, co-funded by the EU's Cohesion Fund.

MT3 – Water-efficiency audit and grant scheme

Proposed actions related to water management include the introduction of voluntary water audits in companies, coupled with a grant scheme to support investments targeting water efficiency.

MT4 – Mainstreaming sustainability in different training programmes

To promote green jobs, the development of a National Education for Sustainable Development Strategy is planned, mainstreaming sustainability in different training programmes.

²¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_mt_en.pdf

Netherlands²²

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|--|
| NL – overall | The Netherlands can be considered a front-runner in the field of the circular economy, and was one of the first to present a circular economy programme (2014), followed in September 2016 by a government-wide programme for a circular economy by 2050. | Circular economy, policy, activity |
| NL1 | The Dutch GPP approach is one of the most ambitious and successful in the EU, stimulating markets for sustainable products. | GPP, circular economy, activity |
| NL2 | “Green Deals” signed by government and stakeholders to overcome obstacles to green growth very successful and can be seen as an EU good practice. | Green growth, collaboration, transport |
| NL3 | Mainstreaming green thinking in the financial sector, for example by the largest Dutch pension fund (ABP), which adopted a policy for sustainable investment in 2015. | Green finance, national pension fund, policy, CSR |
| NL4 | Pioneering work on mapping and assessing the ecosystems and their services, and on developing a natural capital accounting system. | Natural capital accounting |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| NL5 | Since January 2015, waste tax extended from waste deposit to waste incineration. | Taxation, waste, incineration |
| NL6 | Performing as one of the best in the EU with regard to signing and ratifying MEAs. | Transboundary nature of problems, international agreements |

CSR, corporate social responsibility; MEA, multilateral environmental agreement.

NL – overall comments

The Netherlands can be considered a front-runner in the field of the circular economy. It was one of the first countries to present a circular economy programme (2014), followed in September 2016 by a government-wide programme for a circular economy by 2050.

All policy efforts in the Netherlands related to the circular economy are captured in the action plan “From waste to resource” (VANG-programme). The VANG-programme has nine overall operational goals and 54 actions in total.

Some key activities are:

- Within the theme of product design for circularity, the aim is to diminish material losses by 50%, to 5 million tonnes, within 10 years.
- A specific programme, the Practice Research from Waste to Resource (PRO VANG), has been set up so that technical colleges can work in partnership with business students on specific technical solutions that fit into the circular economy. By 2016, it had funded 110 projects.
- The RACE-coalition (Realisation of Acceleration towards a Circular Economy) was set up to coordinate acceleration of the circular economy. This unique collaboration between government, NGOs and businesses enables multidisciplinary innovation, marrying technological progress with social and system innovation. The RACE programme consists of the following activities:
 - defining and stimulating circular design;
 - studying and stimulating high-quality reuse;

²² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_nl_en.pdf

- making an inventory of (perceived) barriers;
 - stimulating and accelerating new value chains;
 - creating a portfolio of circular project examples;
 - raising public awareness around the topic of circular economy;
 - involving young people in the transition towards a circular economy.
- A specific project has been set up to remove regulatory barriers to the circular economy and increase waste separation by households to at least 75% in 2020 (or a maximum of 100 kg of residual household waste per inhabitant per year). Finally, indicators and statistics are developed to increase insight in developments that may promote the circular economy.
 - Part of the move to a circular economy is also stimulating a shift from some products to services. Interesting examples include providing “light” instead of lamp bulbs.

Annual monetary savings of €7.3 billion from reducing demand on natural resources, the creation of 54,000 jobs and the significant reduction of environmental burdens are claimed as some of the national benefits of pursuing a circular economy.

NL1 – Green public procurement

The Netherlands is one of the front-runners in the EU with regard to GPP, and already exceeded the Commission’s recommendations for 2009/2010 public contracts. Recently, more than 40 GPP criteria were published in order to share the Dutch experience at EU level. This good practice has been recognised as being very effective for sharing information among Member States and towards GPP harmonisation in the EU. The Netherlands has achieved a high level of professionalisation of procurement processes and is concentrating responsibility for public purchasing in a small number of clusters, which is a very promising approach.

The Netherlands is also a front-runner in the field of circular procurement, where it is running a number of pilot projects. Various experiments have been set up, including reuse of ICT equipment that is discarded by the government.

The Commission would welcome a continuation of the sharing of good practice on circular procurement by the Netherlands with other countries.

Circular procurement is promoted and so are circular consumption patterns.

NL2 – Green deals

The Green Deal approach is a way for companies, other stakeholder organisations, local and regional government and interest groups to work with the central government on green growth and social issues. The aim is to remove barriers in order to help sustainable initiatives get off the ground and to accelerate this process where possible. The central government plays a key role in this area. Initiatives often work from the bottom up, in response to societal dynamics.

Some examples include:

- Zero Emissions Bus Transport. By 2025, all public transport buses must be clean. The Zero Emission Bus Transport Green Deal aims to affordably realise this transition, by including zero emissions as a requirement in all new public transport bus concessions to be defined. This will require all the supply chain parties to join forces in investing in clean innovation, such as electrical and fuel cell buses, renewable power generation, charging facilities and smart grids.
- KLM (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij/Royal Dutch Airlines) Green Deal – Flying on biofuel. KLM, through its corporate social responsibility (CSR), is striving to achieve sustainability, for example through the use of biofuels. The Green Deal signed by KLM and the central government in 2013 resulted in the first flight from Amsterdam to New York that was powered by biofuel. It was also the first step towards broader use of biokerosene, for example on flights between Amsterdam and Paris.

Since this initiative started in 2011, more than 200 Green Deals have been concluded, for example on energy, climate, water, natural resources, bio-based economy, construction and food.

The ambition of the Dutch Platform Green Resources is to replace 30% of fossil resources by 2030. To support implementation of Green Deals and other innovative approaches, the government is keen to remove laws and regulations obstructing entrepreneurs in making their production processes circular.

NL3 – Green thinking in the financial sector

An important trend is the mainstreaming of green thinking in the financial sector. Where in past years sustainability was an issue only for a limited number of front-runner and specialised green banks, sustainability – as part of the broader concept of CSR – is now becoming a more prominent issue. This increase of attention is not limited to the relation between the customer and the financial institution, but is also on the relations between financial institutions and the companies they invest in.

A good practice example is from the Dutch Pension Fund for Civil Servants (ABP, the largest Dutch pension fund), which adopted a new policy for sustainable investment in 2015. Over the next 5 years, it will assess the sustainability and responsible entrepreneurship of all 4000 companies in which it invests. Furthermore, ABP wants to reduce the CO₂ footprint of the companies it invests in by 25%, increase the assets in high-sustainability investments from €29 billion to €58 billion, increase investments in sustainable energy from €1 billion to €5 billion and increase involvement in issues such as human rights, security and education (all by 2020).

NL4 – Mapping and assessing ecosystems and their services

The Netherlands has a well-developed system of environmental accounts, in particular in the water sector, and is one of the few Member States to have experimented concretely with ecosystem accounts at a local level. The experiments are, at the moment, being scaled up to regional and national levels. NGOs, companies and governmental organisations have agreed to collaborate on transparency regarding natural and social capital.

NL5 – Green taxation (environmentally harmful subsidies)

Since January 2015, the waste tax has been extended from waste deposit to waste incineration. Work is in progress on adapting other taxes for waste. In order to further develop the theme of taxation in the context of the circular economy, this topic was promoted during the Dutch EU Presidency in 2016.

NL6 – Multilateral environmental agreements

Many environmental problems have a transboundary nature and, often, a global scope, and they can be addressed effectively only through international cooperation.

International environmental agreements concluded by the EU are binding upon the institutions of the EU and on its Member States. This requires the EU and the Member States to sign, ratify and effectively implement all relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in a timely manner.

Some Member States have not signed and/or ratified a number of MEAs, which compromises environmental implementation, including within the EU, as well as the EU's credibility in related negotiations and international meetings where supporting the participation of third countries in such agreements is an established EU policy objective.

The Netherlands one of the best performers in the EU with regard to signing and ratifying such agreements.

Poland²³

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|---|
| PL1 | Integrated assessment procedures under EIA and Habitats Directives. | EIA, habitats, procedures |
| PL2 | National network for integrating environmental issues under EU funds. | Funding |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| PL3 | Ring-fencing of taxes on pollution and resources for environmental funds. | Tax, ring-fencing for environment funds |
| PL4 | Active use of the Environmental Liability Directive. | Environmental liability |
| PL5 | Mapping and assessing urban ecosystems to protect and develop green infrastructure in cities. | Urban, ecosystem services, green infrastructure |

PL1 – Integrated assessment procedures

Integrated assessment procedures under the EIA and Habitats Directives are carried out by the Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection. Since their creation in 2008, the regional directorates have significantly improved the quality of the EIA procedure, and Poland now has one of the most comprehensive procedures in the EU-28.

PL2 – National network for integrating environmental issues under EU funds

The national network of environmental and managing authorities works as a platform for sharing experience in integrating environmental issues into operational programmes co-financed under EU funds.

PL3 – Ring-fencing of taxes on pollution and resources for environmental funds

Taxes on pollution and resources are all ring-fenced for Poland's national, regional and local environmental funds (albeit amounts have dropped from 0.19% to 0.1% of GDP).

PL4 – Active use of the Environmental Liability Directive

Poland makes impressive use of the Environmental Liability Directive to address environmental incidents, recording 506 cases between 2007 and 2013. As regards financial security (to cover remediation costs where operators cannot), evidence indicates that there is an active engagement of the insurance sector in the implementation of the directive.

PL5 – Mapping and assessing urban ecosystems

In 2015, the Ministry of the Environment launched a project on mapping and assessing urban ecosystems, which deals with strengthening the use of ecosystem services to protect and develop green infrastructure in cities.

²³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_pl_en.pdf

Portugal²⁴

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| PT1 | The creation of a “Commission for Green Tax Reform” | Green taxation |
| PT2 | National strategy “Green Growth Commitment” adopted in 2015. | Circular economy, green growth, transport, policy |
| PT3 | Improvements in the quality of the drinking water supply systems experienced over the last decade. | Water management |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| PT4 | Ecoprodutin project: to design and develop production processes that avoid the waste of raw materials and energy, providing companies with productivity gains and increased competitiveness. | Circular economy, renewable energy, eco-innovation |
| PT5 | Sustainable Cities Strategy | Sustainable cities, policy |
| PT6 | Green infrastructure projects – Green Corridor Lisbon and WWTP green roof. | Green infrastructure, urban, activity |

WWTP, wastewater treatment plant.

PT1 – The creation of a “Commission for Green Tax Reform” in 2014 and the subsequent reform of the Portuguese tax system in 2015 in order to foster environmental taxation

The Commission for Green Tax Reform, created by the Portuguese government in 2014, has been a positive step towards improving environmental taxation in Portugal. However, only some of its recommendations were taken on board by the government, which subsequently presented a legislative proposal to the Portuguese parliament, which was adopted in 2015. Initiatives include increasing landfill tax and a plastic bag tax.

PT2 – National strategy “Green Growth Commitment”

In April 2015, the Portuguese government adopted the “Green Growth Commitment” (GGC). This strategy has its origins in the “Coalition for Green Growth” launched in February 2014. With broad social support, the GGC encompasses the entire scope of components pertaining to green growth (16 sectors), underpinned by quantitative targets for 2020 and 2030, and an extensive range of measures. The GGC brings stakeholders together in encouraging the transition to a more resource-efficient and low-carbon economy. This national strategy, which was adopted with the purpose of reorienting the country’s economic development, is now focusing on the circular economy.

To focus on the circular economy, new priorities have been developed – in regard to five sectors (industry, agriculture and forestry, built environment, transport and procurement) and five strategies (dematerialisation, eco-design and lifecycle extension, resource efficiency, symbiosis, and recovery/recycling). Stakeholders were called to interact and build collaborative projects.

In relation to SUD, the GGC defines a target to increase the use of public transport and points out several paths to meet this target, such as the modernisation of public transport, including rail transport, the development of mobility plans for major large public and private employers, the promotion of less polluting vehicles (including electric vehicles and the use of biofuels) and the promotion of soft transport modes.

²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_pt_en.pdf

PT3 – Improvements in the quality of the drinking water supply systems experienced over the last decade

Improvements are noted in relation to drinking water. In addition, the quality of bathing water has improved mainly as a result of the control of faecal pollution sources existing in the areas of influence, thanks to considerable investments in the implementation of wastewater treatment infrastructure and the approval of several instruments for territorial management. In inland waters the percentage of excellent quality bathing waters rose from 69% in 2000 to 83% in 2015 and in coastal transition waters from 92% to 97%.

PT4 – Ecoprodutin project

The aim is to design and develop production processes that avoid the waste of raw materials and energy, providing companies with productivity gains and increased competitiveness. The objectives are:

- to make eco-innovation a strategic factor for the productivity and competitiveness of Portuguese companies;
- to align Portugal with the objectives of the community initiative “A Resource Efficient Europe”;
- to stimulate the business fabric to invest in eco-innovation projects, adopting more sustainable production standards;
- to make the use of natural resources and production processes more efficient;
- to promote the opening of new markets to Portuguese products and services that are distinguished by the levels of eco-innovation incorporated.

PT5 – Sustainable Cities Strategy

Oriented towards the promotion of SUD and in line with the European mainstream strategies and programmes, Portugal approved, in 2015, the “Sustainable Cities 2020” strategy, a guiding document offering the municipalities, the inter-municipal entities and other urban stakeholders a roadmap on urban sustainability for the next European funding cycle, until 2020.

PT6 – Green infrastructure projects

Examples of good operational approaches to green infrastructure in Portugal include:

- ***The green corridor in Lisbon***
The central green corridor connects the central main park, Park Eduardo VII, with the main Forest Park, which comprises more than 1000 ha. The corridor is a continuous natural structure, which consists of a coordinated set of green spaces that contribute to bringing the countryside into the city. This link between Eduardo VII Park and the 1000 ha of the Forest Park is approximately 2.5 km long and encompasses a total area of 51 ha. The majority of the tree plantings were supported by NGOs and the local community, including municipal employees. Fruit trees, native species of shrubs, urban gardens, a crop field, and biodiverse and extensive meadows constitute several important structures used throughout the corridor. Elements include bicycle lanes, bicycle-friendly streets, ecological corridors and allotment gardens. The green corridor networks and informal open spaces such as allotment gardens provide wider accessibility to urban residents, workers and tourists. Other benefits are a positive impact on health by promoting active transport (walking/cycling), environmental impact gains and additional income (and jobs) from an increased number of visitors.
- ***The green roof of the WWTP in Alcântara, Lisbon***
The Alcântara wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in Lisbon is built under a green roof of about 2 ha, allowing this solution to reduce the landscape impact of the existence of a large WWTP (concrete construction) in the middle of the city, next to a natural park, also benefiting from good thermal and acoustic insulation and the reduction of the area impermeable by rainwater, thus contributing to a reduction of floods. This roof also lowers global warming, as it absorbs the solar rays that would

reflect and warm the atmospheric air. At the same time, plants synthesise CO₂ from air, converting it into oxygen through photosynthesis.

- ***The ecological restoration and conservation of Praia da Vitória coastal wetland green infrastructure (Azores)***

This project is to restore green infrastructure on the coastal shoreline with similar ecosystem characteristics and functions to the original ones (c. 500 years ago, before settlement) through the recovery, ecological restoration and reorganisation of three key wetlands: Paul da Praia da Vitória, Paul do Belo Jardim and Paul da Pedreira, constituting a network integrating wetlands with different characteristics associated with different bird fauna types.

Romania²⁵

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|---|--|
| RO1 | Green Laboratory of Recycling aims to inform, provide education and raise the awareness in the younger generation on environmental issues. | Recycling, SME, CSR |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| RO2 | Lower Danube green corridor – a large-scale ecological corridor of up to 1 million ha of existing and new protected areas and 223,600 ha of areas proposed to be restored to natural floodplains. | Cooperation, river, habitats, protection, restoration, tourism, water purification, flood plains |
| RO3 | Environmental Volunteer Corps – 1000 registered volunteers who notify identified breaches of environmental law to the competent authorities; also raise awareness. | Volunteer, citizen engagement, awareness, enforcement |

RO1 – Green Laboratory of Recycling

A good practice example is the Green Laboratory of Recycling, which was awarded a Golden Medal in the European Corporate Social Responsibility Awards. The initiative was launched in 2012 in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Education. The project aims to inform, provide education and raise awareness in the younger generation on environmental issues. Key success factors were the partnership with local municipalities and the involvement of school teachers in the promotion of recycling.

RO2 – Lower Danube green corridor

The Lower Danube green corridor aims to coordinate national efforts and cross-border cooperation among the Lower Danube countries for the protection and restoration of wetlands and floodplain habitats. The governments of Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Moldova have committed to establishing a large-scale ecological corridor of up to 1 million ha of existing and new protected areas and 223,600 ha of areas proposed to be restored to natural floodplains. A number of protection and restoration activities have been implemented, demonstrating the multiple benefits of healthy wetlands such as wildlife habitat, fish breeding grounds, water purification and local tourism opportunities.

RO3 – Environmental Volunteer Corps

The National Environmental Guard (NEG) coordinates a network of environmental volunteers (Environmental Volunteer Corps), which consists of about 1000 registered volunteers and is an innovative tool for citizens' involvement in compliance assurance work. The main functions of the corps relate to notification of identified breaches of environmental law to the competent authorities, awareness raising, participation in compliance assurance activities carried out by the NEG and provision of specific technical expertise.

²⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_ro_en.pdf

Slovakia²⁶

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| SK1 | Territorial System of Ecological Stability of the Landscape – a system of landscape and nature protection developed in the 1970s. | Nature, policy, protection |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| SK2 | Measures on ecosystem services – assessment for selected ecosystems performed in four national parks. A national assessment planned in 2018. | Eco-system services |

SK1 – Territorial System of Ecological Stability of the Landscape

The Territorial System of Ecological Stability of the Landscape is a system of landscape and nature protection, which is a good practice developed in the late 1970s in the former Czechoslovakia. Natura 2000 is considered to be integrated into the national system of protected areas, which provides for conservation measures for Natura 2000 sites, because of a high overlap between Natura 2000 and nationally protected areas.

SK2 – Measures on ecosystem services

Activities are ongoing on mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at local/regional levels. Assessment of ecosystem services for selected ecosystems has been performed in four national parks. A national assessment of ecosystem services is planned in 2018.

²⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_sk_en.pdf

Slovenia²⁷

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|---|
| SL1 | The best-performing EU-13 Member State in terms of municipal waste recycling. | Waste management, recycling |
| SL2 | State-of-the-art regional waste management centre in Ljubljana. | Waste management, infrastructure |
| SL3 | EU wide, one of the highest contributions of revenues from environmental tax. | Green taxation, energy, transport |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| SL4 | Ljubljana – sustainable city measures – zero waste strategy, urban mobility measures, green infrastructure. | Circular economy, green infrastructure, waste, transport policy, EU funding |
| SL5 | As part of its circular economy agenda, Slovenia adopted the Framework Programme for the Transition to a Green Economy in 2015. This sets strategic guidelines for developing new green technologies, jobs and the promotion of Slovenian knowledge. | Circular economy, policy, EU funding |
| SL6 | High number of Natura 2000 sites – largest percentage of land area in EU: 38% (vs 18% EU average). | Nature and biodiversity, Natura 2000 |

SL1 – The best-performing EU-13 Member State in terms of municipal waste recycling

In recent years, Slovenia has made very good progress in waste management. According to Eurostat's data for 2014, its municipal waste recycling rates are among the highest in the EU (61%), while the landfilling rate has fallen to 39%. This is mainly a result of the country's overall efforts to change its waste management policy and move away from nearly all landfilling (the landfilling rate was 75% in 2007). Many local authorities have put in place collection systems that exceed the requirements within the national legislation.

It should be noted, however, that this recycling rate is calculated based on the amount of waste treated and for Slovenia the gap between waste generated and treated is very large (approximately 40% in 2014) on account of incomplete coverage of outputs from pre-treatment of waste. If the recycling rate were calculated based on the amount of waste generated, it would be 36%.

SL2 – State-of-the-art regional waste management centre in Ljubljana

A recent study assessing separate collection in EU capitals rated Ljubljana as the best-performing capital in the EU.

As regards the waste infrastructure, the regional waste management centre in Ljubljana (RCERO Ljubljana) is one of the most modern waste treatment facilities in Europe. It is also the biggest environmental project in Slovenia in terms of its budget (co-financed by the Cohesion Policy) and waste treatment capacity. It comprises 37 municipalities and serves as a good practice example of cooperation among municipalities.

SL3 – High contributions of revenues from environmental tax

In 2014, environmental tax revenues accounted for 10.61% of total revenues from taxes and social security contributions (EU-28 average: 6.35%). It puts Slovenia in first place in the EU. The majority of Slovenia's environmental tax revenue for 2014 came from taxation of energy, which amounted to 3.0% of GDP. Transport (excluding fuel) taxes amounted to 0.46% of GDP, and pollution and resource taxes amounted to 0.45% of the country's GDP.

²⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_si_en.pdf

Slovenia performs well in terms of the use of market-based instruments to achieve environmental policy objectives.

SL4 – Ljubljana – sustainable city measures – zero waste strategy, urban mobility measures, green infrastructure

Ljubljana won the EU Green Capital Award in 2016. It put in place a comprehensive set of policies to deliver a more sustainable city. The capital boasts a vast area of green space (542 m² per inhabitant). Public transport, pedestrian access and cycling networks (220 km of managed cycling routes) are the backbone of its urban mobility system. With its Zero Waste Strategy, Ljubljana makes a significant contribution to Europe's transition to a more circular economy.

SL5 – Transition to a Green Economy

As part of its circular economy agenda, Slovenia adopted the Framework Programme for the Transition to a Green Economy in 2015. This sets strategic guidelines for developing new green technologies, jobs and the promotion of Slovenian knowledge. Its measures cover nine areas: sustainable resource management, green growth, green jobs, green products and services, green tax reform, SUD, green public sector, green economy, and green practices in agriculture.

Slovenia also has a well-developed strategic approach to embedding a circular economy within the European Structural and Investment Funds as part of the national Smart Specialisation Strategy.

SL6 – High number of Natura 2000 sites

Slovenia designated the Natura 2000 network in 2004 upon its accession to the EU, with subsequent amendments. By early 2016, Slovenia had designated 355 Natura 2000 sites, including 324 SCIs under the Habitats Directive and 31 SPAs under the Birds Directive. Together these cover 37.9% of the land area (the largest percentage of Member State land area in the EU, where the average is 18.1%) and 10.6 km² of marine waters. Designations for some of the marine components of the network remain to be completed.

Spain²⁸

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|--|--|--|
| ES1 | High levels of experience and performance in preparing and managing projects co-financed by the LIFE programme. | Life funding, nature |
| ES2 | Spanish Network of Environmental Authorities, created in 1997, as a technical forum to foster environmental integration into the EU Cohesion Policy. | Governance, activity |
| ES3 | Sustainable urban model established in cities such as Vitoria-Gasteiz, European Green Capital in 2012. | Green infrastructure, sustainable cities, EU funding, policy |
| ES4 | The significant use of EMAS and Ecolabel licences. | EMAS and Ecolabel |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| ES5 | Higher resource productivity than EU-28. | Resource efficiency |
| ES6 | Largest terrestrial surface contribution to the Natura 2000 Network (more than 137,000 km ²). Also at the forefront of marine contribution to the Natura 2000 network (more than 86,000 km ²). | Natura 2000, policy |
| Other points of note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ministry for the Environment operates a portal on the EIA and SEA for projects and plans authorised by the central administration. • A tax on fluorinated greenhouse gases has been introduced (Law 16/2013), which was phased in gradually from 2014 to 2016. • GPP: the wide replacement of paper publications by electronic publications should be highlighted. • Spain's performance on the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive as enabling framework to actively disseminate environmental information to the public is good. Spain has indicated in the 3-yearly INSPIRE implementation report that the necessary data-sharing policies allowing access and use of spatial data by national administrations, other Member States' administrations and EU institutions without procedural obstacles are available and implemented. | | |

EMAS, Eco-management and Audit Scheme.

ES1 – The experience and performance of Spain preparing and managing projects co-financed by the LIFE programme

Spain has always been one of the countries with the highest number of proposals submitted to the LIFE programme, and Spanish projects have traditionally been successful in achieving their objectives. Since the launch of the LIFE programme in 1992, a total of 738 projects have been financed in Spain. Of these, 458 focus on environmental innovation and demonstration, 261 on nature conservation and wildlife biodiversity and nine on information and communication. As of 2014, eight Climate Action projects are also being co-funded by LIFE. These projects represent a total investment of €1.2 billion, of which €573 million has been contributed by the EU.

As examples of successful projects, LIFE projects in Spain have achieved the increase of the Spanish marine protected areas from less than 1% to more than 8% of the marine territory, improved the status of the most endangered feline worldwide, the Iberian lynx, from “critically endangered” to “endangered”, and substantially raised the awareness in Spain regarding the socio-economic advantages of Natura 2000 and of sustainable resource management.

²⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_es_en.pdf

ES2 – The Spanish Network of Environmental Authorities

Spain's public administration is highly decentralised. This is illustrated by the proportion of spending managed by the regional and local government levels (39% of total non-consolidated expenditure over 2014–2018). This is even more accentuated in the field of the environment. This highly decentralised administration creates coordination challenges, namely in various policy areas, such as the environment.

As a good practice, it is worth highlighting the experience of the Spanish Network of Environmental Authorities, which is a purely technical forum of managing and environmental authorities to foster environmental integration into the implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in Spain. This network, created in 1997, has served as inspiration for similar environmental integration networks in other Member States and even for the European Network of Managing and Environmental Authorities (ENEA-MA).

ES3 – Sustainable urban model of Vitoria-Gasteiz, European Green Capital in 2012

One outstanding example of green infrastructure development in the EU can be seen in the Basque city of Vitoria-Gasteiz. In the 1990s, the city authorities started a project to restore and recover the outlying areas of the city, creating a green belt: a group of peri-urban parks of high ecological and landscape value, strategically linked by eco-recreational corridors. The development of green infrastructure in the city has generated significant economic (reduced risks of floods, tourism), social (better air quality and general wellbeing) and environmental (biodiversity) benefits.

As well as Vitoria-Gasteiz (in the region of País Vasco) receiving the EU Green Capital Award in 2012, Mollet del Vallès (in the region of Catalunya) was one of the two cities winning the inaugural EU Green Leaf in 2015.

With the support of the ERDF during the last few programming periods, Spain developed important and outstanding initiatives in terms of SUD as well as urban regeneration across many cities and towns. In the current period, 2014–2020, Spain has also launched an ambitious and comprehensive initiative in favour of the local administrations to promote Strategies on Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development.

ES4 – EMAS and Ecolabel

Spain has 942 Eco-management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)-registered organisations. This is the second highest number of registrations (after Germany). Spain has 197 EU Ecolabel licences. It is the fourth biggest country in terms of EU Ecolabel licences.

ES5 – High resource productivity

Resource productivity in Spain has been higher than the EU average since 2009 (2015: €2.77/kg vs €2/kg). [CTC note: in the opinion of the authors, this may be because of the economic turndown, particularly in the construction sector. This has been observed in several countries.]

ES6 – Natura 2000

Spain is the Member State providing the largest terrestrial surface contribution to the Natura 2000 Network (more than 137,000 km²). Spain is also at the forefront of marine contribution to the Natura 2000 network (more than 86,000 km²).

The Spanish National Plan for Biodiversity and Natural Heritage, together with the basic legislation, is a good overall framework for the protection of biodiversity in Spain.

Sweden²⁹

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|---|
| SE1 | Environmental objectives and generational goal – “to pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved, without increasing environmental and health problems beyond Sweden’s borders.” Associated council and implementation measures. | Policy and implementation, environmental quality objectives |
| SE2 | Strategy for biodiversity and ecosystem services – most important services identified. Regional action plans for green infrastructure. | Biodiversity, ecosystem services |
| SE3 | Very good performance in waste recycling. Government has decided to use economic instruments through taxation to stimulate repair and reuse. | Waste, recycling, circular economy, textiles, repair, tax |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| SE4 | Taxation measures – a green tax shift reform programme to reallocate taxes from labour to environmentally harmful activities. | Tax, vehicles, waste, pesticides |
| SE5 | Green investment fund for early stage capital to businesses in the climate and energy technologies and service sectors. | Fiscal |
| SE6 | GPP. One interesting tool is an online wizard, which guides contracting authorities through the different environmental criteria available for a number of products. | GPP |
| SE7 | Land purchase and compensation to protect forests and biodiversity. | Biodiversity |
| SE8 | Good practice in establishing GES criteria for marine waters. | Marine |
| SE9 | Sustainable transport measures in Swedish cities. | Urban, transport |
| SE10 | Access to green urban areas – a “Green Target” planning tool. | Policy, urban, green infrastructure, planning tool |
| SE11 | Environmental Technology Strategy – to increase commercialisation of innovative environmental technology, firm growth and exports. | Fiscal, environmental technology |

GES, Good Environmental Status.

SE1 – The Environmental Objectives and Council, and generational goal for environmental problem solving

The generational goal adopted by the Swedish parliament is “to pass on to the next generation a society in which the major environmental problems have been solved, without increasing environmental and health problems beyond Sweden’s borders”.

To meet the goal, national environmental quality objectives (EQOs) have been formulated for 16 areas related to climate, air quality, acidification, forest, wetlands, oceans and coasts,

²⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_se_en.pdf

lakes, mountains, urban environment, agriculture, toxic substances, radiation, zero eutrophication, ozone, groundwater and biodiversity.

An All-Party Committee on Environmental Objectives has been set up to secure political consensus on environmental issues. Its role is to advise the government on how the generational goal and the EQOs can be achieved in a cost-effective way. It is made up of members of parliament, advisers and experts from NGOs and government ministries, and runs to the end of 2020.

In 2015, the government established the Environmental Objectives Council, a platform for heads of agencies that are strategically important for achieving EQOs, to strengthen implementation.

There is a political ambition that, by focusing on sustainable growth and eco-innovation at home, Sweden will be able to contribute to creating new jobs and reducing the environmental burden in other countries. The challenge to implement a green structural change affects all industry sectors. This is expressed in a recent report from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which is already being used for new policy initiatives. This indicates that all industries and sectors will need to shift to a more environmentally driven business model.

SE2 – The strategy for biodiversity and ecosystem services

Adopted in 2014, the strategy has its own objectives as well as the international targets adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity and objectives from the EU's biodiversity strategy.

Sweden has produced a preliminary report on its most important ecosystem services. These assessments will be incorporated in the regional action plans for green infrastructure. There are ongoing projects on capacity-building and awareness-raising about the value of ecosystem services, and a research programme "The value of ecosystems and their services". Statistics Sweden is to develop methods that include the value of ecosystem services in environmental accounting. These aim to contribute to the following objective: "by 2018, the importance of biodiversity and the value of ecosystem services are to be generally known and integrated into economic positions, political considerations and other decisions in society where it is relevant and reasonable to do so". The Swedish EPA, together with other government agencies, reviewed about 100 different relevant existing policy instruments in preparing the national strategy for building a green infrastructure. There is a need to revise some instruments, as well as to create new ones. Policy instruments that regulate the current use of land and water bodies need to be strengthened to achieve sustainable use.

SE3 – Very good performance in waste recycling

Sweden performs well in waste recycling: it reached the EU 2020 target of 50% in 2014, which was well ahead of the EU average (43%). The Swedish waste management plan for 2012–2017 includes measures to promote material recycling. Sweden has two main focus areas: one is economic instruments and incineration and the other is promoting reuse to prevent waste.

The Swedish EPA has actions on better collection and treatment of waste textiles, on waste statistics and traceability, and on revising the waste management plan and the prevention programme. The Swedish government has decided to use economic instruments through taxation to stimulate repair and reuse.

SE4 – Taxation measures

From 2001 to 2006, a green tax shift reform programme was undertaken to reallocate taxes from labour to environmentally harmful activities. The main change as regards environmental taxes was that the carbon tax was increased, but other taxes were adjusted too, including those for vehicles, waste and pesticides. Despite the reform programme, revenues from environmentally related taxes have not kept pace with increases in GDP. Partly, this has been because of the intended behavioural impacts of taxes and an increased substitution to biofuels in the transport sector. Furthermore, the relative tax advantage for diesel vehicles has eroded revenues from the more highly taxed petrol vehicles as the vehicle stock

changed. From 2017, an additional annual appreciation rule for taxes on petrol and diesel has been introduced.

SE5 – Green investment and funding

Sweden has established a green investment fund in the programmes for EU regional funds 2014–2020, with the purpose of strengthening the supply of early stage capital funding to businesses in the climate and energy technologies and service sectors. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth is starting up this green fund. The total budget is €130 million.

The government also established a new mechanism in 2016 to finance innovation and sustainable growth.

SE6 – Green public procurement

Sweden is noted as one of the front-runners of GPP. The government established an agency for public procurement in 2015, to give support through consultation, practical tools and methods for public procurement in general. There is a focus on sustainable, innovative and efficient procurement. GPP criteria are developed at the national level for construction and real estate, cleaning and chemicals, vehicles and transportation, office and textiles, electricity and lighting, food, healthcare, services, and toxic-free childcare. Via an online wizard, contracting authorities are guided through the different environmental criteria available for a number of products, with three levels of criteria: basic, advanced and front-runner.

SE7 – Land purchase and compensation to protect forests and biodiversity

Sweden has substantially invested in land purchase and compensation payments over the years to protect its forests (including use of LIFE funding), mainly in high-latitude and high-altitude areas, albeit a need to further increase protection of the various forest habitats has been noted. The area covered by old forest and protected forest is increasing. The latest data for Sweden (2015) show that the rate of biodiversity loss has neither increased nor decreased over the past 15 years. Sweden has good expertise on restoration of habitats, and various restoration activities show good results, e.g. on grasslands, bogs and sand dunes.

SE8 – Establishing Good Environmental Status criteria for marine waters

In implementing the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Sweden has incorporated its Good Environmental Status (GES) definition into legislation, which is considered good practice. Sweden's GESs are set in a comprehensive manner, covering all descriptors, and taking into account existing EU law and other standards from the relevant Regional Sea Conventions. However, despite a comprehensive definition for GES, it can regularly be difficult to measure.

SE9 – Sustainable transport measures in Swedish cities

Stockholm introduced measures to make local transport more sustainable, including promotion of bicycle lanes and public transport, use of alternative fuels and road pricing. There is a congestion tax on Swedish-registered vehicles driving in/out of the inner-city zone on weekdays.

Stockholm has also adopted a planning strategy aimed at building the city inwards, which includes reusing already-developed land, locating new development areas in connection with good access to public transport, redeveloping industrial areas into urban areas of mixed use, and establishing focal points in city suburbs.

The Traffic Environment Programme for Malmö aims to make the city quieter, more efficient and cleaner, and to reduce impacts on citizens' health through an increase in cycling, walking and public transport, and a decrease in the use of fossil fuels. Through GPP, all new vehicles purchased by the city of Malmö represent some of the best environmental models available. As the city replaces older vehicles, it aims to build a fleet comprising 100% clean vehicles (75% were biogas/hydrogen/plug-in electric/hybrid in 2015). Of Malmö city buses, 50% run on a mixture of biogas, including from the sewage plant.

Umeå is piloting the use of fast-charged electric buses with hybrid back-up.

SE10 – Swedish cities – access to green urban areas

Umeå's "Green Target" planning tool is to ensure the implementation of the city's objective that all citizens have access to green urban areas such as playgrounds, small parks, lawns, etc. within 250 m of their homes. In 2015, 89% of inner city citizens were within 300 m of green urban areas larger than 5000 m².

SE11 – Environmental Technology Strategy

From 2011 to 2014, the government implemented a €43 million Environmental Technology Strategy with goals to increase commercialisation of innovative environmental technology, higher firm growth and increased exports. It was carried out by 10 publicly funded agencies. Firms and research institutes received 28% of the resources directly. The rest was for authorities for cooperation projects, information, education and support with international cooperation. The strategy did not focus on any specific area. The support that firms received has also been small relative to the factors known to affect such firms' growth potential.

The Swedish government has an export strategy in which environmental technology is an important component. The government has also appointed a National Innovation Council, which focuses on environmental and climate technology as one of three priorities. Five innovation partnership programmes have started, for example one on smart cities and one on circular bio-based economy.

Swedishcleantech.se aims to contribute to the development, commercialisation and export of Swedish environmental technology. It is run by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth in cooperation with the authorities, industry and stakeholder associations, and regional environmental technology actors.

United Kingdom³⁰

| Points of Excellence noted in EIR report | | Key themes/categories |
|---|--|--|
| UK1 | GIB to deliver supports to offshore wind, onshore renewables and energy efficiency. | Fiscal, green investment |
| UK2 | National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline gives an overall picture of planned investment in infrastructure to 2020 and beyond. | Policy, investment, infrastructure |
| UK3 | Considered a front-runner in GPP. Various tools and measures under way. | GPP |
| UK4 | Natural capital accounting measures including published natural capital accounts. | Natural capital accounts, ecosystem services |
| Other favourable points in the report | | |
| UK5 | Resource-efficiency programmes for businesses. | Resource efficiency, business |
| UK6 | Nature management and improvement measures – Nature Improvement Areas and Local Nature Partnerships. | Nature, local approach, partnerships, fiscal |
| UK7 | Tool for characterising farm pollution and quantifying effects of control options. | Agriculture, pollution, tools |
| UK8 | Compliance tools and guidance on penalties. | Compliance tools, penalties guidance |

GIB, Green Investment Bank.

UK1 – Green Investment Bank

A specialised bank, the Green Investment Bank (GIB), was set up by the government to provide support to offshore wind, onshore renewables and energy efficiency. The GIB is in charge of attracting private investment and demonstrating that such investment makes commercial sense. To secure funding, projects must meet the GIB's investment and sustainability criteria. CTC note: the UK government agreed to sell the GIB to a private consortium in April 2017.

UK2 – National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline

The National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline gives an overall picture of planned investment in infrastructure to 2020 and beyond, and is updated regularly. It covers communications, energy, flood defences, science and research, transport, waste and water. Planned investments include the project Smart Meters, two energy-efficiency funds and one renewable energy equity fund. Smart Meters involves a rollout of such meters for electricity and gas.

UK3 – Green public procurement

The Greening Government Commitments apply to central government and all agencies. A local government Sustainable Procurement Strategy and strategies for the devolved governments also exist. Currently, criteria are set for 12 major products groups: construction, building products, cleaning products, electrical goods, food and catering, furniture, horticulture, office ICT, paper, textiles, transport, and water-using products. In total, they cover around 60 products, and include criteria set at two levels: “mandatory minimum” and “voluntary best practice”. The GPP targets are embedded in departmental and centralised procurement contracts through Government Buying Standards. Where centralised contracts are developed, they are mandatory. Practical training is being developed.

³⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/pdf/report_uk_en.pdf

The UK is considered a front-runner in GPP; according to a 2010 EU study, 40–50% of UK authorities included GPP requirements in 50–100% of their contracts, which was one of the highest values at the time.

UK4 – Natural capital accounting measures

The UK National Ecosystem Assessment was completed in 2012. A follow-on project in 2014 aimed to provide new information on tools required to help decision-makers across all sectors understand the wider value of ecosystem services. The Ecosystems Knowledge Network provides advice to businesses, local government agencies and land valuation professionals. A national Natural Capital Accounting 2020 Roadmap has been developed. The Statistics Office has published natural capital accounts, including on land cover, woodlands and fresh water. In 2011, Scotland established a natural capital asset index to measure changes in the stock of natural capital, which became one of the indicators used in the government's National Performance Framework.

UK5 – Resource-efficiency programmes for businesses

ENWORKS and the Resource Efficient Scotland Programme both provide free audits and advice on resource efficiency to a range of businesses.

UK6 – Nature management and improvement measures

Following a national competition, in 2012, £7.5 million funding was awarded to 12 new Nature Improvement Areas in England, generating significant additional investment from other sources.

Forty-eight Local Nature Partnerships were established around England to provide a local approach to manage the natural environment in a strategic and integrated way.

UK7 – Tool for characterising farm pollution and quantifying effects of control options

The UK developed an Excel-based tool, FARM Scale Optimisation of Pollutant Emission Reductions (FARMSCOPER), to characterise diffuse agricultural pollutant emissions from representative farm types and quantify the expected impacts of control options on those losses to the environment.

UK8 – Compliance tools and guidance on penalties

The NetRegs compliance assistance tool was created in partnership between the Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (NIEA) and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) to provide free environmental guidance to SMEs.

SEPA's Compliance Spectrum Model has been developed for analysis of causes of non-compliance to enable proper selection of regulatory interventions to tackle different types of non-compliant behaviour.

The UK Sentencing Council has developed guidance on the penalties for environmental crimes to make the enforcement system more effective and proportionate.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| CNTE | National Ecological Transition Council |
| CSR | Corporate social responsibility |
| EAFRD | European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development |
| EEE | Electrical and electronic equipment |
| EFSI | European Fund for Strategic Investments |
| EIA | Environmental impact assessment |
| EIR | Environmental Implementation Review |
| EMAS | Eco-management and Audit Scheme |
| EMS | Environmental management system |
| EPA | Environmental Protection Agency |
| EPR | Extended producer responsibility |
| EQO | Environmental quality objective |
| ERDF | European Regional Development Fund |
| EU | European Union |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |
| GES | Good Environmental Status |
| GGC | Green Growth Commitment |
| GIB | Green Investment Bank |
| GIS | Geographic information system |
| GPP | Green public procurement |
| ICT | Information and communication technology |
| KLM | Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij/Royal Dutch Airlines |
| MEA | Multilateral environmental agreement |
| MUDP | Danish Eco-Innovation Programme |
| NEG | National Environmental Guard |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| PET | Polyethylene terephthalate |
| PIA | Investment for the Future Programme |
| PV | Photovoltaic |
| R&D | Research and development |
| RACE | Realisation of Acceleration towards a Circular Economy |
| RDI | Researcher development innovation |
| RE | Resource efficiency |
| SAC | Special Area of Conservation |
| SCI | Site of Community Importance |
| SEA | Strategic Environmental Assessment |
| SEPA | Scottish Environmental Protection Agency |
| SME | Small and medium-sized enterprise |
| SPA | Special Protection Area |
| SPP | Sustainable public procurement |
| SUD | Sustainable urban development |
| TO | Type of operation |
| WEEE | Waste electrical and electronic equipment |
| WWTP | Wastewater treatment plant |

ⁱ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/country-reports/index_en.htm

AN GHNÍOMHAIREACHT UM CHAOMHNÚ COMHSHAOIL

Tá an Gníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil (GCC) freagrach as an gcomhshaoil a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú mar shócmhainn luachmhar do mhuintir na hÉireann. Táimid tiomanta do dhaoine agus don chomhshaoil a chosaint ó éifeachtaí díobhálacha na radaíochta agus an truaillithe.

Is féidir obair na Gníomhaireachta a roinnt ina trí phríomhréimse:

Rialú: Déanaimid córais éifeachtacha rialaithe agus comhlionta comhshaoil a chur i bhfeidhm chun torthaí maithe comhshaoil a sholáthar agus chun díriú orthu siúd nach gcloíonn leis na córais sin.

Eolas: Soláthraimid sonraí, faisnéis agus measúnú comhshaoil atá ar ardchaighdeán, spríodhíre agus tráthúil chun bonn eolais a chur faoin gcinnteoireacht ar gach leibhéal.

Tacaíocht: Bimid ag saothrú i gcomhar le grúpaí eile chun tacú le comhshaoil atá glan, táirgiúil agus cosanta go maith, agus le hiompar a chuirfidh le comhshaoil inbhuanaithe.

Ár bhFreagrachtaí

Ceadúnú

Déanaimid na gníomhaíochtaí seo a leanas a rialú ionas nach ndéanann siad dochar do shláinte an phobail ná don chomhshaoil:

- saoráidí dramhaíola (*m.sh. láithreáin líonta talún, loisceoirí, stáisiúin aistriúcháin dramhaíola*);
- gníomhaíochtaí tionsclaíoch ar scála mór (*m.sh. déantúsaíocht cógaisíochta, déantúsaíocht stroighne, stáisiúin chumhachta*);
- an diantalmhaíocht (*m.sh. muca, éanlaith*);
- úsáid shrianta agus scaoileadh rialaithe Orgánach Géinmhodhnaithe (*OGM*);
- foinsí radaíochta ianúcháin (*m.sh. trealamh x-gha agus radaiteiripe, foinsí tionsclaíochta*);
- áiseanna móra stórála peitрил;
- scardadh dramhuisece;
- gníomhaíochtaí dumpála ar farraige.

Forfheidhmiú Náisiúnta i leith Cúrsaí Comhshaoil

- Clár náisiúnta iniúchtaí agus cigireachtaí a dhéanamh gach bliain ar shaoráidí a bhfuil ceadúnas ón nGníomhaireacht acu.
- Maoirseacht a dhéanamh ar fhreagrachtaí cosanta comhshaoil na n-údarás áitiúil.
- Caighdeán an uisce óil, arna sholáthar ag soláthraithe uisce phoiblí, a mhaoirsiú.
- Obair le húdaráis áitiúla agus le gníomhaireachtaí eile chun dul i ngleic le coireanna comhshaoil trí chomhordú a dhéanamh ar líonra forfheidhmiúcháin náisiúnta, trí dhírú ar chiontóirí, agus trí mhaoirsiú a dhéanamh ar leasúchán.
- Cur i bhfeidhm rialachán ar nós na Rialachán um Dhrámhthrealamh Leictreach agus Leictreonach (DTLL), um Shrian ar Shubstaintí Guaiseacha agus na Rialachán um rialú ar shubstaintí a idíonn an ciseal ózóin.
- An dlí a chur orthu siúd a bhriseann dlí an chomhshaoil agus a dhéanann dochar don chomhshaoil.

Bainistíocht Uisce

- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht aibhneacha, lochanna, uisce idirchriosacha agus cósta na hÉireann, agus screamhuisecí; leibhéal uisce agus sruthanna aibhneacha a thomhas.
- Comhordú náisiúnta agus maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar an gCreat-Treoir Uisce.
- Monatóireacht agus tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar Cháilíocht an Uisce Snámha.

Monatóireacht, Anailís agus Tuairisciú ar an gComhshaoil

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar cháilíocht an aeir agus Treoir an AE maidir le hAer Glan don Eoraip (CAFÉ) a chur chun feidhme.
- Tuairisciú neamhspleách le cabhrú le cinnteoireacht an rialtais náisiúnta agus na n-údarás áitiúil (*m.sh. tuairisciú tréimhsiúil ar staid Chomhshaoil na hÉireann agus Tuarascálacha ar Tháscairí*).

Rialú Astaíochtaí na nGás Ceaptha Teasa in Éirinn

- Fardail agus réamh-mheastacháin na hÉireann maidir le gáis ceaptha teasa a ullmhú.
- An Treoir maidir le Trádáil Astaíochtaí a chur chun feidhme i gcomhair breis agus 100 de na táirgeoirí dé-ocsaíde carbóin is mó in Éirinn.

Taighde agus Forbairt Comhshaoil

- Taighde comhshaoil a chistiú chun brúnna a shainiú, bonn eolais a chur faoi bheartais, agus réitigh a sholáthar i réimsí na haeraíde, an uisce agus na hinbhuanaitheachta.

Measúnacht Straitéiseach Timpeallachta

- Measúnacht a dhéanamh ar thionchar pleananna agus clár beartaithe ar an gcomhshaoil in Éirinn (*m.sh. mórfheananna forbartha*).

Cosaint Raideolaíoch

- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar leibhéal radaíochta, measúnacht a dhéanamh ar nochtadh mhuintir na hÉireann don radaíocht ianúcháin.
- Cabhrú le pleananna náisiúnta a fhorbairt le haghaidh éigeandálaí ag eascairt as tairmí núicléacha.
- Monatóireacht a dhéanamh ar fhorbairtí thar lear a bhaineann le saoráidí núicléacha agus leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíochta.
- Sainseirbhísí cosanta ar an radaíocht a sholáthar, nó maoirsiú a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na seirbhísí sin.

Treoir, Faisnéis Inrochtana agus Oideachas

- Comhairle agus treoir a chur ar fáil d'earnáil na tionsclaíochta agus don phobal maidir le hábhair a bhaineann le caomhnú an chomhshaoil agus leis an gcosaint raideolaíoch.
- Faisnéis thráthúil ar an gcomhshaoil ar a bhfuil fáil éasca a chur ar fáil chun rannpháirtíocht an phobail a spreagadh sa chinnteoireacht i ndáil leis an gcomhshaoil (*m.sh. Timpeall an Tí, léarscáileanna radóin*).
- Comhairle a chur ar fáil don Rialtas maidir le hábhair a bhaineann leis an tsábháilteacht raideolaíoch agus le cúrsaí práinnfhreagartha.
- Plean Náisiúnta Bainistíochta Dramhaíola Guaisí a fhorbairt chun dramhaíl ghuaiseach a chosaint agus a bhainistiú.

Múscailt Feasachta agus Athrú Iompraíochta

- Feasacht chomhshaoil níos fearr a ghiniúint agus dul i bhfeidhm ar athrú iompraíochta dearfach trí thacú le gnóthais, le pobail agus le teaghlaigh a bheith níos éifeachtúla ar acmhainní.
- Tástáil le haghaidh radóin a chur chun cinn i dtithe agus in ionaid oibre, agus gníomhartha leasúcháin a spreagadh nuair is gá.

Bainistíocht agus struchtúr na Gníomhaireachta um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

Tá an gníomhaíocht á bainistiú ag Bord Iáinimseartha, ar a bhfuil Ard-Stiúrthóir agus cúigear Stiúrthóirí. Déantar an obair ar fud cúig cinn d'Oifigí:

- An Oifig um Inmharthanacht Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Forfheidhmithe i leith cúrsaí Comhshaoil
- An Oifig um Fianaise is Measúnú
- Oifig um Chosaint Radaíochta agus Monatóireachta Comhshaoil
- An Oifig Cumarsáide agus Seirbhísí Corparáideacha

Tá Coiste Comhairleach ag an nGníomhaireacht le cabhrú léi. Tá dáréag comhaltáí air agus tagann siad le chéile go rialta le plé a dhéanamh ar ábhair inné agus le comhairle a chur ar an mBord.

BEST PRACTICES

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