



Sustainable Europe in 2030 – Montenegro

From a concept that was not so clear to many to the widely accepted concept, sustainable development became an answer to wide specter of unsustainable development trends. Adoption of UN Agenda 2030 and the discussion it raised as well as the process of translating Agenda on the national level that was triggered proved that this is a way forward. Finding ways to implement Agenda on the national and regional level is bringing countries closer.

The previous period was marked by significant progress of Montenegro through political commitment to European integration processes as well as the integration of the UN Agenda 2030 into national strategic framework. It is evident that a visible progress has been made in the pre-accession process to the European Union, but also considering the fact that Montenegro is among the first countries in the world that have defined their national policies in response to the challenges of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development through the National Strategy for Sustainable Development until 2030 (NSSD) that Government has adopted in July 2016.

Guided by the commitment to establish an ecological state, Montenegro is one of the first Southeast European countries to set up a strategic and institutional framework for sustainable development in accordance with the standards of the developed countries of the European Union. After the stabilization of political context and the opening of a European perspective for the countries of Southeast Europe, Montenegro has made significant progress in building a national policy for sustainable development and establishing an accompanying institutional framework. After successful completion of the Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the National Council for Sustainable Development was established as an advisory body of the Government of Montenegro aiming to strengthening the capacity for implementation of the sustainable development policy. The National Council for Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, which is the full name of this body according to the 2015 reform, has grown over the period of time into important and influential advisory body. The Council has been chaired by the President of Montenegro since the reform in 2013. Before 2013 it was chaired by the Prime Minister. The Council has 26 members, representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups (ministries, academia, business, NGOs and independent experts) who are working closely within four working groups.

Along with the start of the realization of programs and projects of sustainable development, National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro with a five-year action plan for the period 2007-2012, which defined measures for achieving the goals of sustainable development in the 24 priority areas has been adopted by the Government in 2007. Results of the implementation of this Strategy represented a basis for development of NSSD adopted last year.

NSSD establishes a comprehensive framework for a national response to the challenges that lie on the road to the sustainable development of Montenegrin society by 2030, taking into account the results of the implementation of the previous NSSD, requirements in the process of EU integration of Montenegro as well as UN Agenda 2030.

NSSD is horizontal and long-term development strategy of Montenegro, which is not only related to the environment and economy, but also to irreplaceable human resources and valuable social capital, which should enable prosperous development. Thus positioned, this strategy provides an answer to a range of problems: established unsustainable development trends; incompatible

sectoral policies, both with each other and with the NSSD and environmental policy; the mismatch of the institutional framework with the needs of sustainable development policy and the requirements of good governance; mismatch of the public finance system with the need for horizontal and vertical positioning of the priorities for sustainable development in national strategic policies, plans and programs; mismatch of real actions with expressed political support and official commitments on the sustainable development of Montenegro.

The NSSD structure is designed to consider four fields: human resources (a review of the situation in the following areas: demographic resources, health, education and skills; social resources in which issues such as social capital, the relation of key actors to sustainability of development, value system, trust in institutions and the rule of law, organizational culture, employability and social cohesion, balanced regional development, are addressed; cultural development and integral protection and management of cultural heritage and landscape; natural resources in which the state of resources is given for the following areas: biodiversity, forests, ecosystem services, water, air, land, environment and health, state of non-renewable resources - space, metals and non-metals, and the influence of natural and anthropogenic hazards; economic resources within which macroeconomic trends and sustainable management of development and the state of the sector are of key importance for the sustainable development of the society.

The NSSD also provides an overview of key unsustainable development trends and the need for sustainable development by 2030 within all four groups of resources (human, social, natural and economic), as well as with the institutional framework for sustainable development management and financing for sustainable development. The NSSD also deals with the ways of financing for sustainable development by elaborating in detail the basic principles of financing for sustainable development and looking at possible sources of funding in relation to the Adis Abebe Action Plan, which are specifically identified: domestic public resources, domestic and international private business and finance, international Development cooperation, international trade as a development engine, public debt management and intergenerational balance, science, technology, innovation and capacity development.

The NSSD Action Plan by 2030 represents a set of measures and sub-measures which are grouped within the strategic goals of sustainable development. Strategic goals and measures, with detailed elaboration through sub-targets and targeted outcomes, are defined as responses that Montenegrin society will provide in the time horizon by 2030 in order to overcome the problems, weaknesses and shortcomings of the existing state of development and management system. At the same time, the priority themes, strategic goals, measures and sub-sectors of sustainable development until 2030 will be Montenegro's response to the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030.

- **Biggest challenges for implementing a Sustainable Europe by 2030**

To see change in the world we need to constantly search ways to develop ourselves and the world around us. Development itself is not enough for the growth, and for achieving set goals. In order to make a difference development needs to be consistent and consistency requires sustainability. For that reason sustainable development lies at the core of European values.

In order to reach the goals and achieve SDGs, apart from translating them into our national frameworks, the main challenges are the *financing for sustainable development*, *lack of capacities for sustainable development*, *application and use of science-policy interface* which are key factors for concrete, in-practice implementation of the Agenda in all of our countries.

As a response to the key challenges we are looking for answers in the application of sustainable consumption and production concepts, efficiency of resources, but most importantly exchange of best practices, learning about new technologies and its implementation. In order to achieve the plan it is necessary to provide quality education and lifelong learning for everyone.

Financing for sustainable development

Sustainability has become an overarching objective for all of us. The value of the resources depends on their volume and using them in a smart way is how we can insure sustainability.

Financing is one of main challenges for realization of the projects. Resources are limited and sustainable development means using finance in the projects that are going to make the difference, and increase the value of the used resources. Shaping the world around us starts with shared goals, creating road maps and implementation strategies. In order to insure that resources were targeted for the right kind of projects there needs to be regular monitoring and evaluation. One of the SDGs is directly related to the solution of this challenge. SDG 17 "Partnerships for goals" has power to support all other 16 goals. Through partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society project can be carried out in the best possible way. Partnership can also help the access to different financing sources since it is necessary to ensure stable financing from national (state budget, budgets of local self-governments) and international sources. New NSSD has analyzed all sources which are relevant to support financing for SD and with partnerships we are more than one step closer to achieving SDGs.

Efficiency of resources means produce more with smaller inputs and modify patterns of consumption patterns to limit the risks associated with scarcity of resources and pollution. To improve resource efficiency the sectors of energy, construction, agriculture, as well as the service sector (tourism) are crucial. Application of sustainable production patterns and consumption is one of the essential prerequisites for achieving resource efficiency. Sustainable production and consumption implies the use of services and products works meeting basic needs, enabling while improving the quality of life and minimizing the use natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants throughout the whole life cycle so as not to endanger the availability of resources for future generations.

Capacities building for sustainable development

Ideas change the world, but they can only make a difference with right kind of action. When it comes to the action you need people, and today's challenge is how to find right people with right skills. Skills can be learned if there is a will for hard work. This challenge is connected, once again, with SDG no. 17 Partnerships for goals. The goal itself is looking for the ways to improve capacities building with "Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. "

Capacity building is defined as process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities' need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world. In this fast-changing world we need to stay on the right track in pursuing the SDGs. Staying on the right track depends upon right people being a part of the projects and passing their knowledge on to the people with desire to work. With the help of the experts to the developing countries EU is giving the needed advice to sustainable development strategies. This way good case practices are shared, as well as the bad ones so no time is spent on doing the things the wrong way. Capacity building is the EEAC annual conference itself. Connecting young people, the future generations and creators of the tomorrow's world, giving them opportunity to share knowledge, ideas, and most importantly dreams of the better tomorrow.

Human capacity building is needed for finding out the required answers for overcoming the challenges. Informal education as much as formal is a path for realization of set goals. Our ever changing world demands from us constant improvement of ourselves by learning, creating, keeping in touch with its changes. Looking at the goals and always seeing achievement of all of them is connected with SDG 4 Quality Education and SDG 17 Partnerships for goals. These two goals represent core of the solution. With right education there is no place for ignorance, only for improvement, creativity, new ideas, new solution. Learning, noticing how things work and with knowledge how they can work better is what will get us on the best path to achieve set goals. Partnership for goals is there to support quality education, giving the right opportunities to the right people. Right people are those who have desire, passion, and willingness to work and in their hearts truly feel they want and will make a change in the world. Quality education is there to also improve partnership for goals, since we need for this to continue, to be sustainable. These two goals are there to improve each other, and by doing so they can improve and realize other goals.

Application and use of science-policy interface

Enriching decision-making process would improve the vision of the road ahead of them of both the EU and all other countries. For centuries science has been intercepting the future better than anyone else. Communication between the scientific and policy-making communities needs to be improved in order to develop a more suitable contribution to decision-making process for the sustainable development. Improved communication between these communities is crucial for new ideas, insights, and solutions. Without them we cannot develop, we can only regress. Goal of education is development of students as independent, versatile personalities capable of critical thinking, researching and acquiring functional knowledge and skills that will enable them to actively engage in society. Consequently, the goal of education can be defined as creating a knowledge-based society, and thus increasing the overall economic capacity of the state. Investing time in education is the most profitable investment, but we must remember that result sometimes cannot be seen in short time period.

We, as human beings, learn from the first day of our lives from other people, throughout interaction with others. Sharing knowledge is the key for development, and challenges that we are facing can be less hard if there is a system which help us with this. Creating online databases of best case examples for sustainable development projects contributing the achievement of SDGs, which is organized in a user-friendly way is something that can help governments, NGOs, companies, basically everyone who wants contribute to the SDGs. Platform should serve for sharing knowledge, ideas and opportunities such as new funding for projects, finding partners, capacity building possibilities or job posting. Ideas have their huge value, and if people share ideas they can get advice on how to improve them, since we all have different points of view, different experiences and all of it combined can have greater impact than we could have ever imagine. Creating a channel for ideas, where it would be possible for people to share them and get opinions of others would contribute to better projects.

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