An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

IDWG Meeting
21 November 2023 - Online

Attendees

- DECC – Niall McLoughlin, Fiona McManus, Anna Marie Gaines, Brenda Durkan
- D/Taoiseach – Luke Carroll
- DFA – Cian Kearns | Sarah K FitzGerald
- D/Finance – Pat Mulhall
- D/Justice – Sharon O'Brien
- D/Education – Daniel O'Gorman
- D/Transport – Breda Farrell
- D/Health – Colin O'Hehir
- DETE – Federica DeBlasio | Maurice Dagg
- DFHERIS – John Rafferty | Meabh Hennelly
- DCEDIY – Anthony Redmond
- CSO – Mary Smyth | Patrick Kelleher
- DHLGH – Orla Joyce
- DSP – Paul Norris
- DRCD – Aisling Penrose
- DTCAGSM – Tadhg O'Shea

1. Welcome to New and Existing Members

Fiona noted that there were new members to the IDWG from Justice, DFHERIS and Education, and welcomed these new members and the rest of the group.

2. Ireland's Presentation of the VNR to the HLPF.

Fiona gave an update on the HLPF – and key points from the Minister's presentation, reiterating Ireland's support of Agenda 2030, and the areas that we need to improve on such as housing, services for disabilities, land use and emissions.

The question of data relating to targets was raised, specifically in relation to the 80% target being met by Ireland. Mary Smyth from the CSO clarified that our data relates to the official UN indicators hence Ireland's high performance and that new data will be coming out next month using EU SDG indicators.

Patrick Mulhall wished to highlight to the new people that the Geo Hive is a rich resource in relation to SDG data with a huge amount of infographics/statistics contained in it and this information could be drawn upon for new IDWG members in setting up a departmental committee.

3. Feedback from SDG National Stakeholder Fora (NSF)

Three national stakeholder fora have now taken place; in January, April and November 2023.
The January stakeholder forum focused on Leaving No One Behind.
The April stakeholder forum focused on the Voluntary National Review.
The November stakeholder forum focused on Biodiversity and Community, with a national and international focus.

The NSF reports are available on the www.gov.ie/sdgs website.

A key development is the piece which arose from the January Forum, where there was a new definition of Leaving No One Behind, as follows:-

"An inclusive and empathetic society that empowers everyone to engage with and be represented in decision-making, accelerating dignity and enabling equal opportunities and equitable outcomes."

All IDWG members should bear this definition in mind in approaches to their work/strategies/plans.

At the November Forum points for discussion were raised on localisation, funding for local voluntary groups, national relevant statistics and the sense of community belonging to the SDGs.

4. National Stakeholder Forum Committee

A new forum committee will shortly be elected and will be in situ to the end of 2024.

5. OECD Project on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

This is a key piece of work that DECC will be undertaking, and Policy Coherence needs to be engrained in many Government instruments, such as Regulatory Impact Assessments, Memoranda to Government and Budgetary Cycles.

DECC is shortly having an inaugural meeting of this project with the OECD. Two other countries will be involved, and there will be three expected outputs, a light touch scan, a national action plan for policy coherence which will highlight strengths and areas to be worked on and living labs – where peer learning will happen.

6. EnvEcon Report on Integrating the SDGs into the Regulatory Impact Assessment Process

The first of three pieces of research, the report by EnvEcon on integrating the SDGs into the Regulatory Impact Assessment Process has been received. We will review recommendations and follow up with departments on this.

The final two reports should be received in December.

7. Update on actions and measures from Ireland's current National Implementation Plan (N.I.P.).

The NIP commits to give updates on actions and measures in the N.I.P.

Action 9c details the intention to publish an annual update on all actions and measures due for delivery within the N.I.P.

Action 10 relates to SDG implementation progress at target level (policy map).

The Hive site has been populated with two spreadsheets. The first relates to actions in the NIP and all IDWG members are asked to review this document and provide an update on actions to be completed/update on what is being done to speed up implementation, if an action is delayed.

The second spreadsheet relates to the policy map. This must be completed by providing policy updates on departmental targets, new policies and the work that a department is undertaking to achieve the target/any relevant action taken, and progress achieved to date.

DECC will liaise with CSO regarding statistical inputs.

The timeframe for completion of both is end of December 2023.

If a department is changing the name of the lead department on a target, they should agree this with the other department, edit the document, and insert a comment to this effect.

Fiona and Anna Marie are also available if departments have further queries on this.

8. Any other business

The National Stakeholder Forum has positioned DECC well to move forward into 2024 on plans and actions.

The Department of Education is presenting its first review of the strategy to 2030 on National Education for Sustainable Development this week.

A Voluntary Local Review is due to be presented next year, which will complement Ireland's Voluntary National Review.