



## High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2023

Written input provided by the Organisation for  
Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

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## **About the OECD**

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) brings together Member countries and partners to collaborate on key global issues at national, regional, and local levels. OECD standards, programmes, and initiatives – anchored in shared values and constructive exchange – contribute to the development of policies to end poverty and tackle inequalities in more than 100 countries around the world.

A Permanent Observer at the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the OECD has a long history of partnership with the United Nations (UN) family. The OECD is committed to leveraging its capacity and expertise to help the UN achieve its ambitious objectives.

## **The OECD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, the OECD undertook a broad stock-taking exercise to understand how its assets and existing capabilities might be best harnessed to support Members and partners alike in the implementation of the Agenda. OECD Members unanimously endorsed the Organisation’s Action Plan on the Sustainable Development Goals in 2016, reflecting their commitment to supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Today, Member countries and partners alike have drawn on OECD policy tools, data, and expertise to support SDG implementation at the national level in areas as diverse as public governance, gender equality, climate and environment, water, urban policy, infrastructure, and development finance. Targeted OECD regional and country programmes provide vehicles for co-operation on policy issues of mutual interest.

Several OECD Members have drawn on OECD data in the preparation of their own Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). This includes innovative [OECD analysis](#) on the measurement of Members’ distance to SDG targets.

The OECD Council of Ambassadors also committed to hold an annual, high-level dialogue on sustainable development. Once a year, the Council invites select partners to discuss progress and challenges related to the SDGs in an inclusive format and share views on how the OECD can best support implementation.

## **2023 OECD Dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

This year, the OECD Council organised an in-depth discussion on Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, with a focus on infrastructure), with a view to examining how specific OECD policy tools in this area are contributing to the advancement of these Goals in Member and Partner Countries alike.

A meeting convened in hybrid format at OECD Headquarters in Paris on 17 May 2023 was attended by 171 delegates representing 61 delegations.

The meeting opened with high-level introductory remarks from both the OECD Secretary General and Éamonn Mac Aodha, Director of Ireland’s Multilateral Relations. There was then a dedicated session for each topic, comprised of scene setting for both the SDG and relevant OECD policy tools. This was followed by a panel discussion of countries’ perspectives on how the respective OECD Recommendations contributed to achieving the related SDG. Speakers at the meeting represented OECD Member countries plus the EU (Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland, France, EU, Korea, Colombia, Canada, and Italy), as well as representatives from Brazil, Indonesia, and Morocco.

## **SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation**

### **OECD Policy Tool(s) - OECD Recommendation on Water**

Adopted in 2016 by the Council, the OECD Recommendation on Water [OECD/LEGAL/0434] (hereafter the “2016 Recommendation”) updated and replaced four previous water-related OECD Recommendations. It builds on the

OECD [Environmental Outlook to 2050](#) and recommends policy guidance to central and subnational authorities concerning the main issues related to managing water, namely: water quantity and quality, the management of water-related risks, governance, and pricing and financing water expenditures. It covers water uses in agriculture and cities and related issues. [The 2021 Toolkit for Water Policies and Governance](#) compiles a series of tools that can facilitate alignment with the 2016 Recommendation.

As stated in its preamble, the 2016 Recommendation was designed with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global commitments in mind. It explicitly states that water is essential for the ecosystems on which all life and a range of human activities depend; that access to safe drinking water and sanitation promotes the progressive realisation of human rights and general well-being, including gender equality; and that mitigation of water risks is a prerequisite for sustainable growth, social inclusion, and food and energy security (all reflected in distinct SDGs).

The 2016 Recommendation has guided further OECD analyses, at global, national, and subnational levels. The Environment Policy Committee's (EPOC) work on water allocation, water quality management and financing water also serves to provide guidance and tools to support alignment with the 2016 Recommendation. The Regional Development Policy Committee's (RDPC) work has further supported the implementation of the OECD Principles on Water Governance (embodied in section VI of the 2016 Recommendation) through the development of indicators and an assessment framework to track progress. The 2016 Recommendation is used as a reference in the context of multiple national policy dialogues, including for partner countries such as Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Indonesia, and Thailand.

#### *How countries are using OECD Policy tools to help make progress towards SDG 6*

Panellists shared their views on how OECD policy tools like the Recommendation on Water help Member and Partner Countries make progress towards SDG 6:

#### **Barbara Pompili, French Member of Parliament, and Chair of the OECD Water Governance Initiative Water, France:**

- Good governance is key to ensure clean water and sanitation for all. This is precisely what section 6 of the Recommendation seeks to provide guidance on through OECD principles on water governance.

#### **Yang Dong-han, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Korea to the OECD:**

- OECD Recommendation on water has been instrumental for Korea. Together with the OECD, Korea has undertaken national dialogues on water, which aim to identify fundamental challenges and obstacles in water security and provide policy solutions in eight Asian countries. The first dialogue was conducted in Thailand 2021, the second in Indonesia 2022, and the third Mongolia this year.

#### **Veronica Rios, President-Director of the National Water and Sanitation Agency (ANA), Brazil:**

- A long-standing partnership between ANA and the OECD has contributed to three successive policy dialogues on water and reports aligned with the OECD Recommendation:
  - 2015 on water resources governance in Brazil
  - 2017 on water charges in Brazil and the ways forward
  - 2022 on fostering water resilience in Brazil: turning strategy into action
- The current challenge is to strengthen and harmonise regulation through the establishment of standards.
- In line with OECD recommendation to promote high level engagement, ANA's participation in water governance initiative and network of regulators has contributed to exchanging experiences.

#### **Helge Elisabeth Zeitler, Deputy Head of Unit, DG Environment, European Commission:**

- The European Commission views the OECD as an organisation that brings economic expertise to water policies and management. In addition, its prominence in communities beyond the environment and water community, can help play a core role in connecting the dots and helping us get more awareness in these circles for water crisis.

### Potential future policy outcomes

Based on this year's dialogue, the OECD Secretariat has identified the following potential policy outcomes in relation to the Council Recommendation on Water:

- Continue to disseminate the Water Recommendation both in SDG and Climate-related international fora and in country-specific initiatives on water, sustainable development, climate mitigation and adaptation.
- Periodically update the [OECD Toolkit for Water Policies and Governance](#) to continue to encourage adherence requests to and convergence towards the Water Recommendation.
- Engage with the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, which seeks to redefine the way we value and govern water for the common good. Linked, explore how any potential outputs of the Global Commission can contribute to the continued relevance of the OECD Recommendation.

### **SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure – with an emphasis on the infrastructure element**

#### OECD Policy Tool(s) - OECD Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure

Adopted in 2020 by the Council, the OECD Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure [OECD/LEGAL/0460] (hereafter the “2020 Recommendation”) builds on and updates the 2018 OECD Framework for the Governance of Infrastructure. It provides Adherents with practical guidance for efficient, transparent, and responsive decision-making processes in infrastructure investment. It supports a whole-of-government approach and covers the entire life cycle of infrastructure projects, putting special emphasis on regional, social, gender and environmental considerations.

Developing quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure in the terms envisioned in targets 9.1 and 9.4 will require governments to make important strategic choices regarding infrastructure investments and allow for an efficient and effective delivery. One of the main challenges that countries face in building resilient and sustainable infrastructure has been the quality of public governance. Without robust institutional capacities, appropriate appraisal methods and implementation processes, including procurement, it is highly likely that strategic choices regarding infrastructure investments will be suboptimal and fail to deliver their expected outcomes.

Under the advice, guidance, and leadership of the Network of Senior Infrastructure (SIP) and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) officials (a subsidiary body of the Public Governance Committee (PGC)), the OECD Secretariat has developed a series of assessment and policy tools to support countries' efforts to improve their governance of infrastructure. In 2022, [OECD Infrastructure Toolkit](#) was launched as an online platform that provides guidelines for policymakers in the planning, financing, and delivery of infrastructure, and supports the implementation of the 2020 Recommendation.

The OECD has also developed [OECD Infrastructure Governance Indicators \(IGI\)](#) to help countries self-assess their performance and provide practical tools to support the implementation of the 2020 Recommendation. By addressing important cross-cutting themes such as green, gender and resilience, the IGIs and the Toolkit advance the OECD SIP Network's efforts in promoting sustainable, resilient, and inclusive infrastructure. These issues will be discussed in the 7th OECD Infrastructure Forum in Paris during the first week of December 2023.

#### How countries are using OECD Policy tools to help make progress towards SDG 9

Panellists shared their views on how OECD policy tools like the OECD Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure help Member and Partner Countries make progress towards SDG 9:

#### **Elisa Anna Di Palma, Senior Technical Advisor, Infrastructure and Transport Ministry, Italy:**

- Mainstreaming environmental issues in transport has the potential to contribute to multiple SDGs, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, resilience to climate change and improvement in urban quality.

- Moving forward, more integration is needed between green-based solutions, transport infrastructure and policies to promote resilience to climate change.

**Salma Bellemine, Executive Director, Mohammed VI Fund for Investment, Morocco:**

- The OECD Recommendation is helping to accelerate the rate of infrastructure development. in Morocco, where infrastructure investment represents up to 30% of the country's GDP.

**Sumedi Andono Mulyo, Director of National Priority Infrastructure Projects Development and Planning, Bappenas, Indonesia:**

- Indonesia has a highly diverse population which means policymakers need to pay attention to individual needs of different communities. The OECD Recommendation is particularly helpful in terms of improving the policy and performance of infrastructure development.

*Potential future policy outcomes*

Based on this year's dialogue, the OECD Secretariat has identified the following potential policy outcomes in relation to the Council Recommendation on the Governance of Infrastructure:

- Continue to reach out to partner countries to disseminate the Infrastructure Recommendation, and to encourage adherence requests. For example, the Regional Policy Network on Sustainable Infrastructure in Southeast Asia to be held in October 2023, the OECD Infrastructure Forum in December 2023, and the [OECD Infrastructure Toolkit](#).
- Work with interested partner countries to participate in the upcoming report to Council on the implementation, dissemination and continued relevance of the Infrastructure Recommendation through the [OECD Infrastructure Governance Indicators \(IGI\)](#).
- Use country feedback and results from the IGI on greening infrastructure to discuss with the OECD Network of Senior Infrastructure and Public-Private Procurement Officials in December 2023 the continued relevance of the Infrastructure Recommendation on (i) how infrastructure governance can ensure more environmentally sustainable investments and support the climate transition; and (ii) governments' role in mobilising sustainable infrastructure investment.

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