



Manual of European Environmental Policy

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International development

Summary of the issues

The EU (Member States and the European Commission) is a major donor of development aid, providing more than 50 per cent of all development aid worldwide¹. While developing countries are responsible for identifying and responding to environmental issues affecting them, EU development policy can support such efforts, and the provision of appropriate development aid and improving the level of coherence between different EU external policies can provide a valuable contribution in this area.

Framework of EU development policy

At the October 1972 Paris summit, as part of a broader political agenda of redefining the role of the Community in response to enlargement and a changing international situation, EU leaders took the Decision to launch a European environmental policy and announced an increased effort of the Community in the area of development aid, which it presented as a response to the recommendations of the 1971 UNCTAD conference in Santiago de Chile. In retrospect, the simultaneous birth of new EU policies in the field of environmental protection and development cooperation could be seen as another precursor of the EU's later affinity with the theme of sustainable development. However, it is only since the Treaty of European Union ([Maastricht Treaty](#)) came into force in 1993 that Community development cooperation obtained a specific legal basis (Articles 208 to 211 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)). The primary objective of the EU's development policy is the 'reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty' (Article 208 TFEU). The EU is to take these objectives into account in policies it implements which are likely to affect developing countries. The Lisbon Treaty also provides the EU with the legal mandate to pursue the objective of sustainable development not only within Europe but also in order to contribute to 'the sustainable development of the Earth' (Article 3 of the Treaty on EU (TEU)).

In December 2005, the European Parliament, Council and the Commission signed a Joint Declaration on the development policy of the European Union entitled 'The European Consensus' (*Official Journal* [C 46 of 24.2.2006](#)). The declaration sets out the framework for the EU's development policy, the primary objective of which is the 'eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development'. The environment and sustainable management of natural resources is identified as one of nine priority areas for the Community. Other priority areas relate to water and energy, infrastructure communications and transport, rural development, territorial planning, agriculture and food security. Additionally, environmental sustainability is noted as one of the crosscutting issues that will be mainstreamed in the Community's development cooperation activities. According to the Declaration, the Community will support efforts by partner countries to incorporate environmental considerations in development policy and help increase capacity to implement multilateral environmental agreements. Other actions include the implementation of the EU Action Plan on Climate Change in the context of development cooperation, and promoting the sustainable management of chemicals and waste, particularly by taking into account links with health issues.

The European Consensus reiterates the commitment to policy coherence and in 2005 the EU agreed to apply the ‘Policy Coherence for Development’ (PCD) ([COM\(2005\)134](#)) approach in 12 policy areas (trade, environment and climate change, security, agriculture, bilateral fisheries agreements, social policies (employment), migration, research / innovation, information technologies, transport and energy) as a means of accelerating progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This approach recognizes the contribution of other EU policies, including environmental policy, towards the efforts of developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve the MDGs. The first biennial EU report on PCD was published in 2007 and indicated that even though progress had been made in increasing the support of certain policy areas for development (e.g. trade, agriculture and fisheries) there remained a need to further exploit the ‘development potential’ of several other areas, including climate change, energy and environment policies ([COM\(2007\)545](#)). The 2009 report on PCD ([COM\(2009\)458](#)) noted that despite some progress and the positive synergies of recent policy developments (including the implications of the [climate and energy package](#) for the production and use of sustainable biofuels in developing countries), performance differs across areas and diverging interests make it difficult to ensure a consistent approach. The report subsequently called for a new, ‘more strategic, systematic and partnership oriented approach’ to PCD which focuses on select priorities identified jointly by the Commission and Member States. The Commission's proposals for priority issues related to climate change; global food security; migration; intellectual property rights and promoting security and peace. In April 2010, the Commission presented the Policy Coherence for Development Work Programme 2010-2013 ([SEC\(2010\)421](#)) which sets out how the EU will address five global challenges (trade and finance; climate change; global food security; migration and security) in a development-friendly manner. The Work Programme sets targets and indicators in relation to each global challenge and establishes a scoreboard to track progress towards identified PCD objectives.

In August 2006, the Commission adopted a Communication on ‘Governance in the European Consensus on Development – Towards a harmonized approach within the European Union’ ([COM\(2006\)421](#)), which established common practices and principles for dialogue and cooperation with developing countries on governance.

In October 2011, the Commission adopted a Communication on ‘Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change’ ([COM\(2011\)637](#)) which provided an updated policy framework for EU development cooperation to 2015 and beyond. The Communication proposed that the EU adopt a differentiated approach to aid allocation according to country needs, capacities, commitments and performance. To improve coordination, the Commission proposed to develop joint EU and Member State programming documents and to establish a common EU framework for measuring and communicating results. To generate more resources, the Communication proposed increasing the use of innovative financial instruments. It also proposed that future EU spending concentrate on key priorities such as sustainable agriculture practices, clean energy systems and governance reforms that promote sustainable management of natural resources. These proposals imply significant changes to the way Member States manage their bilateral cooperation and it remains to be seen to what extent they will be taken up including in EU financial instruments for development cooperation for the 2014-2020 period.

In addition to the general EU development policy framework set out in the 2005 Joint Declaration, economic and development cooperation between the EU and some specific geographic regions is governed by explicit agreements and policies. In particular, cooperation

between the EU and countries from Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) is governed by the [Cotonou Agreement](#) that came into force in 2000([2000/483/EC](#), OJ L317 15.12.2000). Similarly, economic and development cooperation between the EU and neighbouring countries falls under the EU Neighbourhood Policy ([COM\(2004\)373](#)) (see below).

EU development policy is implemented as a combination of actual development cooperation activities and the integration of development objectives (e.g. environment) in other EU external and internal policies. As development is a shared competence between the EU and its Member States, a number of Community and Member State initiatives and instruments are in place to carry out the policy objectives (see below).

Integrating environment in EU development policy

The [Cardiff Process](#) launched in 1998 initiated the integration of the environment in the EU's development policy. In response to commitments made by the European Council in Cardiff, the Commission published a Communication in May 2000 which outlined elements of a strategy for integrating environment and sustainable development in economic and development cooperation policy ([COM\(2000\)264](#)). At a meeting in May 2000, the Development Council further endorsed the concept of environmental integration and called on the Commission to prepare a specific strategy in consultation with Member States. In April 2001, the European Commission adopted a Strategy on Integrating the Environment into EC Economic and Development Cooperation ([SEC\(2001\)609](#)) which outlined how EC economic and development cooperation can best assist developing countries in responding to environmental challenges. At the policy level, this translated into exploiting synergies between environment and poverty reduction, and improving coherence between different policies. The Strategy provided the basis for a set of Council conclusions adopted in May 2001 entitled 'Strategy for the integration of environmental considerations into development policy to promote sustainable development'² which emphasized that environmental considerations should be systematically incorporated in the preparation of all strategic plans and programmes of EC development cooperation. In February 2002, the Commission's general approach to the global aspects of sustainable development, including environmental integration, were outlined in the Communication 'Towards a global partnership for sustainable development' ([COM\(2002\)82](#)). These global aspects were subsequently incorporated in the renewed [EU Sustainable Development Strategy \(SDS\)](#) endorsed by the European Council in June 2006.

At the sectoral level, the EU has adopted several strategies and guiding documents related to integrating environmental considerations in different areas of development cooperation. The strategies emphasize the links and interactions between poverty, environmental issues (e.g. biodiversity, climate change, land degradation) and other sectoral policies. The sectoral strategies include: a Communication on water management in developing countries – Policy and priorities for EU development cooperation ([COM\(2002\)132](#)); European Community policy and approach to rural development and sustainable natural resources management in developing countries ([COM\(2002\)429](#)); Trade and development – assisting developing countries to benefit from trade ([COM\(2002\)513](#)); Communication on Climate change in the context of development cooperation ([COM\(2003\)85](#)); Building a global climate change alliance between the European Union and poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change ([COM\(2007\)540](#)); Agricultural Commodity Chains, Dependence and Poverty – A proposal for an EU Action Plan ([COM\(2004\)89](#)); and EU land policy guidelines –

Guidelines for support to land policy design and policy reform processes in developing countries ([COM\(2004\)686](#))

At the Johannesburg summit in 2002 (see below) the EU launched two specific sectoral initiatives: ‘Water for Life’ and the ‘Energy for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development’ ([EU Water Initiative – EUWI](#) and EU Energy Initiative – EUEI). Following this, the EU Water Fund was established in 2003 ([COM\(2003\)211](#)) and in 2005 the ACP-EU Energy Facility was established ([COM\(2004\)711](#)). Additionally, in May 2003 the Commission published an EU Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) (see section on [forestry](#)) aimed at tackling illegal logging ([COM\(2003\)251](#)) and in 2005 Regulation (EC) No [2173/2005](#) was adopted which established a FLEGT voluntary licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community. On biodiversity, the Commission presented a Biodiversity Action Plan on Economic Cooperation and Development as part of the EC Biodiversity Strategy ([COM\(2001\)162](#)) and the Biodiversity Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond ([COM\(2006\)216](#)) included a number of actions aimed at addressing the integration of biodiversity in EU development cooperation (Action Plan Policy Area 2: the EU and global biodiversity). These actions included preventing/minimizing negative impacts of development initiatives on biodiversity and ensuring adequate funding for biodiversity within Community and Member State development cooperation. The Global Climate Change Alliance aims to integrate climate change in the development strategies of vulnerable countries and provide assistance for adaptation measures ([COM\(2007\)540](#)).

The EU also actively supports the better integration of developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, in the world trade system. The 2002 Commission Communication on Trade and Development ([COM\(2002\)513](#)) made commitments to grant developing countries greater access to the EU market, to provide adequate funding for trade-related assistance, and to make trade a central part of development strategies. In December 2005 the EU agreed to increase trade-related assistance, including Community aid and bilateral assistance by Member States, to €2 billion a year from 2010 for all developing countries. This commitment was followed in October 2006 by Council Conclusions on EU ‘Aid for Trade’ focusing on quality and effectiveness. The October Council also agreed to prepare a Joint EU Aid for Trade Strategy in 2007. Consequently, a Commission Communication outlining the EU Aid for Trade Strategy was released in April 2007 ([COM\(2007\)158](#)) which set out common objectives and core components of the EU ‘Aid for Trade’ initiative. According to the Strategy, which was adopted by the Council in October 2007, the preservation of natural resources and the environment are an integral part of the ‘Aid for Trade’ objectives. More than a third of EU development aid now supports trade related needs. A Communication presented in January 2012 on Trade, growth and development ([COM\(2012\)22](#)) updated the 2002 Communication on trade and development. The Communication stressed the need to differentiate among developing countries to focus on those most in need and to improve the effectiveness of EU trade and development instruments, including more targeted and effective Aid for Trade.

In general, evaluations of environmental integration in the EU's development cooperation to date have shown a number of shortcomings. For example, in 2002 a Commission review of 60 Country Strategy Papers (CSP) and seven Regional Strategy Papers (RSP) revealed a low level of integration of environmental issues³ and a 2003 report by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly indicated that the EC had inadequately mainstreamed environmental issues in development assistance⁴. In July 2006, the European Court of Auditors (ECA)

published a special report on the management and inclusion of environmental issues in the Commission's development aid⁵ which concluded that the Commission had not adequately managed to integrate environmental aspects in its development cooperation activities. The report identified several shortcomings including insufficient training of Commission staff and a lack of assessing/monitoring of the environmental impacts of development cooperation projects and programmes.

A 2009 Commission Staff Working Document on improving environmental integration in development policy (SEC(2009)555) outlined progress in the implementation of the 2001 Environment Integration Strategy and the impact of subsequent policy developments. The report concluded that 'there remains a sizeable gap between proclaimed environmental objectives (e.g. to halt biodiversity loss by 2010, to mainstream climate change or to systematically carry out environmental assessments) and actual results' and recognized the need for *inter alia*: enhanced policy dialogue on environmental issues with partner countries which leads to increased funding for environment-related actions; better coordination between the Community, Member States and other donors; more effective aid delivery with respect to environmental issues, and more effective integration of environment in projects and programmes, based on systematic and coordinated environmental assessments. The June 2009 the Environment Council called on the Commission to set up an appropriate framework to prepare and monitor implementation of the EU's approach to integrating the environment in Community development policy and to prepare an ambitious joint EC-Member State Environment Integration Strategy. Key elements of the revised Strategy are expected to include action to expand the environmental knowledge base, improve tools for environmental integration and capacity building, achieve better mainstreaming of the environment in new development issues, integrate the environment in budget support, improve monitoring, evaluation and reporting on environmental issues and coordination and division of labour⁸.

Framework for implementing EU development policy

EU development policy, including its environmental aspects, is implemented as part of the broader Community framework for external assistance. In the past a number of Community instruments, for example legal (convention-based and unilateral) and financial (geographic, thematic and specific) instruments, have been in place to deliver EU economic and development cooperation. These instruments have included, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership initiative (MEDA) (Regulation (EC) No [1488/96](#), amended by Regulation (EC) No [2698/2000](#)); cooperation agreements with Asia and Latin America (Regulation (EC) No [443/92](#)); and [TACIS and PHARE Programmes](#) (Regulations (EC) No [99/2000](#) and [3906/89](#)). All these programmes and instruments included environmental considerations. In addition, specific Community budget lines for environmental cooperation are in place, and have included: a budget line for Environment in Developing Countries (Regulation (EC) No [2493/2000](#); superseding Regulation (EC) No [722/97](#)) and a budget line for Measures to Promote the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests and Other Forests in Developing Countries (Regulation (EC) No [2494/2000](#); superseding Regulation (EC) No [3062/95](#)).

Since 2001, the programming of EU development cooperation and external assistance has been based on partnerships with developing countries (EU partner countries) carried out within a framework of Country and Regional Strategy Papers (CSPs/RSPs). These strategy papers set out principles and priorities for cooperation, and were complemented by National or Regional Indicative Programmes (NIPs/RIPs) indicating the areas where resources will be

spent over a given number of years and the amounts of funds to be allocated. From the environmental perspective, one of the formal requirements for CSPs and RSPs, although not a legal obligation, is the development of Country Environmental Profiles (CEPs) that provide an analysis of the environmental, social and economic situation within a country/region, which is to be annexed to the CSP/RSP. The CEP should include information on the state of the environment, environmental policies, the legislative framework, institutional capacities, environmental cooperation experience, and recommendations on integrating the environment during preparations of the CSP/RSP.

In 2006 several of these Community instruments for funding external assistance, including ones relating to environmental integration, expired and were replaced by a single framework comprising of six financing instruments over the period 2007–2013. One of these instruments is dedicated to development cooperation (Regulation (EC) No [1905/2006](#)). The primary and overarching objective of the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) is ‘to support the eradication of poverty in partner countries and regions in the context of sustainable development, including pursuit of the MDGs, as well as the promotion of democracy, good governance and respect for human rights and for the rule of law’. Fostering sustainable development of partner countries and regions, including political, economic, social and *environmental* aspects, is another major objective of the Regulation.

Assistance under the financing instrument for development cooperation is implemented through a number of geographic and thematic programmes set out in the Regulation (Articles 5–17 of the Regulation). Geographic programmes (based on the CSPs/RSPs and NIPs/RIPs framework) constitute the main framework for Community cooperation with third countries and their aim is to support the development of, and reinforce cooperation with, countries and regions in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and South Africa. Thematic programmes are subsidiary to the geographic programmes and cover (a) specific areas of activity of interest to a group of partner countries not determined by geography, (b) cooperation activities addressed to various regions or groups of partner countries, or (c) international operation that is not geographically specific. In 2006, a thematic programme on environment and natural resources was created. The objective of this thematic programme is to integrate environmental protection requirements in the Community's development and other external policies and to help promote the Community's environmental and energy policies abroad.

European Neighbourhood Policy

Cooperation between the EU and its neighbouring states takes place within the framework of European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The ENP was established in 2003-2004 and was designed to give new impetus to cooperation with countries neighbouring the EU following the 2004 enlargement. The policy was first outlined in a Commission Communication in 2003 on Wider Europe Neighbourhood: A new framework for relations with eastern and southern neighbours ([COM\(2003\)104](#)) which was followed by a more detailed Strategy Paper on the ENP in 2004 ([COM\(2004\)373](#)). These documents set out the overall framework for the ENP which aims to support economic and political reform processes, promote closer economic integration and sustainable development in the EU's neighbouring countries as a means of promoting stability, security and prosperity along the EU's borders. This privileged relationship with the EU's neighbours builds on a mutual commitment to common values including sustainable development. In 2006 ([COM\(2006\)726](#)) and 2007 ([COM\(2007\)774](#)) the Commission made proposals on how the ENP could be strengthened which highlighted the environment as key dimension both at national and regional level. In response to some of the

political turbulence in the region, in May 2011 the Commission presented a review of European Neighbourhood Policy: A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood ([COM\(2011\)303](#)). The ENP applies to southern and eastern neighbouring countries (Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine). Relations with Russia are developed through a special ‘Strategic Partnership’.

The specific areas for cooperation are defined in country-specific ENP Action Plans that are mutually agreed between the EU and each partner state. These Action Plans set out a more detailed agenda of political and economic reforms in the partner countries. The Action Plans are to promote good environmental governance in partner countries to, identify priorities in key areas such as water quality, waste management, air pollution, and desertification, promote regional cooperation, and encourage ratification and implementation of international agreements. The Action Plans are also to incorporate cross-border energy issues which include security and safety of energy supply, renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy savings, and transport issues which include promotion of efficient, multi-modal and sustainable transport systems.

In the past, EC assistance to countries in the ENP was provided under various geographical programmes and thematic programmes (such as TACIS and MEDA). Since 2007, ENP initiatives and projects are carried out via the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) (Regulation (EC) No [1638/2006](#)).

Although environment and sustainable development are included among the priorities of ENP Action Plans, few specific proposals in this area are made and ‘the wording makes it clear that environment is regarded as a low priority in relation to economic development, security considerations, migration issues and governance and legal/judicial reform’⁶. Commitments in the Action Plans are often not implemented in practice and only limited support has been provided to environmental projects and programmes to date⁷.

Cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) and Outermost Regions

Reflecting Europe's colonial history, relations between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP countries) are a particularly important aspect of EU development policy and more widely its external action. The EU also has a number of Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) that depend constitutionally on four of its Member States (Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) but do not form part of the Community's territory. Additionally, the EU has seven Outermost Regions that, unlike the OCTs, are part of the European Union, but whose distinctive characteristics qualify them for special treatment in various sectors.

Since 2000, the framework for development cooperation between the EU and ACP has been provided by the Partnership Agreement ([2000/483/EC](#)), signed in Cotonou in June 2000 (the Cotonou Agreement). The Cotonou Agreement replaced its predecessor, the Lomé Convention, which had created the basis for EU-ACP cooperation from 1975 to 2000. The main objectives of the Cotonou Agreement are to reduce poverty, consistent with the

objectives of sustainable development and promote the integration of ACP countries in the world economy. The Agreement also encourages political dialogue between the EU and ACP states and makes provision for economic cooperation and trade. The first revision to the Cotonou Agreement took place in 2005 and prepared the ground for the 2007-2013 financial framework for development assistance. The [second revision](#) was signed in March 2010 and recognises climate change as a major subject for the partnership. With the revision, parties commit to raising the profile of climate change in their development cooperation and to supporting ACP efforts in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

The Treaty provides the legal basis for relations between the EU, the OCTs and the Outermost Regions (Articles 198–204 and Article 345, respectively). According to the Treaty the purpose of the OCT relations is to promote the economic and social development of the OCTs and to establish close economic relations between these areas and the Community as a whole. In principle, the provisions of the Treaty are implemented by the Council ‘Overseas Association Decision’ (Council Decision [2001/822/EC](#)). In 2009, a Communication on ‘Elements for a new partnership between the EU and the overseas countries and territories’ ([COM\(2009\)623](#)) was published, which outlined three central objectives of a new partnership with the OCTs: enhancing the competitiveness of OCTs and trade measures; promoting cooperation with other partners on economic measures as well as in tackling cross-border environmental protection and undertaking initiatives to manage disaster risk regionally; enhancing the OCTs' resilience and capacity to respond to economic shocks, energy dependency and environmental challenges as well as their vulnerability to natural disasters.

The European Development Fund (EDF) is the main instrument for Community aid for development cooperation in the ACP countries and OCTs. The EDF does not come under the general Community budget but is funded by Member States and subject to its own financial rules. Each EDF is concluded for a period of around five years with the ninth and tenth EDF funding periods covering the periods of 2000–2007 and 2008–2013, respectively (Financial Regulation for the ninth EDF, [OJ L83 1.4.2003](#)) The tenth EDF was proposed by [COM\(2006\)650](#) and an [internal agreement](#) was adopted in a Council meeting of 17 July 2006. This was further complemented by an implementing Regulation adopted by the Council on 14 May 2007 (Regulation (EC) No [617/2007](#)). Some specific programming guidelines have been elaborated for national and regional programming and for intra-ACP programming as well as CSP, RSP and an intra-ACP strategy paper. Implementation is to be annually monitored by the Commission and reviewed at mid-term (2010) and at the end-of-term (2012). To help with implementation a [multiannual indicative programme](#) was decided between the Commission and the ACP States in March 2009 and [guidelines](#) for the 2010 mid-term review established. The outermost regions are eligible for support measures under Community funds aiming to improve the cohesion within the Union (e.g. [Regional Development and Social Funds and the Cohesion Fund](#)). Particular consideration has also been given to the outermost regions under the framework of the EU's [Integrated Maritime Policy](#). A Commission Communication preparing for the eleventh EDF was presented in December 2011 ([COM\(2011\)837](#)). The Communication proposed an amount of € 34 275.6 million contributed by Member States to cover the period from 2014 to 2020.

Both the Cotonou Agreement and the OCT Overseas Association Decision include references to the environment. For example, the Cotonou Agreement stipulates that the principles of sustainable management of natural resources and the environment shall be applied and integrated at every level of the EU-ACP partnership (Article 1). Environment is also identified as one of the areas for cooperation between the EU, ACP countries and OCTs. The

2005 EU Strategy for Africa ([COM\(2005\)489](#)) addressed issues related to sustainable environmental management in the African countries including, in particular, combating desertification and responding to the effects of climate change.

EU and international initiatives

The EU supports a number of international initiatives on sustainable development. The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (the ‘Earth Summit’) was a landmark meeting in terms of initiating the integration of environment in development issues at the international level. The Summit adopted two key documents: the Rio Declaration on environment and development and the Agenda 21 Action Programme.

In September 2000, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration which set out a series of international development goals to be achieved by 2015. These goals became known as the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs) and range from halving poverty and hunger to ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG7). The MDGs represent the first set of internationally agreed development goals and have helped to build consensus and mobilise global support to combat world poverty.

The **2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development** (WSSD) in Johannesburg marked the start of the development of a ten-year framework of programmes to support sustainable patterns of production and consumption and the launch of a number of partnerships to implement Agenda 21. As an outcome of the Summit, the EU, together with the international community, committed itself to a number of environment related objectives⁸⁵ including:

- Halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015.
- Restoring depleted fish stocks urgently and where possible no later than 2015.
- Aiming by 2020 to use and produce chemicals in ways that do not lead to significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.
- Promoting the ratification and implementation of the Rotterdam Convention and the Stockholm Convention.
- Encouraging countries to implement a new globally harmonized system for classification and labelling of chemicals which is fully operational by 2008 with the development of a strategic approach for chemicals management by 2005.
- Developing integrated water resources and management plans by 2005.
- Achieving a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity by 2010.

The commitments made at the Johannesburg Summit have subsequently been reaffirmed in several Council conclusions. Progress on the implementation of the WSSD commitments was evaluated in a Commission Communication ([COM\(2003\)829](#)) presented in December 2003 which concluded that the [EU Sustainable Development Strategy \(SDS\)](#) will be the key tool for implementing the Johannesburg commitments.

In 2002 the EU agreed to increase the level of official development assistance (ODA) to 0.39 per cent of the Community's gross national income (GNI) by 2006. Furthermore, post-2006 targets for EU development aid were set in 2005 (Council Conclusions of May 2005). According to these targets the EU is to collectively increase its ODA to 0.56 per cent of gross national income (ODA/GNI) by 2010. This EU goal represents an intermediate step towards

achieving the UN target of 0.7 per cent by 2015. Although the EU and its Member States missed their collective 2010 target of 0.56 per cent by a wide margin (by almost € 15 billion), they together reached the highest ODA/GNI ratio of the last 20 years of 0.43 per cent ([SEC\(2011\)500](#)). Despite the financial and economic crisis, the Commission maintains that keeping these commitments is necessary not only for ensuring progress towards the MDGs, but also for maintaining the EU's credibility on the international stage ([COM\(2010\)159](#)).

A report evaluating EU efforts in achieving the MDG was published in 2001⁹⁶. In relation to MDG7 (environment), the report emphasized the need for further integration of environmental issues in political dialogues and development cooperation programmes. It also addressed the efforts on tackling biodiversity loss and climate change. A further [report](#) published in 2005 by the Commission focused on EU performance for the period 2000–2004 and underlined the leading role played by the EU concerning climate change policy through the [emissions trading scheme](#) and the creation of clean development mechanisms. However, despite some progress in the biodiversity area and in the integration of environment in the political sphere, the EU's ecological footprint risks jeopardizing the EU's ability to meet MDG7. In 2008, the Commission published a communication on 'The EU, a global partner for development; Speeding up progress towards the Millennium Development Goals' ([COM\(2008\)177](#)) which identified necessary measures to ensure fulfilment of MDGs with a focus on the volume and effectiveness of development aid, aid for trade and policy coherence. A 2008 [report](#) on progress made towards reaching the MDGs found a lack of uniformity in the achievements of MDGs and recommended an augmentation of public aid to fulfil the Accra Agenda for Action (harmonization of public procedures and public procurement systems, coordination of providers of funds, transparency and mutual accountability). A 2010 report on progress towards the MDGs ([SEC\(2010\)418](#)) noted that while there has been some encouraging progress towards certain MDGs, for example in reducing extreme poverty, progress has been highly uneven across different regions, countries and population groups, and several targets are off-track, such as maternal mortality, child mortality and access to sanitation.

In April 2010, the Commission presented an Action Plan in support of the Millennium Development Goals ([COM\(2010\)159](#)) which was accompanied by five staff working documents on the MDGs, aid effectiveness, financing for development, aid for trade and policy coherence for development. Some of the key actions proposed are set out below:

- Annual action plans are to be developed by Member States for reaching national ODA targets. The Commission also recommended establishing an internal ODA peer review process through the Council and called on Member States to consider introducing national legislation for setting ODA targets;
- To improve aid effectiveness, the timing of national and EU programming cycles in countries should be aligned, a joint programming framework developed, the division of EU labour both within and across recipient countries improved, and a common approach to accountability and transparency developed. This follows a new provision in the Lisbon Treaty which states that 'the Union and the Member States shall coordinate their policies on development cooperation and shall consult each other on their aid programmes ... They may undertake joint action. Member States shall contribute if necessary to the implementation of Union aid programmes' (Article 210 TFEU);
- Prioritise action and funding to the most 'off-track' countries (in terms of progress towards MDGs) and the most 'off-track' MDGs;

- Use the Policy Coherence for Development Work Programme (see above) as a tool to guide EU decision-making in other policy sectors;
- Mobilise domestic resources by strengthening capacities in developing countries and promoting good governance in tax matters;
- Enhance regional integration and trade through inter alia strengthening the capacity of the European Investment Bank (EIB) (see section on [the EU Institutions](#)) to support the EU's development objectives;
- Exploit the potential of innovative financing mechanisms;
- On climate change, the key action is to implement the EU's commitment to provide €2.4 billion fast-start funding annually between 2010 and 2012. It is recommended that this fast-start financing be used as a test for aid effectiveness and coherence; and
- On issues of global governance, key actions are to support the ongoing reform process of the UN system and increase voting shares of developing and transition countries in the World Bank and IMF.

Twenty years after the pivotal 1992 Rio Earth Summit, a follow-up United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) is being organised in an attempt to renew political commitment for sustainable development, assess progress and implementation gaps in meeting previously agreed commitments, and address new and emerging challenges. This follows the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg which sought to reinvigorate the course of sustainable development. The 2012 conference will focus on two main themes – the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

On 20 June 2011, the Commission presented a Communication setting out its initial views on potential outcomes of the Conference ([COM\(2011\)363](#)). Achieving a world-wide transition towards a global green economy is a prominent theme of the Communication. To guarantee commitment beyond Rio+20, the Communication called for a 'Green Economy Roadmap' to help countries accelerate progress towards the green economy. The Roadmap advocated the development of national and, where appropriate, regional objectives and timelines for action, indicators to monitor progress, and a globally agreed system for environmental and social accounting.

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