Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.)

Developing Successful Sustainability Strategies

Strategies for a Sustainable Future in Germany, Europe and Worldwide

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Content

Introduction and Overview

Henrik Riedel

Project "Developing Successful Sustainability Strategies"

In Germany, strategies for a sustainable future were initially and primarily developed at the municipal level in the form of local agenda processes. In addition, in 2002, the federal government decided on a "National Sustainability Strategy," which was subsequently continuously updated. Sustainability strategies were also adopted in various federal states and at least partially further developed. The challenges of political sustainability strategies at the level of the states comprise mainly two areas (effective: January 2014):

- Lack of coverage
  Sustainability strategies are only implemented in nine out of 16 federal states: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia. In the states of Brandenburg and North Rhine-Westphalia, the processes for developing a strategy are currently ongoing but not yet concluded. In the city-states of Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg, as well as in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Saarland, there are currently no comparable strategy development processes.

- Lack of governance
  The existing strategies and processes clearly differ with respect to particular governance criteria, which have proven to be significant success factors in many cases. First of all, they are not all aligned in an integrative and binding way to the ecological, economic and

social dimensions. Secondly, their potential for implementation is low as the political responsibility and administrative entrenchment is not always guaranteed in the same way. Thirdly, there is a lack of appropriate participation by citizens, companies, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, with the result that their commitment is not always ensured. In the fourth instance, the existing strategies and processes in the state and administration as well as business and society are not yet adequately effective; this means that the objectives aimed for are not reached or that, at the least, there is inadequate impact control.

Sustainability policies in Germany, Europe and the world have, however, generated a number of policy innovations. This is where the project "Developing Successful Sustainability Strategies" comes in. Executed by the Bertelsmann Stiftung and funded by the Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Consumer Protection of the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the project has the following objectives: to determine best practices for the development and further development of sustainability strategies in Germany and abroad; to make them known across all the states; and to transfer them to the state of North-Rhine Westphalia. Through the identification and analysis of best practices and their transfer and evaluation, sustainability strategies should be supported – especially at the level of the states in Germany.

The focus of the project is therefore on promoting sustainability strategies at the level of the states in Germany. The project intends to gain an insight into how the success of sustainability strategies can be improved through the transfer of best practices from other contexts. Best practices should, however, not only be identified, and their transfer should not just be described in theory. Rather, the project aims to also test the transfer of examples from other contexts and to analyze and assess the test practically – by way of example and in selected specialized contexts. The aim is to develop specific proposals for the North Rhine-Westphalia sustainability strategy and, if necessary, other strategies, general and specific success factors, as well as a

model instrument to transfer best practices for sustainability strategies.

The project is divided into three phases with two components each:

- Identification and analysis of best practices

    In the first phase, best practices are identified and analyzed. For this purpose, sustainability strategies or appropriate processes in Germany (at the state and federal levels) as well as at EU level are analyzed. In addition, further cases are investigated at the international level.

- Transfer of best practices

    In the second phase, the best practices identified and analyzed are made public in the context of an open expert group. In addition, selected best practices in selected specialist topics will be transferred to the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and, if applicable, other states by way of example.

- Evaluation of the transfer of best practices

    In the third and last phase, the exemplary transfer of best practices to the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia and, if applicable, to other countries is evaluated. For the development of sustainability practices, we are ultimately developing general and specific success factors based on the evaluation.

This publication presents in a summarized form the results of an investigation of sustainability strategies in Germany and at the EU level as well as those of an investigation of sustainability strategies at the international level. In addition, we outline possible processes by which sustainability strategies can be developed on the basis of best practices from other contexts.

Investigations of sustainability strategies

In the context of the project, two investigations of sustainability strategies were carried out on behalf of the Bertelsmann Stiftung. In the first half of 2013, the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment

and Energy analyzed the following strategies or corresponding processes existing in Germany and at the level of the EU.

- EU level
  - European Sustainability Strategy
  - Europe 2020 strategy
- Germany (federal level)
  - National Sustainability Strategy
- Germany (state level)
  - Baden-Württemberg sustainability strategy
  - Bavaria sustainability strategy
  - Brandenburg sustainability strategy
  - Hesse sustainability strategy
  - North Rhine-Westphalia sustainability strategy
  - Lower Saxony sustainability strategy
  - Rhineland-Palatinate sustainability strategy
  - Saxony sustainability strategy
  - Saxony-Anhalt sustainability strategy
  - Schleswig-Holstein sustainability strategy
  - Thuringia sustainability strategy

In Brandenburg, the ongoing process for developing a formal sustainability strategy was investigated. In Saxony-Anhalt, the process and strategy for sustainable development were placed on an equal footing. The subject matter of the investigation in North Rhine-Westphalia was the Agenda 21 process, which was developed from 2000 to 2005 but has not been formally completed.

In the second half of 2013, the following sustainability strategies in the international arena were analyzed by the Research Center for Environmental Policy at the Free University Berlin:

- National level
  - Bhutan
  - Finland
  - France
  - Austria
  - Switzerland

- Regional level
  - Aargau (Switzerland)
  - Flanders (Belgium)
  - California (USA)
  - Tyrol (Austria)
  - Wales (Great Britain)

The structure of the investigations of sustainability strategies in Germany and at the EU and international levels are based on the following basic schema, respectively:

(1) Explanation of the general understanding of sustainability strategies

(2) Identification and description of the individual sustainability strategies

(3) Identification and description of best practices for particular cross-cutting and specialist topics

(4) Conclusions and way forward

Besides the content-related structure, the process of the two investigations is in principle structured the same according to the following model:

(5) Conducting of the investigation and preparation of a draft report by the expert

(6) Discussion of the draft report in the context of the project group (consisting of representatives from the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the Wuppertal Institute, the Free University Berlin, the Leuphana University Lüneburg and the North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of the Environment) and subsequent revision

(7) Execution of a peer review with well-known researchers for the topics investigated

(8) Discussion of the draft report in the context of an open expert group (consisting of representatives from interested federal states as well as the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministry of the Environment, the Council for Sustainable Development and the project group) and subsequent revision

Summary

On the whole, it is clear that the investigations carried out are ultimately not more, but also not less, than a rich source for the best examples of how sustainability strategies have been developed and implemented on the whole or for individual issues.

After the investigations in Germany and abroad are presented in the following chapters, two possible processes for harnessing best practices for developing sustainability strategies are outlined.

Sustainability Strategies in Germany and at the EU Level

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Identification of sustainability strategies

A total of 14 sustainability strategies or sustainability-related strategy processes were identified for Germany and the EU level. Table 1 provides an overview in this regard.

Table 1: Overview of existing sustainability strategies at the level of the European Union and in Germany

European level	
European Sustainability Strategy	Renewed sustainability strategy of 2006; review in 2009
Europe 2020 strategy	"Europe 2020 Strategy for Intelligent, Sustainable and Integrative Growth"
Germany: National level	
National Sustainability Strategy	"Perspectives for Germany – National Sustainability Strategy"; since 2002; progress reports 2004/2005/2008; current progress report 2012
Germany: State level	
Baden-Württemberg	"Jetzt das Morgen gestalten" (Designing the Future Now) since 2007; process for new edition since 2011
Bavaria	"Bayerische Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie" (Bavarian sustainability strategy)
Brandenburg	"Gemeinsam Verantwortung für unsere Zukunft übernehmen – Eckpunkte einer Strategie für Nachhaltige Entwicklung des Landes Brandenburg" (Taking Responsibility for Our Future Together – Cornerstones of a Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the State of Brandenburg)

Hesse	"Lernen und Handeln für unsere Zukunft" (Learning and Acting for Our Future) – Hesse sustainability strategy; since 2008
NRW (2000–2005)	"Agenda 21 NRW – Gemeinsame Ideen mit Zukunft" (Common Ideas with a Future)
Lower Saxony	"Umweltgerechter Wohlstand für Generationen – Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie für Niedersachsen" (Environmentally Compatible Prosperity for Generations – Sustainability Strategy for Lower Saxony)
Rhineland-Palatinate	"Perspektiven für Rheinland-Pfalz" (Perspectives for Rhineland-Palatinate); since 2001
Saxony	"Sachsen hat Zukunft – Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie für den Freistaat Sachsen" (Saxony Has Prospects – Sustainability Strategy for the Free State of Saxony); since 2013
Saxony-Anhalt	"Gemeinsam für eine Lebenswerte Zukunft – Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie Sachsen-Anhalt" (Together for a Livable Future – Saxony-Anhalt Sustainability Strategy)
Schleswig-Holstein	"Zukunftsfähiges Schleswig-Holstein" (Schleswig-Holstein Fit for the Future); since 2003; progress report 2009
Thuringia	"Die Thüringer Nachhaltigkeitsstrategie 2011" (The Thuringia Sustainability Strategy 2011); since 2011; indicator report 2012

There are two relevant strategy processes at the European level: the European Sustainability Strategy and the Europe 2020 strategy. The European Sustainability Strategy was adopted in 2001 by the heads of state and government. It was revised in 2006 and reviewed in 2009. The strategy states that the European Council must, at the latest in 2011, decide when a comprehensive review will be started. This has not happened to date. This is possibly due to the Europe 2020 strategy, the successor of the Lisbon Strategy "for growth and employment" from 2000 and now a key reference point for the policy of the European member states. The Europe 2020 strategy was adopted by the European Council and contains aspects relevant to sustainability. The growth imperative of the Lisbon Strategy was, however, retained, and the Europe 2020 strategy is not an overarching, sustainability-based framework. The international dimension is also lacking.

Germany has had a national sustainability strategy since 2002, when the Federal government adopted it prior to the summit held in

Johannesburg under the title "Perspectives for Germany." The strategy has been updated regularly (in 2004, 2005, 2008 and 2012) with various points of focus.

At the level of the federal states, a total of 11 sustainability strategies and sustainability strategy processes were identified.

In *Baden-Württemberg*, a participative process for the implementation of a sustainable development strategy was launched in 2007. Its aim was a strong project orientation in the first instance toward the participation of business, civil society, associations, academia and citizens. The process comprised a total of nine focal points. After the change of government in 2011, the new state government decided on a new edition of the sustainability strategy which would now concentrate on four focal points (climate and energy, resources, education for sustainable development and integration). Objectives and indicators should also be adopted for the strategy.

In *Bavaria*, Bavaria Agenda 21 was already in place in 1997; a sustainability strategy was developed in 2002, which has now been further developed by a new sustainability strategy. For the further development, an inter-ministerial working group prepared a draft in 2011, which then underwent an online consultation process. Due to the consultation process, the draft was in revision until April 2013. On April 17, 2013, the Council of Ministers adopted the sustainability strategy.

In *Brandenburg*, the state parliament charged the state government in 2010 with developing a sustainability strategy. Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Council for Sustainable Development Brandenburg, the state government developed the cornerstones of a sustainability strategy. These cornerstones formed the basis for a broad, state-wide dialogue process in 2012. The results of this dialogue should be included in a first draft of the sustainability strategy, which should then be developed in a new dialogue process beginning in September 2013.

A broad strategy process was started in *Hesse*. Titled "Learning and Acting for Our Future," this process has a strong project nature similar to the first phase of the Baden-Württemberg sustainability strat-

egy. This operational level is supplemented in Hesse by a strategic overall structure in which the objectives and indicators for the areas of ecology, economy and social are entrenched. The first progress report on the development of the indicators was published in 2012. An interim report from 2011 documents the progress of the many projects that are carried out in cooperation with numerous actors from the entire state.

Lower Saxony adopted a similar strategy in 2008, although it has yet to be further updated. It is expected that the new state government – as announced in the coalition agreement – will work on a new edition of the sustainability strategy.

In *North Rhine-Westphalia,* a process to develop a sustainability strategy was already initiated in 2000. Five years later, the Agenda 21 process saw the state government, with the participation of stakeholders, develop the cornerstones of a state sustainability strategy. However, due to a change of government, this process was not continued in the state.

Likewise, *Rhineland-Palatinate* adopted a sustainability strategy in 2001 in accordance with a resolution by the state parliament. It was updated in 2005, 2007 and 2011 in the context of a report on the indicators.

The first considerations regarding a sustainability strategy in *Saxony* were made in 2006 at the suggestion of the state parliament. A sustainability conference took place in 2009. At the end of 2013, the state government finally submitted a sustainability strategy for the state.

In 2011, *Saxony-Anhalt* published a report on the state's sustainability policy whose status and development were described using a total of 11 focal points. The report is more of a summary description than a future-oriented plan. In Saxony-Anhalt, sustainable development is, however, seen as a long-term task, and the sustainability process is equated with the sustainability strategy.

Schleswig-Holstein already passed a resolution for developing a sustainability strategy in 2000. In the context of a dialogue process, a sustainability strategy was then developed and adopted in 2003. The first progress report was published in 2009.

In *Thuringia*, a state secretary group, in cooperation with the Advisory Counsel for Sustainable Development, developed a draft strategy as a result of a cabinet resolution for the adoption of a sustainability strategy. The online consultation for this draft and the comprehensive consultation and dialogue process, in which the municipalities and the municipal umbrella organization also participated, resulted in recommendations being developed by the Advisory Counsel for Sustainable Development. On the basis of these recommendations, the state secretary group developed a sustainability strategy that was adopted in 2011.

Best practices on specialist and cross-cutting topics

With respect to the cross-cutting topics, the following conclusions can be drawn and best practice examples summarized:

- The content and objectives of the sustainability dimensions "ecology," "economy" and "society" in a sustainability strategy should be regarded as integrative and not as additives. The objectives for the various sustainability dimensions should, if possible, be determined in the form of quantified and scheduled indicators in order to increase the binding effect and to make ongoing review possible.
- Implementing sustainability strategies in the form of independent action programs or action plans are appropriate for creating a binding effect on the administration and society as well as for developing a broad communication effect, for instance, in the form of specific implementation projects in cooperation with partners from the administration and/or business and civil society. Examples for this can be found at the level of the federal states in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia, where the strategies are designed to be implemented in the form of specific projects.
- The significance of a sustainability policy can be increased by entrenching the sustainability strategy processes at high political levels (horizontal integration). The introduction of sustainability tests

for legislative procedures can, in addition, contribute to greater sensitization for considering the principle of sustainability.

- Vertical integration of sustainability policies is of key importance particularly in multi-layered political systems and against the background of the subsidiarity principle. Likewise, a political level always has a bridge function for the levels above and below it. For this reason, getting these levels – and particularly the downstream levels – involved in the (further) development of sustainability strategies is crucial. This can be achieved, for instance, by appropriate working groups (as in the case of the National Sustainability Strategy) or by including municipalities in advisory councils project implementation.

- The participation of non-state actors in the (further) development of sustainability strategies should extend beyond pure consultative processes – and particularly online-based consultation processes. This can be realized, for instance, by advisory councils and – in the development of strategies – via broad dialogue processes with partners from academia, business and civil society, in the context of which the principles for the strategies can be determined.

The following approaches and measures were identified as best practice examples in terms of cross-cutting topics in the strategies investigated:

Content and objectives

- Holistic focus in Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia
- Quantified and scheduled objectives in Thuringia, Hesse (partly), Lower Saxony (partly), Saxony (partly), Saxony-Anhalt (partly) and Baden-Württemberg (in progress)

Monitoring and evaluation

- Independent work programs in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia
- Independent budget and participation of the departments in Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, Hesse, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia
- Regular progress reports on the basis of indicator reports in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt

Horizontal integration

- Entrenchment of the political leadership for the sustainability strategy in the center of government in Hesse
- Creation of inter-ministerial working groups for the development and implementation of sustainability strategies in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia
- Introduction of sustainability tests in the context of policy impact assessments in Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg (in planning) and Thuringia (in the context of test issues regarding legislative processes)

Vertical integration

- The inclusion of lower-level political levels in the development and implementation of sustainability strategies in Baden-Württemberg and Hesse
- Functioning communication and cooperation with lower political levels in the development and implementation of sustainability strategies in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxon-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia

Participation

- Execution of consultation processes for the development or further development of sustainability strategies in Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Schleswig-Holstein and Thuringia
- Creation of sustainability advisory councils in Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, Hesse and Thuringia

The topic "sustainable business" plays a role in all the strategies. However, there are differences in the depth, breadth and concretization of the measures. While all the strategy documents in Thuringia and Bavaria cover certain aspects, others relating to procurement and consumption are not an issue in all the strategies. On closer examination, the various strategies also have marked differences, for example, with respect to the framing of the overall context, the setting of focal points in the overall strategy, and the varying emphasis placed on the integration of ecological, social and economic sustainability (e.g., regarding the aspects of innovation and investment as well as in the issue of corporate responsibility).

In the view of the authors, the aspects "sustainable consumption" and "sustainable procurement" should be components of a comprehensive strategy. As an important component of value-creation chains, consumption can contribute significantly to severing the link between resource use and economic development. Nonetheless, sustainable consumption is an issue only in the strategies investigated in Bavaria and Thuringia. Sustainable procurement is key not least because, particularly at the national and European levels, there are developments in place that are also supposed to be applied in the longer term at the level of the federal state. Hesse holds a leading position on this issue thanks to its ambitious "CO_2-neutral Regional Government Administration" project. In 2013, Baden-Württemberg launched a similar project, titled "Climate-Neutral Regional Government Administration".

The following approaches and measures were identified as **best practice examples in terms of the topic "sustainable business"** in the strategies investigated:

- Sustainable commodities and material use through "EffCheck" for the sustainable use of resources in Rhineland-Palatinate
- Sustainable land use through cooperative land management in Bavaria, Hesse and Rhineland-Palatinate
- Sustainable innovations and investments through strategic overall approaches in Saxony-Anhalt
- Sustainable consumption through active consumer policies in Thuringia
- Promotion of social entrepreneurship in connection with CSR strategies in Thuringia
- CO_2-neutral regional government administration in Hesse

Some federal states have good approaches for explaining and formulating sustainable financial policies in their sustainability strategies – however, only a few best practice examples can be identified. In principle, almost all the states' documents ascribe an important role to a sustainable financial policy. However, it appears to be the case that sustainability strategy documents are not the ideal place to identify best practice examples for a sustainable financial policy. Depending on the case, some were developed in other processes and other papers, and some are more recent than the sustainability strategy documents of the federal states.

The following approaches and measures were identified as **best practice examples on the topic "sustainable financial policies"**:

- Sustainable financial policies through implementation of a debt cap in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia

- Sustainable financial policies through indicator-related management in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia
- Sustainable financial policies through alternative funding instruments in Brandenburg

With respect to the aspect of "spending priorities," only selective priorities are set, and these relate in almost all cases to investments in research and development. There is practically no mention of alternative financing models – which is also the case with issues related to integrating life-cycle approaches into economic feasibility calculations. It is assumed that the reason for this is that the developments regarding this at the federal and EU levels are relatively recent as well as very detailed, with the result that they have also not been included in the relevant strategy documents for reasons of communicability. On the whole, the impression arises that the sustainability strategies focus heavily on the problem of public indebtedness and the challenge of limiting this. In addition, the focus is more on the formulation of programmatic objectives, and there is no systematic representation of the measures to be taken. Indeed, the step from a programmatic approach to a pragmatic approach is apparently shied away from.

Sustainable participation in society forms an implicit component of all the strategies. However, it only appears explicitly in the dialogue-oriented processes, which do not extend beyond the consultative level. A uniform understanding of participation is not an underlying factor of the strategies. In addition, the dialogue processes tend to rather address the interested public. However, it would be meaningful if the sustainability dialogues were extended to broader sectors of the population in order to first achieve a broadening of the topic and, secondly, to make real, literal participation possible. In addition, participation can only succeed in the interplay of formal politics, civil society and affected groups, which in itself constitutes a challenge for politics. The inner tensions are recognized to some extent.

Specific statements on participation supported by objectives, measures and resources, in general and with respect to gender and generational fairness, are not made. A reason for this is probably that individual policy areas (equal treatment policies, senior citizens' policies) tend to be cited in the strategies under the label of "sustainability strategy," whereas an explicit reference to sustainable participation and structuring is only seen in rudimentary form.

The following approaches and measures were identified as **best practice examples on the topic "sustainable participation by society"**:
- Sustainable social participation through a dialogue process on the sustainability strategy in Brandenburg
- Gender equality through entrenchment in the sustainability strategy in Rhineland-Palatinate
- Sustainable senior citizens' policy in Lower Saxony

Education for sustainable development is understood holistically in most strategies with respect to the areas of education. However, in terms of content – and particularly in the presentation of measures – most of the strategies focus on the "environment" topic.

The following approaches and measures were identified as **best practice examples on the topic "education for sustainable development" (ESD)** in the sustainability strategies investigated:
- Development of a certification program for out-of-school education partners in Bavaria and Schleswig-Holstein
- State action plan for education on sustainable development in Bavaria and Brandenburg
- Inter-ministerial working group for education on sustainable development in Saxony-Anhalt
- Financial support for the structural entrenchment of education on sustainable development in Bavaria

The current UN Decade on Sustainable Development is clearly project-based, which the strategies also clearly reflect. Most of the strategies remain rather vague with respect to the creation of long-term political, institutional and financial framework conditions for a structural entrenchment of education for sustainable development (ESD). The activities of the federal states in the field of ESD are varied. The stakeholder structures are extremely complex and represented in different degrees of detail and systematization in the strategy documents. In addition, many of the documents are fairly old. Particularly taking into account the end of the UN Decade and the significance of ESD for the education policies of the states, it is suggested that a more detailed investigation be carried out to identify best practices. This investigation should analyze the present development and processes with respect to the strategy documents across all states and ensure a stronger structural entrenchment. Some reviews currently exist, for example, in the form of an overview of the secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers on Education regarding the activities of the federal states in the area of ESD.

The topic of "youth participation," which is generally regarded as an innovative best practice approach in sustainability strategies, is only taken into account in the three federal states of Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia.

The following approaches and measures were identified as **best practice examples on the topic "youth participation"** in the sustainability strategies investigated:

- Establishment of youth advisory councils and fora in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia
- Execution of youth initiatives and projects in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia
- Designing of youth platforms and websites in Baden-Württemberg, Hesse and Thuringia

An International Comparison
of Sustainability Strategies

Klaus Jacob, Hannah Kannen, Ingeborg Niestroy

Selection of sustainability strategies

What can be learned from other countries and their strategies and policies for sustainable development? In our study, we explored in total 10 countries and regions which are considered as leading countries and examples of good practices for their strategies. Our analysis aims to explore approaches which can be transferred to Germany and the German Länder. Therefore, we not only analysed the strategies and policies, but also the contextual factors which are prerequisites for the functioning of the examples of good practice. Based on this, it is possible to explore firstly, if such contextual factors are available in Germany as well, or if efforts have to be undertaken to create such framework conditions in Germany as well, in order to successfully transfer the examples.

We took several steps to identify best practices for sustainability strategies: Based on an extensive review of literature, we identified countries with a high reputation for their SD strategies and policies. This was complemented by the findings from a recent global survey undertaken by IISD on behalf of the Bertelsmann Stiftung. In addition, the experts from the advisory group of the project were asked for their opinion on our selection as well as suggestions for additional cases. As far as possible, we included cases from federal countries covering both the national level as well as the regional level.

The case selection contains two pairs (i.e., regions) that are linked to each other in the multi-layered system (Austria/Tyrol and Switzer-

land/Aargau). The joint consideration of the federal and subnational levels will make it possible to gain additional insights regarding the roles of regions in the (co-)design of sustainability processes and, at the same time, to clarify the potential and limits of the respective levels in the context of the distribution of responsibilities set out in the constitution.

As a result of this approach, we identified the following countries as examples of good practices for their strategies for sustainable development:

Aargau: In Switzerland, the Canton of Aargau is perceived as a leader when it comes to regional sustainability. A special feature in Aargau is the distribution of responsibilities: The responsibilities are mainstreamed into all departments. The coordination and implementation is in the hands of Naturama, the natural history museum.

Bhutan: Compared to the other sustainability strategies discussed here, Bhutan may be exotic at first glance. However, the country offers inspirations and innovations for more sustainability, which makes a closer analysis meaningful. Sustainability is entrenched in the entire state organization as a constitutional objective. Accordingly, the goal of economic development is not solely to increase the gross national product, but "gross national happiness." This principle is the explicitly indicated objective of the five-year plans. It is entrenched in both horizontal and vertical government coordination (Gross National Happiness Commission).

Finland: Already in the 1990s, Finland had adopted its first sustainability strategy and is frequently cited as a role model in the established literature. Effective structures of horizontal integration, continuing monitoring and updating of the strategy, as well as the Finnish National Commission for Sustainable Development, already in existence since 1993 and consisting of politicians and non-governmental stakeholders, are highlighted as excellent practices. Finland is currently preparing an updated sustainability strategy, which aims for a new societal contract for sustainable development with a vision for 2050.

Flanders: Flanders was one of the first regions to prepare a sustainability strategy. The first strategy was already adopted in 2006; the first

update took place in 2011. This came about against the background of an ordinance issued in 2008 that prescribes the development of a new sustainability strategy at the beginning of each legislative period. The current Flemish strategy is based on the long-term vision of having a sustainable society by 2050. It combines long- and medium-term objectives with short-term actions.

France: France adopted its first sustainability strategy in 2003. In the literature, reference is made to the country mainly due to two innovative processes: (a) the development of a method for an international peer review process, which France subjected itself to in 2005 and which was subsequently used throughout Europe as a model for other peer reviews; (b) the broad participatory process "Grenelle de l'Environnement," which, as an environmental summit, made the participation of professional associations and non-governmental organizations in the development of a plan for sustainable environmental protection possible.

California: In the United States and beyond, California is regarded as a leading green region. Ambitious energy-saving, climate-protection and environmental-protection objectives offer excellent economic framework conditions for innovative companies in the green sector. Best practices are expected in particular in the specialist topic "sustainable business." In addition, California adopted mechanisms of horizontal integration and participation.

Austria: The country is considered as a leader in the development and implementation of sustainability strategies since 2002. A special feature in Austria is the Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development (Österreichische Strategie Nachhaltige Entwicklung: ÖSTRAT), adopted in 2010, which the federation and states jointly conceptualized and adopted. In addition, Austria has a number of coordination committees that aim for the institutional entrenchment of the strategy (e.g., Sustainability Coordinators' Conference, Committee for a Sustainable Austria, Sustainable Austria Forum).

Switzerland: Switzerland has already had a sustainability strategy since 1997. The current version (Sustainability Strategy 2012–2015) identifies 10 key challenges for the country and five principles to meet

these challenges. Sustainable development has constitutional status in Switzerland (see Article 2 of the Constitution). In the literature, the Swiss sustainability strategy is highlighted in particular for its monitoring (MONET indicator system), the sustainability assessment of legislative processes as well as the strong linkages between the regional and federal levels in the context of the Sustainable Development Forum.

Tyrol: In Austria, this federal state is a leader with respect to its regional sustainability strategy adopted in 2012, which builds on the overall Austrian strategy (ÖSTRAT) and supplements the regional aspects. The strategy process is distinguished by a broad participatory process. Although the strategy is comparatively recent, it can link to earlier projects to increase sustainability in Tyrol. The strategy document mentions more than 100 such best practices, which are to be updated and developed in the context of the strategy.

Wales: In the course of the devolution at the end of the 1990s, political powers increased the autonomy of the Welsh national parliament. The Government of Wales Act of 1998, the UK law establishing the partial autonomy of Wales, includes mention of how the regional government is obliged to promote sustainable development. At present, the Welsh government is planning an additional act (the Future Generations Bill) according to which, besides governments, all other public institutions will have to pursue sustainability as a key organizational principle. After the dissolution of the UK Sustainable Development Commission, Wales was the only region to nominate its delegate as an independent advisor with control functions (now called the Sustainable Futures Commissioner).

Best practices for specialist and cross-cutting topics of sustainability strategies

The findings of the case studies and the analysis of the best practice examples found therein demonstrate that, over 20 years after the first global environment summit in Rio de Janeiro, significant political in-

novations have been brought about in the context of sustainability policies. Nonetheless, the challenges of sustainable development remain great for each country and each region. In all the countries considered, sustainability policies must confront a number of short-, medium- and long-term challenges regarding the physiological-geographical, financial or socio-cultural aspects. These include climate change, demographic change, the securing of social cohesion, overuse of natural resources, state indebtedness and financial crises. Overcoming these challenges must occur under political and institutional framework conditions that are generally not conducive to governing sustainable development. However, the policy innovations developed in the 10 countries and regions that were considered based on how they designed and implemented sustainability strategies show that institutions and their capacities for acting can generally be mobilized within the meaning of sustainable development.

Overall, it becomes clear in the 10 case studies that there is no single recipe for establishing and designing sustainability policies. Instead, various options can be identified in the design of sustainability strategies that have their respective advantages and disadvantages in addition to being able to supplement each other.

In the following, we present some ideal types derived from an analysis of the case studies. The goal is not to develop a ranking, but to present various options that (if pursued seriously) are effective elements of a sustainability strategy.

Content and objectives

On the one hand, strategies can be identified that pursue a distinct management approach in terms of content and objectives: In this strategy type, objectives are quantified and scheduled as far as possible, and the reaching of these targets can be supported by indicators. The competencies for achieving the objectives can be broken down, and the responsibilities for implementing the measures can be set out. Monitoring makes it possible to see the contributions made to-

ward reaching the objectives, and modifications can be made where necessary. Such a management orientation either implies a broad agreement with the content of the objectives or a strong strategic core. The French sustainability strategy that is an example of a management-oriented strategy that is close to such an ideal type.

In contrast, one can also identify strategies that have a vision at their core and from which objectives can be derived (including qualitative ones, where applicable). The vision demonstrates the need for action. The vision provides a benchmark against which activities and measures are evaluated and through which they can be justified. Ideally, this motivates further activities or gives stakeholders direction. This ideal type especially corresponds to Bhutan's sustainability strategy.

Both ideal types do not necessarily exclude the other but can complement the other. When evaluating strategies it would, however, be incorrect to only look for measurable objectives supported by indicators, as gaining legitimacy for action from principles can also establish a strategy and strategic action. Nonetheless, for vision-based strategies, it must be noted that a form of monitoring and evaluation must be ensured here, too, within the meaning of transparency and reflection.

Implementation

When implementing sustainability strategies, two ideal types can also be distinguished:

Some strategies pursue work programs specifically designed for them and contain concrete measures, competencies and, if applicable, also budgets. Based on these work programs, progress reviews can be undertaken at regular intervals so as to achieve transparency and allow for restructuring or the setting of new focal points. Examples of strategies with specific work programs are those of Austria and Tyrol.

The contrasting type is mainstreaming. The approach emphasizes the necessity of entrenching sustainability as a principle in all policy

areas – and thus in the portfolios of all ministries. In the context of the strategy, specifications are made that call on (or even obligate) all stakeholders to apply their own sustainability programs as well as to finance activities for sustainable development within their area of responsibility. Such a mainstreaming approach corresponds the most with the sustainability strategy of the Canton of Aargau.

For both of these ideal types, it must be noted that it cannot generally be said which one is the most suitable for effective target attainment. When implementing this strategy takes the form of concrete work programs, there is the danger that sustainable development will be understood as one of many fields of action that exist separately from other policy areas. An opportunity for integration may therefore also be lost here. On the other hand, the mainstreaming approach only functions if the affected stakeholders are prepared to pursue the principle of sustainable development as a key principle and within their areas of responsibility. However, experience has shown that there are always "reluctant" departments that do not regard themselves as responsible for sustainable development despite existing sustainability strategies, or that even see sustainability policies as being contrary to the interests of their departments. The decision for an implementation type should therefore always be made in the context of the existing institutional and political framework conditions.

Monitoring and evaluation

When it comes to monitoring and measuring the results of sustainability strategies, one can observe and distinguish between two approaches: one focusing on implementation activities (output) and another focusing on their effects (outcome or impact).

Output-oriented monitoring is a form of controlling the implementation of a strategy. It is usually carried out in the form of activity reports that are drafted by individual ministries or a coordination office for sustainability and are frequently submitted to the parliament for control. These activity reports sketch the progress made in imple-

menting a strategy's work programs or the programs of sectoral measures; reflect on related successes and failures; and propose plans for future action. Output-oriented monitoring in the form of activity reports is carried out in a number of places, including California, Flanders and Wales.

In contrast to this is outcome-oriented monitoring, which is mainly carried out using a certain number of quantitative and some qualitative indicators that contain statements regarding the status of sustainable development within a country or a region. Not all sustainability indicators necessarily have a causal relationship to the sustainability strategy. Nevertheless, they serve as important starting points for assessing the efforts made so far (Where can we see progress?) and pointers for the future orientation of the sustainability policy (Where is there a greater need for action?). Outcome-oriented monitoring is particularly meaningful when it allows comparisons between similar units (benchmarking). Outcome-oriented monitoring has a particularly central position in the context of the sustainability policies of Austria, Switzerland and the Canton of Aargau. The latter is also active in benchmarking: Cross-comparisons are made in the context of the "Cercle Indicateurs" forum. As part of this federation-coordinated project, 19 Swiss cantons and 16 cities have agreed on a common core indicator system.

Output- and outcome-oriented monitoring can be combined. In France, for instance, the annual activity report of the government to the parliament contains a combination of the two methods; for each focal point, both the measures taken as well as the developments in the assigned indicators are reported on. The two forms of monitoring can be supplemented by external evaluations, as is the case in Austria, Finland and Switzerland.

Horizontal integration

To achieve a horizontal integration, a range of options can be found. The 10 case studies indicate a continuum of full mainstreaming,

ranging from the coordination or interaction of departmental activities to the transfer of competencies and decision-making powers to a separate sustainability committee.

The one extreme here can be seen in Aargau and Wales, where there is no inter-ministerial coordination committee to coordinate the sustainability policies. The reason for this is a conscious decision in favor of the mainstreaming approach described above, according to which sustainable development must be integrated as a key principle into the activities of all the relevant policy areas and levels. According to this logic, there is no need to create a separate committee for sustainability policies. In Wales, such a cabinet sub-committee was even disbanded. The reason was that the promotion of sustainable development was viewed as the constitutional duty of each minister.

In other cases, sustainability policies are coordinated by inter-ministerial committees. The logic here is that, as a cross-cutting topic, sustainability affects many, if not all, policy areas, and that coordination is indispensable if the objectives are to be reached effectively and efficiently. Inter-ministerial coordination committees exist, for instance, in France and Switzerland.

The other extreme on the continuum of horizontal integration is California. Here, a separate committee (the Strategic Growth Council), made up of high-ranking politicians and officials, was created to decide on and implement a common sustainability strategy. In this case, the committee was not only created for coordination and interaction, but also for decision-making and strategy implementation.

Besides the formal institutions, structures and mechanism indicated, ad hoc instruments (e.g., sustainability assessment of policies) also serve to integrate sustainability at the horizontal level. Such sustainability assessments of all intended policies are carried out, for instance, in Bhutan (under the term "GNH screening").

Vertical integration

The vertical integration of sustainability is particularly relevant for federal countries that divide competencies between the national and regional levels. In the area of vertical integration, there are once again two options for sustainability strategies, which we will refer to as the "integration" and "coherence" options.

Here, "integration" means that the national and regional levels jointly adopt goals and execute action programs. The parallel nature of the levels of government is disregarded here within the meaning of a joint process. The textbook example is Austria's overall strategy ÖSTRAT. Wales is also on the best path to actual integration in that the so-called "duty to promote sustainable development" is also to be extended to municipal administrations in the context of the Future Generations Bill.

With the "coherence" option of vertical collaboration, even though there is no adoption of a joint strategy, there are institutionalized forms of coordination between the national and regional levels that are meant to ensure that both levels are at least operating along the same lines. Thereby, despite the lack of a common strategy, the levels do not operate in complete isolation from each other. Instead, arenas are created in which the political levels enter into contact with each other and are able to define common goals. Examples for mechanisms for coherence between the levels can be found in Switzerland, where sustainability policies are discussed in the forum "Sustainable Development," and in Finland, where local councillors can be found on all the relevant advisory committees.

Participation of non-governmental stakeholders

Concerning the participation of non-government stakeholders, there are likewise two options, and these can be combined well. On the one hand, there is the institutionalized, long-term consultation through sustainability advisory councils, which comprise various representa-

tives from business and civil society and have the task of critically supporting the sustainability policies of the government and setting new impulses. In the last 20 years, sustainability advisory councils have been established in many countries and increasingly also in regions. Finland's mixed sustainability advisory council, FNCSD, which has acted as the key committee for the country's sustainability policies for many years, must be particularly highlighted. Sustainability advisory councils are also in place in France and Austria as well as at the federal level in Belgium.

In addition to the institutionalized advisory councils, there are also ad hoc forms of the participation of non-government stakeholders in strategy processes (e.g., consultation processes). These now take place almost everywhere, even if their formats differ (e.g., online surveys, workshops). France must be mentioned here – with the "Grenelle de l'Environnement," it has likely initiated the most comprehensive participatory process. Even if the Grenelle is not solely an update to a sustainability policy, it has strongly influenced it. Institutionalization is also conceivable for ad hoc formats of participation, for instance, through the development of standards or guidelines for carrying out consultations that subsequently become binding during policy development.

Policies for Sustainable Development

Besides the sustainability strategies as a whole and their mechanisms for implementation we explored concrete policies for achieving a sustainable development. In agreement with the funders of the study and the advisory group, we searched for good practices in selected priority areas for sustainable development. These were: Sustainable business, sustainable fiscal policies, sustainable social participation, education for sustainable development and youth participation. These are issue areas for a sustainable development around the world, as we found many examples of policies in the context of the strategies for sustainable development. Our ambition was to identify good practices among these many examples of policies.

It was impossible to evaluate the actual effectiveness of policies in the context of the study. Instead we used the following criteria: Policies were considered as good practices if they have a clearly formulated objective, if they have a concrete implementation concept and if there are capacities assigned to the policy. Capacities may be a budget, an organizational responsibility or a political commitment, e.g. by the head of government. Furthermore, we focused on those examples of policies which are (not yet) introduced in Germany and hence may represent a policy innovation.

Table 1 provides an overview of the 31 examples of good practices identified in the five issue areas.

In the study, the policies are describes including the framework conditions required for their functioning. On this basis, the transfer of the policy innovations in the context of Germany can be further explored.

Table 1: Good practices in the selected issue areas

Sustainable Business	• Tekes – Program for green growth 2011 to 2015 (Finland) • Tekes – Groove program for growth with renewables 2010 to 2014 (Finland) • "Materials" transition process (Flanders) • Spatial concept Switzerland (Switzerland) • Model project "Sustainable Spatial Development" (Switzerland) • Regional plan for regionally compatible tourism development (Tyrol) • Tax credit on research expenses (France) • Fee for single-use carrier bags (Wales) • Bonus-malus system for vehicle purchases (France) • Initiatives for creating awareness for sustainable consumption (Austria) • Sitra – New business models for organic and local food (Finland) • Sustainable Development Charter (Wales) • Obligation to submit environmental and social reports (FR) • Austrian Sustainability Reporting Award (AUT) • Bonus-malus system for ministry expenses (FR)
Sustainable Fiscal Policy	• Expenses and debt cap (Aargau) • Economic stimulus program "Investments in the Future" (France) • Promotion of socially responsible investing (France) • GNH screening of the five-year plan (Bhutan)
Sustainable Social Participation	• NESTORGOLD quality seal for age-appropriate work (Austria) • GNH survey (Bhutan) • Tyrol employment project (Tyrol)
Education for Sustainable Development	• Nationwide conferences for education for sustainable development (France) • A revised Curriculum for Wales – Personal and Social Education Framework (Wales) • FNCSD: Strategy for educating and training for sustainable development and implementation 2006 to 2014 (FI) • Sitra – Courses for sustainable fiscal policies (FI)
Youth Participation	• Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales: Funky Dragon (Wales) • Tyrolean youth initiative and Tyrolean youth advisory council (Tyrol) • Children and youth participation in Austria (Austria) • Flemish youth advisory council (Flanders) • Municipal dialogue days (Finland)

Conclusion and Way Forward

Henrik Riedel

Participative transfer process

In the chapter "Introduction and Overview," it was determined that a significant problem in the development of sustainability strategies at the country level is that best practices from other countries, regions or states are not known, or only known to some extent, and can therefore not be used by countries to develop their own strategies.

The objective of the studies on sustainability strategies in Germany, Europe and the world contained in this publication was to remedy "transparency deficits" at least to some extent. It is clear that we have only been able to clarify selected and not all policy areas in the context of the investigations carried out. It is also clear that we have not been able to analyze the investigated strategies in as much detail as would have been desirable. And, ultimately, it is clear that the final effect of the best practices that were identified have generally not been measured or could not be measured.

Nevertheless, the best practices found offer ideas and methods to stimulate and promote the strategy-development process. As the principle of sustainability requires, best practices should be transferred in the most participatory way possible. With the participation of important stakeholders in a topic, it is ensured that all the aspects relevant to a transfer are taken into account. In addition, those affected are made to be participants, guaranteeing acceptance of the best practice-based measures from the outset. In turn, acceptance is a positive factor for the successful implementation of the measures. Of course, in

political and administrative processes, legitimation through participation is not the only mechanism that can and may be relied on; in addition, it is important to achieve legitimacy through law, knowledge or other sources.

Under participation-transfer processes, a distinction must be made between citizen-oriented and expert-oriented processes. Citizen-oriented processes focus on the participation of affected or interested citizens; expert-oriented processes focus on the participation of experts or stakeholders. In the following, we present examples of both a citizen- and an expert-oriented process for the transfer of best practices.

Citizen-oriented transfer process (example)

An example of a citizen-oriented process for the transfer of best practices for sustainability strategies is Germany's citizens' forum, or BürgerForum. The Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Heinz Nixdorf Stiftung jointly developed this format and tested it many times. In 2008 and 2009, smaller pilot projects first took place at the national level on the topics of "Social Market Economy" and "Europe," each with 400 participants. In 2011, 25 citizens' fora were held at the municipal level, each with 400 participants (thus with a total of some 10,000 citizens). Based on these experiences, the BürgerForum was further developed into a standardized participation format.

The special feature of the BürgerForum is that it combines the advantages and opportunities of attendance events and online discussions in addition to highlightning – with the support of experts – high-quality suggestions on a strategically relevant topic formulated by citizens themselves. The BürgerForum comprises four phases:
- Invitation and information phase
- Kick-off workshop as a full-day attendance event
- Four-week online workshop for developing the results of the kick-off workshop

- Results workshop as a half-day attendance event to hand over the developed citizens' suggestions to politics, administration and civil society.

During the first phase of the BürgerForum, the general public is informed of the topic (e.g., via press and internet announcements) and encouraged to register on an online platform. In addition, difficult-to-reach target groups are addressed directly (e.g., via telephone) and encouraged to participate. The objective is to achieve a representative composition of the BürgerForum according to certain criteria (in particular, age and gender).

In addition to the invitation and registration, the first phase is about informing citizens as best as possible regarding the topic of the BürgerForum (e.g., via existing studies, analyses and best practices). This can take place as a once-off measure or several times in the period between when the invitations are sent out and the kick-off workshop is held.

The BürgerForum officially starts with the kick-off workshop. During this full-day attendance event, the approximately 200 participants get to know each other, develop the first suggestions and elect so-called "citizens' editors" for the subsequent online workshop.

The basis for the discussions in the kick-off workshop is the World Café format. First, participants are given an opportunity to subdivide the topic of the forum into two to six sub-topics as well as to form a specialist committee for each sub-topic. In each specialist committee, discussions are held at tables in small groups of four to six people. If necessary or desired, participants can include in the discussion any subject-matter experts in attendance so as to obtain additional relevant information. Several of these discussion-group meetings are held consecutively, with participants rotating to different tables. By the end of the kick-off event, three proposals that have arisen from previous voting rounds are prioritized by each specialist committee. These proposals can be published as interim results. In addition, they form the basis for detailed development and review during the online workshop.

During the four-week online workshop, participants discuss the proposals from the kick-off workshop in greater detail, develop them further and draft them. The citizens' editors elected in the kick-off workshop are particularly important here: They ask searching questions to the discussion participants and add their responses into the proposed text in a balanced way. In this way, well-thought-out, differentiated and realistic proposals arise online from the spontaneous suggestions put forward at the kick-off workshop. In the online discussion, experts and other interested citizens have an opportunity to participate and submit comments. At the end of the online workshop, the proposal with the most supporters in each specialist committee becomes the key proposal. At the end, the proposals selected in this way from the individual specialist committees are combined into proposals made by citizens.

The BürgerForum is concluded with a half-day attendance event involving all participants as well as representatives from politics, administration and civil society. Here, the participants present the proposals and discuss them with those present. The addressees comment on the proposals and explain how the individual approaches will be handled further.

Additional information about the four phases mentioned above can be found on the website of the BürgerForum (www.buergerforum.info/).

The advantages of the BürgerForum are:

(1) The BürgerForum motivates people to engage in politics who would otherwise not become involved, and it guarantees a varied composition of participants (in particular, by directly addressing and motivating people to collaborate).

(2) The BürgerForum takes into account the different interests and abilities of participants (in particular, due to the combination of online and off-line offerings).

(3) The BürgerForum enables an integration of consultations with citizens, on the one hand, and experts who are included in the discussions as required by citizens, on the other hand.

(4) The BürgerForum provides sound, high-quality proposals due to the varied composition of the participants, the multi-week discussion process and the opportunity to consult experts.

(5) The BürgerForum improves discussions between citizens and politicians, thereby creating the basis for the long-term acceptance of broad political decisions.

(6) The BürgerForum has a strong public impact that is primarily established by the facts that the format is publically announced and the events are attended by politicians and media representatives.

(7) The BürgerForum is a process that has been tested many times and that, in principle, leads to reliable outcomes – with clearly defined tasks for the individual phases of the process.

The above-mentioned advantages recommend the use of the Bürger-Forum, if necessary, as a citizen-oriented process for transferring best practices to the planning and implementation of sustainability strategies.

Expert-oriented transfer process (example)

In the following, we present a development and survey process that was designed for use in the context of the project "Developing Successful Sustainability Strategies" as an example of an expert-oriented process for transferring best practices for sustainability strategies. The focus of this process is on the inclusion of experts, i.e., stakeholders and other specialists. The process provides for a project group consisting of experts in the respective topics to provide expert opinions on proposals for designing sustainable policies.

The impulses are further developed step-by-step on the basis of appropriate survey methods: At first, focus groups discuss the content; the further-developed content is then included in a representative survey. Experts in the selected topics participate in the focus groups. The survey should be representative for the population of the respective country and be conducted via telephone.

The special feature of the development and survey process lies in how it uses two different survey methods. With the first "feedback loop" (focus groups), the objective is primarily to first further improve the quality of the project group's proposals. With the second feedback loop (representative survey), information needed for the acceptance of the proposals is obtained and used for the finalization of the proposals.

The advantages of the development and survey process are:

(1) The process is appropriate for generating high-quality proposals and impulses for the sustainability strategy of the respective country, as the focus is placed on the inclusion of experts (in the context of the development process, by the project group; in the context of the survey process, by the focus groups).

(2) By means of the final, representative survey, the process provides information regarding the acceptance of the proposals or impulses developed in the population of the respective country.

(3) The process represents a thought-out interlinking of the development and survey stages, the individual steps of which are transparent and can be verifiably documented.

(4) The process is based on tested formats and methods, which leads to reliable results with clearly defined tasks at the outset for the individual steps of the process.

Summary

The selection of a suitable process for the transfer of best practices in the field of sustainable strategies should be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the situation.

While a citizen-oriented process might be more suitable in one country, an expert-oriented one might work better in another. No matter what the case might be, however, experts should be included in citizen-oriented processes so that there are no theoretical deficits in the results, and citizens should be included in expert-oriented processes so that there are no practical deficits in the results.

Lastly, it should be borne in mind that the participation of citizens (with experts) or experts (with citizens) is not only necessary, but also meaningful to transfer best practices for sustainability strategies from one application to the other. In turn, taking best practices into account assists in successfully structuring the development of sustainability strategies.

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