

THE FRENCH NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A Background Report (revised)

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1. Background

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), in 2002, the President of the French Republic, M. Jacques Chirac, made a commitment that France would be prepared to submit its national strategy for sustainable development (NSDS) to be 'peer reviewed' by other countries.

“To verify the application of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, France proposes that the Commission for Sustainable Development be given a function to undertake peer reviews, like that existing for example in the OECD. And France is ready to subject itself to be the first to be evaluated”.

As a follow up to this commitment, a project has been initiated and is being managed by the French Ministère de l'Ecologie et du Développement Durable (Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development) and the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The project aims to develop and test a methodology for peer review/shared learning on NSDSs, using the French NSDS as an experimental pilot case. A workshop was organised on 8-9 November 2004 to bring together invited reviewing countries (Belgium, Ghana, Mauritius, the UK), French NSDS actors and others (the European Commission and UN DESA¹) to discuss an appropriate and workable methodology. The agreed methodology has been used and tested during a peer review/shared learning workshop in February 2005.

The experience from testing this experimental approach will be presented at the next meeting of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) in New York in April 2005. It is hoped that the approach will be found to have broad value and that one or two other countries will be willing to use it and modify it as required. Subsequently, following such additional testing, development and trial application, it is hoped that a suggested generic approach along these lines will be presented and recommended to the CSD in 2006. It is further hoped that such a peer review/shared learning methodology will be of help to countries as they seek to meet the UN target on NSDS² set out in the WSSD Plan of Implementation (para 145).

This Background report has been prepared as part of the preparatory phase for the pilot French peer review workshop. It aims to provide workshop participants with information about the French NSDS, particularly the reviewing country participants, so that all have a basic understanding of the strategy. The document follows the same structure that will be used as a framework for the peer review/shared learning workshop, covering:

- **Process(es)** through which the NSDS was prepared, developed and managed and then implemented (such information is seldom evident in any detail in strategy documents);
- **Content** – the areas of focus and structure of the strategy;
- **Outcomes** - the resulting plans, policies, regulations and incentives, and actions, and the effectiveness of these; and
- **Monitoring** (including the indicators used).

It also harnesses the views expressed by interviewed strategy actors on these themes, and on key issues and challenges.

¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

² “Take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005”.

The French NSDS was released on 3 June 2003 and is still, therefore, in the early stages of implementation. As a result, the questionnaires and interviews used to prepare this report yielded far more information on the strategy process and much less on the three other themes.

2. Preparation of this report

This report derives from a two-part process involving first a questionnaire and then structured interviews with 14 individuals who had been key actors in the development of the French NSDS.

The Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared a list of individuals to be interviewed (Appendix 1) and a questionnaire (Appendix 2) was sent to each in September 2004. Structured interviews were then undertaken with these individuals between 25th and 28th October using the framework of questions listed in Appendix 3. Supplementary questions were added to explore issues arising from an analysis of the responses to the questionnaire.

The report has been revised to incorporate new information arising during the peer review workshop on 7-11 February 2005.

3. Administrative structure in France³ (Figure 1)

3.1 Central level

France is a democratic and parliamentary state based on the separation of powers:

- Executive power is shared between the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister and his government;
- Legislative power is exerted by the Parliament made of the National Assembly and the Senate; and
- Legal power is ensured by an independent judiciary (“magistrature”).

The President of the Republic is elected through a general election, every 5 years.

The government is headed by the Prime Minister, nominated by the President. Ministers are also nominated by the President, on a proposal of the Prime Minister. The government determines and leads national policy. It is represented locally by Prefects in Regions and Départements.

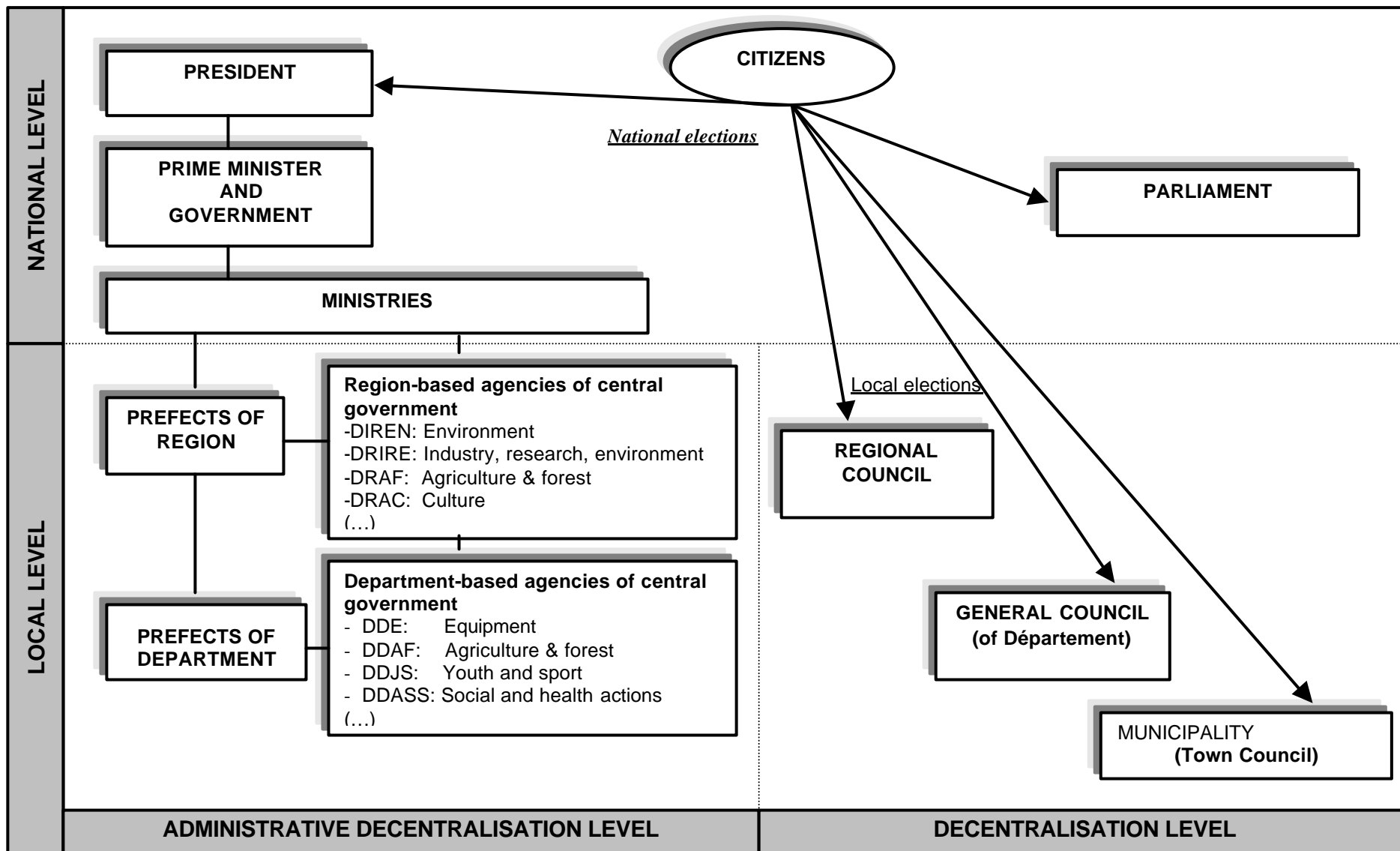
Parliament comprises two chambers:

- the National Assembly: 577 Members of Parliament are elected by the citizens, for a 5 years term;
- the Senate: Senators are elected for 6 years by indirect election through a college of electors (MPs, representatives of Département Councils and representatives of municipalities including the mayors). Half the members are elected every three years. Under the organic law of 30 July 2003, the number of senators will increase gradually from 321 (before the 2004 elections) to 346 in 2010.

³ according to information available on:

www.dgcl.interieur.gouv.fr/Orga_territoriale/accueil_orga_territ.html

Figure 1: French administrative structure



Apart from the traditional executive and legislative bodies, there are several consultative bodies:

- the Constitutional Council (*Conseil constitutionnel*): supreme jurisdiction responsible for guaranteeing that laws are constitutional;
- the Council of State (*Conseil d'état*): supreme jurisdiction in administrative matters;
- the Court of Auditors (*Cours des comptes*): audits public accounts;
- the Higher Council of Judiciary (*le Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature*): guarantees the independence of the judges;
- the Economic and Social Council (*Conseil économique et social*): composed of representatives of companies, trade unions, farmers, households, etc.

3.2 *Local level*

The local administrative organisation of France is characterised by locally-based agencies of central government and local authorities.

Since decentralisation, there have been three levels of local authorities: the municipality, the département and the region. In addition, there are inter-municipality cooperation bodies.

3.2.1 The Prefects and locally-based agencies of central government:

The Prefect is the local representative of the central government, the Prime minister and each Minister, and is the head of the locally-based agencies of central government (eg *Directions régionales de l'environnement* (DIREN) – Regional Offices of the Ministry of Environment). S/he is nominated by a Presidential decree during a Council of Ministers, on a proposal of both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Home Affairs. The Prefect of the Département in which the regional capital town/city is located is also the Prefect of that Region. S/he is responsible for the police, the organisation of elections and emergency assistance in case of disasters.

In to ensuring respect of the law, the Prefect provides support and advice to local authorities. S/he also plays a significant role in the contractual relations, agreements and conventions made with local authorities on behalf of the central government.

In the field of regional planning, the Prefect has a central role to negotiate “*Contrats de plan*” concluded between the central government and the regions.

3.2.2 Local authorities

- *The municipality (“commune”)*

This administrative level is the smallest but also the oldest subdivision in France. It was instituted in 1789 and began to achieve autonomy with the law of 5 April 1884, a genuine communal charter.

A town council (“*Conseil municipal*”) is elected every 6 years through local elections. Once elected, the town councillors elect the mayor.

The mayor is the town executive and manages the budget. S/he is the employer of the town’s employees and is in charge of local public services: schools; town planning; social action;

roads; school transport; domestic garbage collection; sanitation, etc. S/he is also an agent of the central government for registration (births, marriages, deaths), some police-related actions, organisation of elections and delivering regulatory documents.

Currently, there are 36,778 towns in France (including 162 in the overseas *département* and territories).

- *the département*

Created during the *Revolution*, the *département* became an autonomous local authority, with a deliberation body and an elected executive body under the law of 10 August 1871.

A general council (“*Conseil général*”) is elected every six years through local elections, and manages the *département*. It elects the Head of the *département* who prepares and carries out the Council deliberations and manages the budget and staff.

The *département* has broad competences: social action; constructing and maintaining secondary schools; rural regrouping; and organising school transport.

There are 100 *départements* (including 4 overseas).

- *the region*

The region is the most recently introduced local authority structure, under the decentralisation law of 16 March 1986, and reconfirmed by the constitutional revision of 28 March 2003. Regional councilors are elected for 6 years through local elections.

The regional Council (“*Conseil Régional*”) elects a President who manages the budget and staff, and conducts the regional policy focused on economic action, regional planning and vocational training.

In France, there are 26 regions, including 4 overseas.

4. Process of developing the French NSDS

4.1 Earlier Initiatives

In 1995, the Prime Minister decided to charge the then Ministry of Environment and Regional Planning with the development of a sustainable development strategy. In 1996, the then French Commission for Sustainable Development (CFDD), chaired by Christian Brodhag (this body was established in 1993 and dissolved in May 2003) made 35 proposals on a strategy, following national and regional meetings. A first sustainable development strategy entitled “*French strategy for sustainable development*” was prepared mainly by the Ministry of Environment working through inter-Ministerial meetings and drawing from the work of the CFDD. This strategy was published in 1997 and its main axes were submitted to the United Nations CSD in 1997.

It aimed to review the obstacles to SD and assess what needed to be changed in public policy. Its development involved a long process of discussion at both national and regional levels.

But, according to the Introduction to the current NSDS, the 1997 strategy was an abstract exercise that failed to materialise in operational terms. It remained an academic exercise agreed by inter-Ministerial officials, but not formally adopted by the government. According

to those interviewed, the strategy had little influence because it wasn't followed by a strong political commitment and sufficient media coverage.

During spring 1997, the dissolution of the parliament led to a change of government and this strategy sat on the shelf. However, a policy related to climate change and a national climate change plan (*Plan national de Lutte contre le Changement Climatique*) were implemented.

In 2001, a second project was initiated by the Cabinet of the Ministry of Environment. It took some of its ideas from the 1997 strategy document and was designed to engage Ministers, but it involved no consultations.

The 2001 French report⁴ to the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) mentioned that the country had developed a "national sustainable development policy and/or a national strategy to implement Agenda 21 and/or another strategy focused on sustainable development". Like the 1997 strategy initiative, this second strategy was not put into operation.

4.2 Government commitment to a new NSDS

4.2.1 Preparation of the Johannesburg Summit

With the WSSD approaching (in 2002), the new government recognised that the earlier attempts to produce and implement strategies for SD had not been pragmatic and had lacked adequate public involvement. It made a political commitment to produce a new strategy. The medium-term problems were generally already well understood (e.g. climate change). It was recognised that the main challenge was to move away from vague theories about SD and focus on concrete actions to make SD visible.

In 2001, the government established the French Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, chaired by M. Michel Mousel, and reporting to the Prime Minister. Its task was to prepare the position of French civil society for the WSSD. It brought together 60 representatives of French institutions involved in sustainable development. Regional consultations were organised with civil society actors.

The Committee set up Working Groups to examine 13 priority themes:

- Water;
- Energy;
- Health;
- Agriculture and food security;
- Culture:
 - Culture and sustainable development;
 - The Francophone world and sustainable development;
 - Education and sustainable development;
- Research;
- Cities and local authorities;
- Access to basic services;
- Public-private partnerships and funding;
- Corporate, social and environmental responsibility;
- Ethical trading and fair trade;
- Social and ecological inequities;
- International cooperation.

⁴ This report is a response to a questionnaire sent by the Commission of Sustainable Development in order to monitor the implementation of Agenda 21 at a national level.

The suggestions made by the Working Groups were presented at a symposium in Rennes on 1-2 July 2002, and then formulated in the *French Participants' White Paper on Sustainable Development*. This document has been used for the elaboration of the current NSDS.

4.2.2 A strong political commitment

President Chirac also made sustainable development a key platform of his re-election manifesto (he was re-elected on 6th May 2002) and proposed the inclusion of an Environmental Charter within the Constitution. This raised the focus given to sustainable development.

In May 2002 (following the re-election of the President), the government changed the name of the Ministry of Environment and Regional Planning to the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development (MEDD) and nominated a Secretary of State for Sustainable Development – giving weight to its commitment to sustainable development.

The speech of President Chirac at the WSSD in September 2002 also provided a strong political impetus and led to broader political will across government to address sustainable development. The manifesto pledge and the WSSD speech led to sustainable development being taken far more seriously.

Subsequently, some ministers have begun to implement sustainable development actions within their administrations. The Minister of Economy, Francis Mer, initiated a change in the public market code, integrating social and environmental objectives in the selection of sub-contractors, despite some opposition within the administration (this modification was adopted in January 2004, see section 7.5).

The government has also taken action at decentralised levels. During 2002, the Committee of Directors of DIREN (*Direction régionale de l'environnement* – Regional Offices of the Ministry of Environment) was requested by the Ministry of Environment to prepare a report on actions towards sustainable development in the regions.

The strong political commitment at the heart of government also resonated with different elements of society who have become more aware of the need to change to a sustainable development path, for example, as a result of increasing awareness of vulnerability to environmental disasters such as oil tanker spillages.

4.2.3 The Government seminar

Following the WSSD and as an initial step in the process to develop the NSDS, it was decided to organise a “**Government seminar on sustainable development**”. It was coordinated by the Cabinet of the Prime Minister’s Office and was an effort to sensitise and engage Ministers and administrations (Box 1). The decision to involve all Ministers was a deliberate attempt to move away from a centralised approach to a more cross-cutting one. To prepare for this seminar, the Cabinet of the State Secretary in charge of sustainable development liaised closely with the Cabinet Directors of every ministry and appealed to them to:

- nominate a Senior official (*Haut Fonctionnaire*) in charge of sustainable development within their administration; and
- propose actions in order to illustrate sustainable development, in their sector, now and in the future.

Box 1: Sensitising Ministers and Administrations

Q: why organise a government seminar on sustainable development?

R: This seminar is the starting point of a new voluntary approach. The aim is to:

- **Launch the work** of the NSDS by proposing a framework for its development and follow up;
- Highlight **the shared commitment** of the whole government, due to the fact that an effective sustainable development approach needs cross-cutting initiatives;
- Participate in the essential initiative of **information and sensitisation** of citizens and civil society actors on the importance of SD

Source: Dossier d'information, Séminaire gouvernemental sur le développement durable, 28 novembre 2002. Available on <http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/dossier-seminaire28novembre2002-2.pdf>

In parallel, a baseline document was prepared for the seminar. It aimed to define six themes of action for the NSDS: economic activity and sustainable development; territory and sustainable development; precaution, prevention and police; Information, education and sensitisation and exemplary state and international action. Around these themes, the document set out 64 short-term measures illustrating the sustainable development approach in every policy.

The Government Seminar, chaired by the Prime Minister, took place on 28 November 2002⁵. It was attended by all 29 ministers and included a number of eminent personalities/scientists to explain the concepts and challenges of sustainable development. According to some interviewed actors, this seminar was well covered by the TV media. It was the first time that such a ministerial seminar had been devoted to a single subject – sustainable development (usually there would be an agenda of items to discuss), signifying the importance given to this matter. The seminar formally decided to develop a new NSDS (by June 2003⁶) with a five-year time frame (Box 2).

The Seminar participants decided to set up two bodies to facilitate the strategy process:

- an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development (CIDD) – established through a Presidential Decree on 21 February 2003.

The CIDD⁷ (Chaired by the Prime Minister or, by delegation, by the Minister in charge of Sustainable Development) includes all other relevant Ministers. It was given formal responsibility for “the definition of orientations, monitoring their implementation, adopting the NSDS, and approving action plans and annual reports on NSDS”; and to ensure the coherence of the actions of all ministries with the government’s sustainable development policy and France’s European and international commitments.

⁵ A second similar seminar on sustainable development progress is planned in March 2005 where the recommendations from the peer review could also be considered.

⁶ The exact reasons for setting this date are not entirely clear. Some interviewees suggested that it was desired to have the NSDS in place in time for the G8 Summit being hosted by France at Evian in June 2003. Others suggested that, because the strategy would have a five-year horizon, this had to fit within the period of office of the President – the next election is due in 2007. Apparently, it was originally the intention, after the Presidential elections, to adopt the NSDS by the end of 2002, but it was too late to achieve this in the time remaining.

⁷ See decree 21 February 2003

Box 2: Decision to develop an NSDS of the Government Seminar on Sustainable Development

Q: Why a national sustainable development strategy for France?

R: Sustainable development necessitates in-depth changes in behaviour and working methods of all the components of society. In view of the extent of the task and of the scope of the problems to be dealt with, it is important to organise the approach to give to everybody a **common vision** of the issues and of the necessary developments in the short- and medium-term, to specify the **methods of integration** of sustainable development in public policies, and finally to **follow the progress** achieved in this field. This is the objective of the development of a national sustainable development strategy.

Sustainable development aims to reconcile economic development, social equity and environmental protection, and concerns all government policies: international action, economic and social policies, actions in the field of education or research, sectoral policies on agriculture, transport, tourism...

All ministries are, therefore, required to mobilise themselves **to identify** the required actions and to **organise and manage these on a hierarchical basis**. Since this overall approach is also **cross-cutting**, they will have to work cooperatively and encourage all civil society actors to work in the same direction. The national sustainable development strategy has to put into perspective all the actions to work effectively in search of sustainable development.

Source: Dossier d'information, Séminaire gouvernemental sur le développement durable, 28 Novembre 2002

- a National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDD) – established through a Decree of the Prime Minister on 13 January 2003⁸, chaired by Anne-Marie Ducroux and under the responsibility of the Prime Minister. As such, some people may regard its independence as ‘discretionary’. The CNDD represents the interface of the government to take into account the views of civil society and to carry on work undertaken by the French Committee for WSSD and the former French Commission for Sustainable Development⁹.

The CNDD is a forum that brings together 90 representatives from civil society and local authorities. “It gives support to the government’s SD policy. To this extent, it participates in the development, monitoring and evaluation of the NSDS”¹⁰. It is made up of 4 groups: representatives of (i) local authorities, (ii) businesses, employers’ associations, labour unions, (iii) NGOs, consumers’ organisations (iv) qualified individuals (media, scientists).

Figure 2 gives a view of the NSDS development and highlights two different processes:

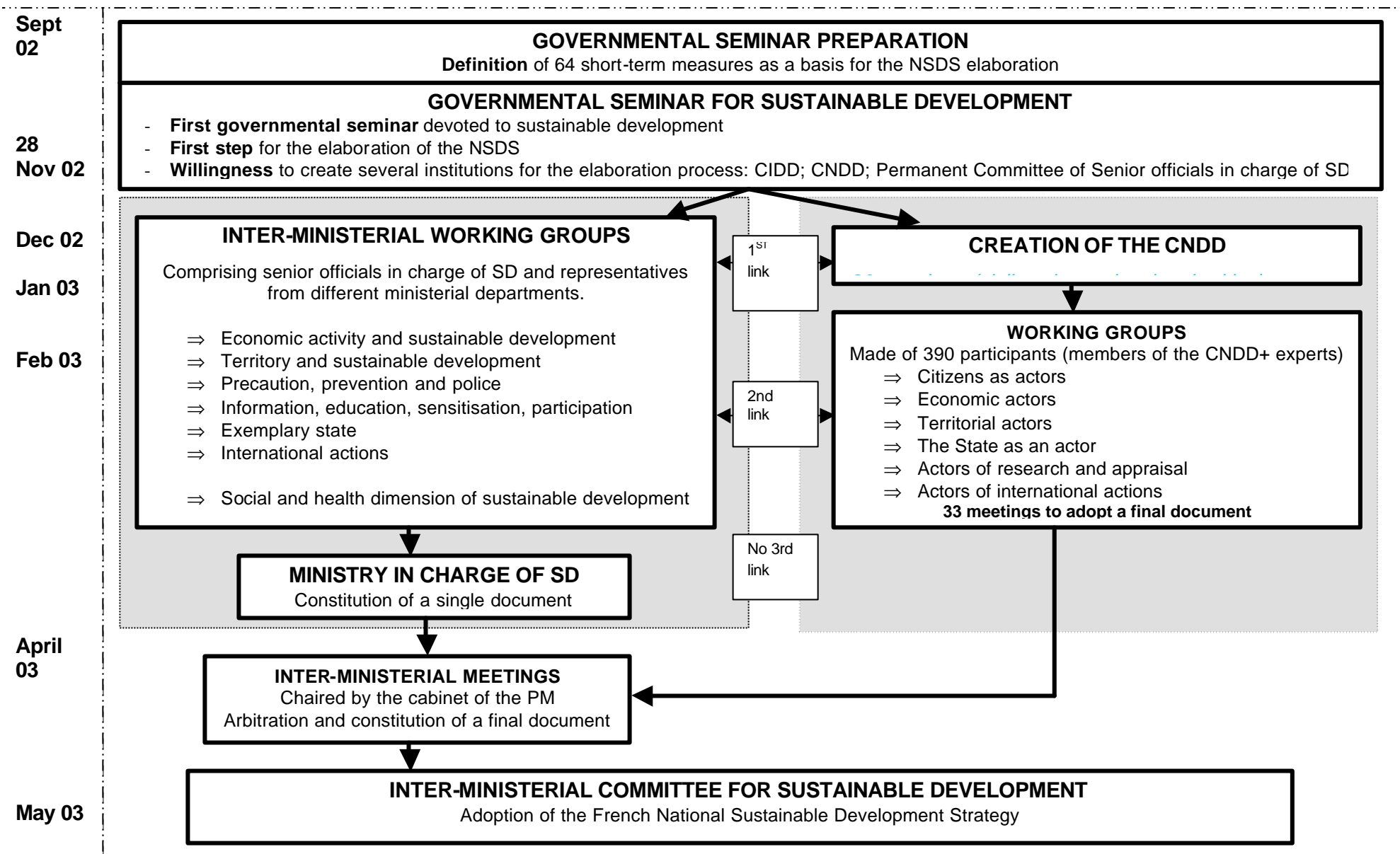
- the government process (political and administrative)
- the civil society process through the CNDD

⁸ The Prime Minister issued a Decree concerning the CNDD renewing in March 2005.

⁹ See press releases of the government

¹⁰ See decree of the 13 of January 2003

Figure 2: French NSDS development



4.3 Government process

In December 2002, the proposed strategic axes, defined during the Seminar were finalised by ministries. The next month, a number of Working Groups met, each focusing on one of the axes. The Ministry of Ecology was in charge of managing the process. The Working Groups also included representatives of different local offices of ministries (eg, a representative of DIREN participated in each group) and were chaired by Senior Officials in charge of sustainable development. They considered six key themes:

1. Economic activity and sustainable development;
2. Territory and sustainable development;
3. Precaution, prevention and police;
4. Information, education, sensitisation, participation;
5. Exemplary state (i.e. greening government departments, an exemplary employer...);
6. International actions.

A seventh theme devoted to the social dimension and sustainable development, was added later.

The Working Group Chairs had difficulty to identify the right people in different ministries to participate. Some Working Groups (eg International Actions) had initial problems to identify actions on the 64 measures already agreed at the Government Seminar. Some interviewees commented that strong group effects became apparent and this then enabled good debates.

Each Working Group produced a theme report in April 2003. Based on these, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development produced a synthesis document in mid-April. This was discussed and elaborated further during May 2003 through arbitration in a series of Inter-Ministerial Meetings involving officials (RI: Réunion Inter-Ministerielle) (chaired by the Cabinet of the Prime Minister).

The final strategy was then submitted to, and adopted at, a meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development (CIDD) (3rd June 2003). The text is available on: www.ecologie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/sndd-2.pdf. This was the first and only time (so far) that this Committee has met¹¹.

It also decreed the appointment of a Senior Official in each Ministry to be responsible for Sustainable Development - mirroring the existing Senior Official for Defence in each Ministry (giving the position the same title symbolised the importance of this action). In addition the CIDD decreed the establishment of a Permanent Committee of Senior Officials in charge of Sustainable Development.

At the same time, the government also launched regional and national public debates on the Environment Charter and on the energy related theme.

4.4 The civil society process (CNDD)

In parallel to the governmental process, the National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDD) was established on 14th of January 2003. It then had to move rapidly to organise

¹¹ One interviewee noted that, if the Committee had met again, it could have resolved a conflict of view over taxes with respect to climate changes between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Ecology and SD.

itself, in 6 groups, with limited staff and financial resources¹², to produce an input within the short timeframe being pursued by the government.

Along with members of the CNDD, about 300 individuals participated voluntarily in a number of Working Groups. In order to be efficient and quick and also to facilitate the examination of proposals, these were broadly the same themes as those of the government Working Groups, but with changed titles to show a less institutional approach and highlight the role of actors:

1. Citizens and actors;
2. Economic actors;
3. Territory and actors;
4. The State as an actor;
5. Actors of research and appraisal;
6. Actors of international actions

The Government Seminar indicated that there should be a series of three formal links between the CNDD work and that of the government and senior officials in developing the NSDS:

- *1st link* (at the outset): When the work started in late January 2003, the CNDD received a one-page note with the six starting themes (the seventh had not been added at that time). This document framed the first working groups.
- *2nd link* (early March 2003): CNDD received a document from the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development containing the strategic axes and some objectives for each axis¹³. These, in particular, were discussed in a plenary meeting in March 2003.
- *3rd link* was to be related to action plans (from the different ministries), but the CNDD did not receive the requested information. Some representatives of the government pointed out that the strategy would be a provisional document, to be modified after its adoption through further consultations with the CNDD. However, more or less informal meetings were organised between heads of government groups and coordinators of CNDD groups.

In order to facilitate choices, the CNDD prepared proposal forms to be used by individuals and network of actors, criteria to facilitate debates and to set priorities for suggested proposals. The proposals of the CNDD were made having regard to earlier proposals made by civil society in 1996 for the 1997 strategy and later for the WSSD, and also to the European Sustainable Development Strategy. 33 meetings were organised in Paris between the end of January and the end of March, in order to deliver the report to the Prime minister at the end of April 2003. They involved 300 actors, mainly heads of network, representing thousands of people from different interests. These meetings identified strategic axes, quantified and scheduled objectives and concrete proposals for actions on the objectives with indicators.

All participants contributed voluntarily to the exercise, but this was in addition to their regular jobs and responsibilities. The CNDD way of working meant that stakeholders had to reach agreement. As a result, they found it difficult to cope with the pressure generated by the tight time schedule. Nevertheless, the mobilisation of actors was very strong, showing a real interest in the process and a strong expectation.

¹² The CNDD budget (initially only a 3-month budget) was only made clear four months after its constitution (the budget was later extended to 12 months) – so it had difficulties to operate.

¹³ At this time, the CNDD had already scheduled the last working groups, in order to respect the government's deadlines.

The Working Group proposals were distilled into a first report. This was circulated to CNDD members for comment. 700 amendments (200 pages) were proposed and negotiated, between actors, in a CNDD plenary on 23rd April. A final document¹⁴ was adopted during this meeting, showing debates and consensus reached between members.

The CNDD report was submitted to the Prime Minister and to the Ministry of Ecology at the end of April 2003 and fed into the series of Inter-Ministerial meetings. The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDD) was then scheduled to meet and consider the NSDS on 13 May (in the event the meeting was deferred to 3rd June). The short period between the submission of the CNDD report and the adoption the NSDS caused some concern in the CNDD. During the CIDD meeting, the President of the CNDD was invited to make a short presentation on the CNDD report (a very rare occurrence – usually only Ministers speak).

The CNDD considers that it was consulted too late in the process to enable an in-depth examination of the proposals during inter-ministerial meetings. According to some of those interviewed, it is unclear whether the CNDD's ideas were drawn upon at all and had any influence at all on the NSDS. Other people stressed that if the final NSDS document is compared with the contribution of the CNDD, it is possible to identify the influence of the CNDD.

After the CIDD meeting, a request was made that the Prime Minister or a government representative attend a CNDD plenary to report on how its work had been included in the strategy process. The CNDD finally received a polite reply, but without any comment on the CNDD's proposals. When the CNDD had access to the final text of the strategy, there were strong debates among members. Eight CNDD members (NGOs) decided to express their view and the Prime minister agreed to meet them.

The CNDD decided, in September to gather views of the members on the final NSDS. This report (*“Paroles d’acteurs reactions - propositions et recommandations”*, September 2003) represents first reactions rather than a detailed analysis of the NSDS.

A number of interviewees reported that the government Working Groups had a relatively poor understanding of the views of civil society. Some people reported that there were informal exchanges between members of the CNDD and government Working Groups (through the chairs). Thus, some government groups were able to take on board ideas being developed by CNDD groups. But overall, people felt there was very little effective dialogue or exchange between the separate processes of the government and the CNDD. Furthermore, they felt that the development of the NSDS was not an ‘open’ process and that it did not enable the production of a final document which incorporated the views of both sides.

One reason highlighted by interviewees was the rather short time schedule with an insufficient inter-ministerial process after the delivery of CNDD proposals. Time ran out. This situation can also be explained by the fact that the traditional ‘political’ culture in France reinforced taking a centralised and ‘top-down’ approach. The political and administrative decision-making processes do not appear to have been capable of taking into account views from other processes and sources.

¹⁴ « *Première contribution de la société civile et des collectivités territoriales: Changer de cap, de références, de comportements individuels et collectifs: trois portes à ouvrir* », available on: http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/cndd_rapport050503.pdf

4.5 Post adoption

NGOs were not satisfied by the outcome of the NSDS development process. There was criticism of the lack of feedback which meant that they did not know what happened to their contributions and proposals. For example, Transparency International had submitted a range of suggestions on dealing with corruption (particularly regarding export companies). NGOs were disappointed at the lack of vision in the adopted text, the contradictions between political decisions, and the fact that insufficient account appeared to have been taken of the CNDD proposals. They wrote to the Prime Minister.

There was relatively little coverage of the NSDS in the press after its adoption. It was adopted during the first Sustainable Development Week in France and press reports focused more on the concept of sustainable development than on the adoption of a strategic national document. But the government focused on content rather than communication. Since the adoption of the strategy, there have been occasional attempts at communication, but without real coordination or global vision. Clearly the press and public require shorter, more 'accessible' documents to be able to understand and interpret the NSDS.

5. Content

The NSDS adopted on 3 June 2003 extends, with detailed actions programmes, the short-term measures agreed at the Governmental Seminar in November 2002. According to the first annual report on NSDS implementation (see Appendix 5), the NSDS "establishes an intervention framework to take into account long-term and global effects resulting from economic development and individual behaviour. It directs the governmental action for the next five years and fixes objectives to every minister".

5.1 The dimensions of sustainable development

The NSDS text focuses on the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). In the introduction, the Prime Minister also refers to a fourth dimension – culture, although this theme is not explicitly picked up through the rest of the document (except with regard to issues related to architecture and culture diversity).

However, some interviewees commented that much of the debate during the writing of the strategy focused on environmental concerns. It was pointed out that France has experience over the past 20 years of integrating environmental and economic issues, but that it is less easy to integrate the social concerns. It was also observed that, in France, 'social' is translated rather narrowly as those matters under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs, eg focusing on salary differentials, equity concerns, exclusions, etc. It was suggested that there is a cultural difference in the way that the "social" dimension of SD is interpreted in Anglophone countries and the UN on the one hand, and in Latin-speaking and francophone countries on the other hand. It was suggested that a broader focus was needed – concerned with, for example, the way society functions or reacts, what it needs as a whole, and what is produced.

It was pointed out that some members of the scientific community have a keen interest in integration of the three pillars. But it is a difficult question. Firstly, because the research is undertaken under three broad categories: basic research, applied research, and appraisal. Secondly, because the career of a researcher is based on recognition by peers and thus on the obligation to write articles in reviewed journals. This leaves little time for other activities. It

was felt that the NSDS helps to identify issues for research – particularly regarding mid term solutions.

Interviewees stated that, in developing the strategy, efforts were made to build on existing policies and experiences of pursuing the goal of sustainable development. For example, traditionally, energy policy has been concerned with securing supplies at low prices, but for several years, there has also been an environmental dimension. This theme is incorporated in the NSDS in the energy section, which deals with greenhouse gas emissions and favours a nuclear power option.

Some interviewees highlighted conflicts between short- and long-term issues. For example, the Prime Minister had committed to a four-fold decrease in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This constraint on the use of fossil energy could compromise economic growth. But, if the objective of reducing fossil energy consumption was politically announced, it might influence the required life-style changes (eg smaller cars, living nearer to places of work).

Also, it was felt that the NSDS avoids dealing adequately with a number of difficult or contentious areas:

- Energy – particularly type and sources of energy to be used in the longer term;
- In-depth reform of the fiscal system in order to integrate sustainability;
- Moving towards more sustainable agriculture: eg cutting subsidies harmful to the environment or indirectly harmful to agriculture in developing countries;
- Transport and mobility: controlling the effects of greenhouse gases in the transport sector without reducing mobility, developing different, more desirable modes of transport;
- Retirement, pensions and age at work: access of youth to employment and keeping senior citizens at work in connection with pensions reform;
- The main obstacles to sustainable development: there has been no public debate on the sustainability of public policies.

Other interviewees said that this situation was not surprising due to the limited time available for developing the strategy. It was acknowledged that it was not feasible to appraise every subject and that all solutions could not be found during this period. The NSDS needed to identify subjects on which work remained to be done in order to highlight good practices and to organise efforts.

5.2 *The structure of the NSDS*

The strategy is constructed around six themes / strategic axes and 10 action programmes with objectives and 500 actions (Box 3). Each strategic axis includes at least one action programme. These action programmes contain a detailed list of objectives and actions, centred on specific issues or sectors. Each strategic axis focuses on the role of a specific class of actors.

Box 3: Themes of the French NSDS

1. Information and awareness-raising, education and participation
2. Our “territories” (land – “a piece of the earth for which we have responsibility”)
 - Vision and structured efforts (via decentralisation)
3. Business and economic activities
 - Responsibility, certification, labelling, socially responsible investment
4. Improved protection of the environment and individuals
 - Preventative and precautionary strategies, research, diagnostics, new technologies and innovation, strong environmental policing, dissuasive legal system,
5. Collective commitment to sustainable development
6. International action (“the NSDS is not in isolation”)
 - Extended efforts in multi-lateral for and bilateral relationships.

One axis deals specifically with the territorial aspects of sustainable development. The social dimension is both an integral part of each action programme, and the focus of a specific programme explicitly targeting the social and sanitary dimension of sustainable development. It includes measures to improve social cohesion, life-long learning, the fight against social exclusion and discrimination, family planning, access to housing, child protection, gender equity, integration of handicapped people and solidarity between generations.

Box 4 provides more details of the main axes of the strategy and the proposed objectives/actions.

Box 4: Main axes and proposed objectives/actions of the French NSDS

1. Citizens as actors for SD (information and education):

- a. Sensitisation of citizens and professionals (managers, engineers, architects, farmers...) to the concept of SD.
- b. Clear and trustworthy information (by means of indicators) on the state of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of SD
- c. Generalise education on environmental matters in schools by 2004
- d. Facilitate participation to the public debate on SD

2. Territories:

- a. The new land use policy should be based upon the principles of SD.
- b. Create a **partnership** between all actors involved in land use matters.
- c. **Urban environment:** avoid urban sprawls and organise urban planning to reduce daily travel needs. Protect cultural heritage.
- d. **Rural environment:** protect biodiversity, natural heritage (a strategy for protection of **biodiversity** should be ready by 2004) and water resources (a new **water strategy** by 2004 should assure good quality is achieved everywhere by 2015).
- e. Better associate **local authorities** in SD: stimulate the development of more than 500 local Agenda 21 projects within 5 years. By 2005 identify existing ecological and social inequalities between localities and start an urban renovation programme to counter these.

3. Economic activities, producers and consumers:

- a. Encourage all **industries** to engage in activities to enhance SD (e.g. through voluntary agreements).
- b. Integrate SD in **production and consumption** patterns: a new **waste** strategy will be adopted in 2003 and a **product plan** in 2004.
- c. Encourage industrial **innovations** related to SD
- d. Develop the social and environmental **responsibility of businesses** through the provision of a national framework for dialogue between industries and other social actors.
- e. Create **financial incentives** for change in production and consumption: use of certification procedures, eco-labels and socially responsible investments, fiscal reforms (by 2005, mainly for transport, building and natural heritage) and financial incentives (include environmental criteria).

4. Energy, transport and agriculture

- a. This axis contains three specific action plans aimed at reinforcing SD considerations in the **energy, transport** and **agricultural** sectors.
- b. Implement a proactive **climate change policy**: -3% every year up till 2050 through energy efficiency measures in buildings, household appliances, industry; the development of renewable energy sources (concrete targets by 2006 for solar, wood and biogas) and investing in R&D in new technologies. New climate change plan foreseen at the end of 2003.
- c. Develop a sustainable **transport** policy through full cost pricing (avoiding distortions in competition with other countries), inter-modal switches, and energy efficiencies of automobiles (AECA-agreement, clean vehicles programme). Work together with local authorities to abolish barriers to the development of a global transport and urban development policy.
- d. Towards a sustainable **agriculture and fisheries**: simulate agriculture in developing countries while making agricultural and fishery practices in the North more sustainable (action plan for biological agriculture, selective fishing practices, total allowable catches, reduce capacity, modernise fleet, SD in aquaculture). Mobilise research towards environmentally sound agricultural practices.

5. Prevention of risks, pollution and other environmental and health problems

- a. Develop independent and qualitative **expertise and research** base for SD: tools for evaluation of policy options, increased risk assessment of industrial sites, use of indicators ...
- b. Finalisation in the spring of 2004 of an **environment and health action plan** (inventory of risks, priorities for action).
- c. Proactive preventive and adaptive policy for lead and other heavy metals, marine pollution, pesticides, air pollution, **noise** pollution, **antibiotics**, polluted sites.
- d. Enhance **information** to citizens about (industrial and natural) **risks**.
- e. Reinforce **control mechanisms** and jurisprudence.

6. The Government

- a. Integrate SD concerns in **public policies**: from 2004 onwards policy proposals with a strong link to SD will be subjected to an extended impact assessment.
- b. Better mobilise **research** in favour of SD.
- c. Take SD into account in the **daily operations of the administration**: integrate SD consideration in the training programmes for public service personnel. Introduce eco-responsibility within the administrations (yearly indicators will be published for benchmarking and assessing progress). Reform of public procurement rules to include SD considerations.

7. International actions

- a. Reinforce the struggle against **poverty** through increased solidarity with developing countries (Johannesburg objectives and Millennium goals). Priority actions in the field of health care, education, research, urban development, access to medicines, energy, water, protection of

biodiversity, fair trade, and sustainable tourism.

- b. Manage the **globalisation** process and reinforce **global governance** for SD: create a coherent framework for governance between the different international institutions involved. Favour the creation of a World Environment Organisation (WEO). Integrate SD concerns in WTO (SIA of trade agreements), allow for the coming into force of the Kyoto Protocol. Favour a partnership with Africa and Mediterranean countries (implement NEPAD).
- c. Support efforts in favour of **cultural diversity** and the **French language**.
- d. Promote **SD in all European Union policy areas**: the European Commission should propose a 10 year programme for sustainable production and consumption, and the Council should integrate environmental concerns in all policy areas, particularly in trade, energy, agriculture, research and tourism. Attention should go to both quantity and quality of employment and to social cohesion.

In a separate section, the strategy puts forward a number of specific objectives and measures to illustrate the type of actions to be taken for each strategic axis.

- Environmental education in schools: pilot projects from September 2003 onwards; generalised from 2004 onwards.
- Help consumers become actors for SD: sustainable tourism and fair trade, product plan before end 2003, eco-consumption guide for all sectors by 2007, double from 35 to 70 by 2004 the number of products with an eco-label, traceability of GMO's.
- Green fiscal reforms: from 2005 onwards SD criteria will be built into the fiscal system.
- Develop a more sustainable transport policy: take account of all costs and redefine the transport policy by 2003.
- Adopt a national health and environment plan: action plan due for the spring of 2004. This includes reductions of exposure to lead (50% reduction of industrial emissions by 2005), reduction of emissions to water from classified installations, reduction of air pollution (-50% by 2010 for NOx, SO2 and VOC, and stabilise NH3 emissions. A plan combating noise pollution should be adopted by the end of 2003.
- Increased controls to prevent health risks
- Creation of a special police service to fight serious infringements to environmental legislation.
- Integrate SD concerns in the government's daily functioning and its policy setting.
- Reinforce international governance for SD: 0,5% GDP to ODA by 2005; support creation of WEO, include environmental concerns into NEPAD and creation of a SD strategy for the Mediterranean area.

5.3 *The use of Tools*

A couple of interviewees commented that the strategy distinguishes between market regulatory tools (legislation) and systems using market natural mechanisms (taxation, greenhouse gas emission exchange).

On the other hand, others regretted that the NSDS didn't lead to more in-depth reflection on the desirable combination of tools and leverage points (regulation; market mechanism; incentives; explanation and conviction; public or private pressures).

5.4 *Link with the different levels (local, European and international)*

Links with regional and local authority action plans are present in the territorial axis. There are a number of references to Local Agenda 21 actions, but the strategy does not explicitly build on or signal how to harness their experience. It makes reference to the presence of locally-elected representatives in the CNDD and suggests a couple of concrete actions for thematic collaboration and coordination. But, the NSDS does not build on or integrate with the rich experience of Local Agenda 21s in France.

The link between what is required at national and sub-national (particularly local) levels to implement the NSDS and to progress towards sustainable development is stated in the action programme “Toward an Exemplary State”. Objective 2 of the first chapter (“integration of sustainable development in public policies”) points out that sustainable development must be taken into account in government strategies at a decentralised level. To this extent, the Prefect plays a significant role as suggested in the action plan of Objective 2: “the Prefects will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of NSDS implementation locally and, by 2004, will integrate the NSDS objectives within public policies and local actions, particularly within the government territorial project and contractual projects with local authorities”.

The NSDS also makes reference to the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development, but it was felt that this does not appear clearly from the document’s structure. The text of the NSDS contains no clear linkage with actions proposed in the European SDS (although some of the themes are related, e.g. climate, health and environment, transport), and there is no explanation of the international ‘environment’ on key topics. But the orientations of the French Biodiversity Strategy, included in the French NSDS, are directly linked to European policies on habitat and species protection. And the thematic strategies such as the Climate Plan, Health and Environment Strategy and National Biodiversity Strategy take into account the principles of the NSDS. It was also commented that French policies, in general, are strongly integrated with European ones, particularly economic ones. 60% of French environmental legislation derives from European Directives.

The last axis refers to international actions and the Johannesburg Summit and the commitments of the Millennium Declaration. But, national objectives of the NSDS are not clearly put in perspective with international ones. Some interviewees proposed that the next NSDS should be more ‘situated’ in the context of international priorities.

In addition, some people commented that, in developing the strategy, no inventory or assessment was made of existing policies concerning how they integrate the dimensions of sustainable development; and the main obstacles to sustainability were not identified (now made possible following the publications of indicators). Also there was no comparison (content and process) with NSDSs in other countries.

5.5 *Define priorities and a global vision*

Most of interviewees felt that the NSDS contains far too much detail and tries to cover ‘everything’, although it was recognised that it is difficult for a first strategy not to deal with the ‘whole field’ and also to mobilise a huge range of actors. They felt that, when revised (prospectively by 2008), it needs to identify and even rank priorities, and address the most important issues. It should provide guidelines. At present it cannot be digested and understood by the general population. Some described it as “unreadable”, “difficult to navigate”, “boring” and “a little pedagogic” – and therefore only likely to be read by those who need to. Some interviewees stressed that this could be one of the reasons why the media did not report much on the strategy. However a first public document couldn’t avoid covering a subject, which is global and cross-cutting.

Shorter, clearer, explanatory documents with key messages were considered by some interviewees to be necessary to raise public awareness and buy-in. It was also suggested that any future revision process should be more simple. Other people stated that the process was good, credible and innovative but it is necessary to take a better advantage of it to reach clear and coherent choices.

However, there was a view that the NSDS was already a minimum platform, with 500 actions identified, on which there is government consensus. Others regretted that the objective of the NSDS seems to be to reach inter-ministerial agreements, rather than create consensus (to be incorporated) between actors.

In addition, some interviewees commented that whilst there is a vision for each thematic programme, the NSDS lacks of an overall vision of sustainable development – particularly on the type of economic and social system to be sought in the longer term.

6. Outcomes

6.1 Political commitment and environment charter

Interviewed actors highlighted that speeches of the President were felt to have had a very significant effect on giving political and national commitment to pursuing the goal of SD.

It was commented that the development of the NSDS was accompanied by mobilisation of the media and economic actors (eg businesses and local authorities) on sustainable development issues. But it is difficult to say whether this was a consequence of the NSDS or merely took advantage of the momentum generated by its development – possibly a combination of both.

The strategy mentions the proposal of the President to develop an Environment Charter and that this should be incorporated in the Constitution. During 2003 and 2004, there was a process of considerable debate on the proposed Charter at regional meetings throughout France¹⁵, with evidence being taken and a dedicated Internet forum established. There has been a growing consciousness amongst the population that continued environmental deterioration is potential damaging, and particularly to children, eg from large industrial complexes in rural areas. There was, of course, some resistance to the Charter from those who feared they would have to ‘give up’ something as a result. Popular TV programmes also focused on environmental concerns and raised awareness. The Charter was adopted by the National Assembly and the Senate in July 2004. To be formally incorporated as part of the Constitution, the Charter has been approved by a vote at the Parliament gathered in congress (gathering of the Senate and the National Assembly in Versailles) in March 2005.

But whilst the general public is increasingly concerned about the environment, it remains unfamiliar with the concept of sustainable development (integrating three pillars).

6.2 Responsibility for implementation

Appendix 5 presents a summary of the first annual report on NSDS implementation. It records a range of outcomes and developments arising from the NSDS.

6.2.1 Ministers and senior officials

Each Minister is responsible for the implementation and follow-up of the actions in the strategy that fall under that Ministry’s authority. S/he nominates a senior official in charge of sustainable development who has the responsibility to ‘champion’ sustainable development within his/her ministry. For example, in the Ministry of Culture, the Minister is considering a

¹⁵ The synthesis of those debates didn’t feed into the CNDD working groups established for the NSDS elaboration.

proposal for an in-depth examination of the implications of sustainable development in the different sectors of Culture, in order to organise a debate open to the Ministry's employees.

But there remain challenges to promote sustainable development in some ministries. For example, sustainable development represents a cross-cutting issue for the Ministry of Transport and the Minister is strongly supportive. But the different services (eg transport, urbanism) are not yet working together effectively across all fields. Encouraging the required coordination is a challenge for the Senior Official for Sustainable Development in the Ministry. Several interviewees underlined that the Prime Minister should reinforce the role of the Senior Officials for Sustainable Development, by giving them more power to influence their ministries' departments.

This Permanent Committee of Senior Officials appears to be functioning well. It meets regularly – about every two months. A number of interviewees commented that the Committee provides for a strong degree of coordination and good inter-ministerial debate, particularly as the members have come to know each other well. It is now working in sub-groups on particular issues, eg the legal aspects of SD, greening administrations or territorial actions.

6.2.2 The Inter-Ministerial Delegation and the MEDD

An Inter-Ministerial Delegate in charge of Sustainable Development (DIDD) (Christian Brodhag) was appointed in July 2004, to lead and co-ordinate the actions of all Ministries with regard to the Government's sustainable development policy, in the name of the Prime Minister. This move was accompanied by the elimination of the position of State Secretary for Sustainable Development in the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development. The Inter-Ministerial Delegate is responsible for preparing materials for consideration by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Sustainable Development (CIDD) – and watches over their follow-up and implementation. He also chairs the Permanent Committee of Senior Officials in charge of Sustainable Development which serves the CIDD and is associated with defining the work of the CNDD.

The Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development is reorganising its structures and establishing a specific service responsible for monitoring the implementation of the strategy. This service will be part of the new Inter-ministerial Delegation for Sustainable Development.

6.3 *Regional and departmental level*

Local authorities (regions, départements, cities, towns) were generally able to participate, in developing the strategy through the CNDD consultation process. However, several municipalities didn't feel involved in the process and knew little about the NSDS. Application of the NSDS varies across the regions. It was stated that it needs to be adapted to regional conditions (eg there are differences between urban and rural areas), and that local priorities need to be monitored to take account of the NSDS. The role of the State was seen in several ways:

- as a *partner* - for matters that are the remit and responsibility of local authorities. Energies can be pooled;
- as a *strategist* - to maintain and/or build capacity to provide strategic perspectives to help local authorities with programmes which are beyond their regular (daily) activities, and to help improve administrative arrangements (eg by mergers of functions);
- as a *guarantor* of Agenda 21 – the government signs international commitments but implementation is needed at local levels.

Municipalities have recently begun to be concerned with SD issues, particularly through their representative associations. But many municipalities have taken their own actions on the environment and sustainable development, eg to develop Local Agenda 21s (Box 5). The participation of some local authority representatives in WSSD in Johannesburg shows a growing awareness of the links between local and global policies and their effects, and between local and international commitments. But those initiatives are not a result of the NSDS – most were already developed or underway before the NSDS was prepared. However, the NSDS does include a commitment to the development of 500 Local Agendas 21 in France (within 5 years) – but without specifying how this target will be met and the role of each actor (government, local authorities).

Box 5: Sustainable development in Issy les Moulineaux

The Mayor Issy les Moulineaux, a town near Paris, is well known in France and is committed to the environment. Like many other towns in France, the town has initiated a range of environmental and sustainable development activities (see, for example, Appendix 4). But these have been in response to local pressures and demands, and are not a consequence of the NSDS.

The town is in a former industrial area, which has undergone a complete change over the last 30 years, from an industry-based to a service-based economy. It still has a waste incineration plant and suffers from a large volume of passing traffic, which generates air and noise pollution. It also has green areas and is close to the River Seine. It now requires more services and there is a need to deal with social change and demands for a better quality of life.

A municipal environment plan was developed in 1991 allowing the prioritisation of problems and proposing actions. In 1995, the town adopted the Charter of European Cities & Towns Towards Sustainability' (Aalborg Charter) and promoted sustainable development in its area. In 2001, it decided to undertake an Agenda 21 with the development of a local urban plan (PLU). The same year, the town was involved as a pilot case in a project to develop a national publication on a methodology to implement Local Agenda 21, coordinated by ARENE (Regional Agency for Environment and New Energies). The objective of the project was to improve coherence of different policies, develop a culture of consultation, and be part of a shared learning network. A first Agenda 21 was implemented informally in 2002 and a official programme started in 2003.

One action in 2004 was the organisation of a meeting with companies based in or operating in the town to discuss the Local Agenda 21. Production and consumption issues such as waste management, the mobility of employees have been discussed and led to more demand for parking and improved public transport, collection of waste paper, etc.

Since 1st January 2003, five towns (Chaville, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Vanves, Ville d'Avray et Meudon) have come together in a group called Arc de Seine to share investments and objectives. Arc de Seine is responsible for some aspects of the Local Agenda 21, eg environment issues.

6.3.1 The role of the Prefect and local offices of the national government

Prefects coordinate the action of the government at a departmental and regional level. They are challenged every day with matters relating to sustainable development and take many initiatives – some stimulated, others not, by the NSDS. They are an essential tool in the NSDS framework at a decentralised level, and have responsibility for local application of the NSDS. They coordinate its implementation, promote sustainable development actions and advice local offices of the national government and local authorities. Table 1 gives examples of local sustainable development-related initiatives in the Département of Indre related to action programmes in the NSDS.

Table 1: Sustainable development-related activities in the Département de l’Indre

NSDS Action Programmes	Examples of local actions	Related difficulties and proposition
Social and health dimension of SD	Project aimed at maintaining elderly people at home (eg. home access to seniors and disabled)	Coherence between state and local authorities
The citizen, a player in SD	Courses on sustainable agriculture practices in 6 farming schools	Different training applications within the 6 schools
Territories	The State departmental strategic project (PASED) includes proposed action to promote Agenda 21 within local authorities	
Economic activities, Companies and consumers	Promotion of environmental management systems within small businesses through regional actions	Difficulties to motivate businesses on a concept they consider as obscure and vague
Climate change and energy	Thermal improvement to buildings	
Transport	Multimodal studies on transport	
Agriculture and fisheries	Increasing farmers’ awareness of good practices in the frame of European subsidies	Some incoherence between water management and irrigation policies
Preventing risks	Implementing flood hazard protection plans	Information and communication with inhabitants
Towards an exemplary State	Implementing sustainable practices into the prefecture (purchase policy, paper collection...)	Permanent communication with agents because SD is seen as a vague concept
International action	Meeting with NGOs from Cameroon to share experiences	

In 2001, the prefect of Auvergne established a working group on SD. It has showed that large companies have good awareness of SD, but mainly linked to the environment. For example, Michelin, a tyre company based in Auvergne, has established an internal SD Service.

In 2004, with different local offices of the national government, the DIREN of Auvergne produced a methodology to develop regional sustainability charters (*Chartes durables de territoire*). This document has been adopted by the Prefect and appears to be very useful to project managers. It involves a set of diagnostic questions to project managers which aim to examine: objectives, governance, the link between the design and objectives, and the links between action plans and objectives.

From 2004, regions and départements are required to develop State Strategic Action Projects: PASER for regions and PASED for départements (See Box 6). They follow the first generation of state territorial projects (1999-2003) and set out the government priorities on actions at a local level. The idea is to improve coherence between Government actions at a regional level.

Box 6: The State Strategic Action Projects

The PASER is the new reference tool for relations between central administrations and local offices of government ministries:

- It has to translate the three dimensions of government actions in territories: the central role of the Prefect; adapting government responses to the local level; and the culture of results;
- It is different from the former territorial projects because: it is more selective; provides a reference point in the region; represents a willingness to provide an operational document which prioritises objectives and the evaluation of performance;
- It represents a dialogue tool between central administrations, regional and departmental services and local authorities;
- Its development involves initial analysis (including a territorial diagnosis), identifying the expectations of users and government partners; and an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the internal organisation of the central government;
- It set out a limited number of guidelines (4 to 5), translated into an action programme (maximum 15 actions), particularly in areas with inter-ministerial dimensions;
- It is a triennial and evolutionary project. The evaluation process is specified during its development., and will involve tools to monitor priorities, score boards, and indicators for actions;
- It must result from a collective approach;
- It is developed by the Prefect of each Region/Département;
- It has to be transmitted to the Secretariat of the National Monitoring Committee by the 15 of June (for Regions) and by the 30th of September (for Départements).

Source : Circulaire du Premier Ministre du 13 mai 2004 relative à la préparation des projets d'action stratégique de l'Etat

The first annual report on implementing the NSDS (see section 6.1.2) states that SD issues are included in the guidelines and/or in the actions of many PASER. But the circular of the Prime Minister (see Box 6) to Prefects did not specify the need to establish a link between the NSDS and PASER¹⁶.

¹⁶ The CNDD made some recommendations on the role of the Prefects in March 2004 – see section 6.5

6.3.2 Local sensitisation

Over the last few years, there has been a significant change in the way of thinking of rural people, particularly farmers. They used to find it difficult to speak about sustainable development as they saw their role as solely to produce food. Now they talk about including sustainable development as an aspect of farming processes.

Local authorities are now very receptive to ideas about sustainable development and it is no longer difficult to introduce, for example, measures to protect the quality of water sources.

Increased local awareness of sustainable development has come from education efforts. Often families are sensitised to the goals of sustainable development by their children following ideas introduced at school. Nevertheless, most people still see sustainable development as an environmental issue rather than the integration of three pillars.

The view was expressed that good implementation of the NSDS requires that it be properly and clearly explained to ordinary people. For example, in June 2004, the Département of Indre organised a three-day international forum on sustainable development as a communication event for professionals, elected people and children – with scientific meetings (academics), a conference on ‘big’ subjects (eg climate change), and an exhibition for everyone to display their efforts. Some representatives of Brazil and Africa attended this forum.

6.4 ***Budget matters***

The basic principal highlighted by the government during the preparatory phase states that sustainable development must be integrated in every public policy. The objective of the national strategy is to specify the priorities of this integration, within a 5 years agenda. The strategy is not intended as an additional policy. Therefore the government deliberately makes no specific linkage to the budget process. It is intended to be a mechanism or ‘*chapeau*’ for steering the actions of different ministries and administrations towards sustainable development, but is not, in general, expected to incur additional costs. Some people added that the integration of sustainable development could involve a cost reduction (saving energy).

The strategy has also been described as “a mode of reflection and a philosophy of action which cannot be quantified”, and creating a dedicated budget for the strategy would be discouraging.

Some people shared the view that it is not necessary to have a special budget for state action on sustainable development. But more budget instruments and incentives are needed (eg through taxation, subsidies, etc.)

On the other hand, part of the ‘international’ section of the NSDS is concerned with official development assistance (ODA), following the political commitment in Johannesburg to increase the ODA to 0.5% of the GDP. This involves a budgetary commitment.

A process of budget reform called LOLF (*Loi organique relative aux lois de finance* - organic law on budget law) has been underway since 2002. This will change the system from standard ministry-based allocations (eg for standing expenses such as salaries, travel, equipment, etc) to results-oriented allocations for proposed ministry action programmes.

Under the LOLF, from 2006, ministries will be required to submit an annual report on expenditures and on the efficacy of their action programmes – structured into ‘missions’, using performance indicators. Some ministries such as those concerned with security, social affairs, or facilities have broader, transverse responsibilities which involve actions with other ministries. In this case, an inter-ministerial ‘mission’ is to be developed, incorporating action programmes from several ministries. It is not planned, for the moment that sustainable development will be part of an inter-ministerial mission. However, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development has proposed to the Prime Minister to implement a document on cross-cutting policy (DPT) on sustainable development under which each ministry working on sustainable development would report on its activities and commitments to related results. Preparation of this DPT would include work on performance indicators.

It was felt that the revised NSDS, expected to be prepared by 2008, would be greatly improved by linking it to this new budget process. But, it was added that it would require the government to integrate consideration of NSDS objectives when selecting LOLF indicators and objectives for each Ministry.

The New Finance Law will present options for each ministry to link its programmes to actions set out in the NSDS and could enable greater coherence across government. But for this to work effectively would require multi-annual budgets (rather than annual ones – as currently required for public administrations). Some of those interviewed see a difficulty in linking the NSDS to this new budget system because it will use indicators calculated every year (because of the annual budget rule), while the NSDS will measure long-term values for indicators.

6.5 Work of National Council for SD (CNDD)

Since the preparatory phase of the NSDS, the CNDD has continued to organise meetings connected to its mission: make proposals and recommendations (upstream), undertaking evaluations (downstream) and comments. The CNDD reports that its allocated human and budgetary resources in 2003 and 2004 do not allow for it effectively to meet its politically-stated role and to network of a growing number of actors (more than 500) interested in the CNDD work.

In the period January 2003 – June 2004, the CNDD held 76 meetings and 10 plenary meetings. It produced a range of suggestions and contributions, covering:

- 6 action plans and 622 measures for the development of the NSDS;
- A general reaction to the NSDS “Paroles d’acteurs”, autumn 2003;
- Recommendations on research and sustainable development “which bridge between sciences and society?” September 2003;
- Guidelines for the National Biodiversity Strategy (with IUCN) “ Au nom du vivant”, December 2003;
- Recommendations on the 45 indicators set by the ministries entitled “Vers une empreinte écologique”, December 2003;
- Recommendation on the role of the Prefects, with regard to the issues of sustainable development;
- Contribution to the public debate on the Environment Charter, April 2004.

Proposals and recommendations have been made by CNDD itself and also in response to requests from the Prime minister and other government ministers¹⁷. Further ministerial

¹⁷ Minister of Ecology and Sustainable Development, State Secretary in charge of Sustainable Development, Minister of Home Affairs, Minister in charge of Research and New Technologies and Minister of Agriculture.

request are scheduled. Proposals from civil society promote perspectives from different sources (seen by some ministries as more representative and neutral) and this improves overall knowledge on particular issues. Such proposals also promote the development of in-depth relations with the different ministries (ministers, their cabinets and officials).

The CNDD reports three main problems concerning the use of its proposals: continuing poor awareness of the issues; the mode of political decision-making; and the working method of the ministries. In 2004, the CNDD could not conduct any consultation on ministerial action programmes related to the National Biodiversity Strategy, but during the first phase of developing this strategy, good use seemed to be made of the CNDD's proposals. The CNDD pointed out that deadlines (three weeks) set by government prevented consultation with the CNDD on the Climate Plan and the National Health and Environment Plan.

Several members of the CNDD observed that many political decisions continue to be taken that are unfavourable to the environment or to sustainable development. In addition, the CNDD pointed out that it has a balanced composition open to economic, local, societal and environmental interests. This has enabled several partners (operating initially at distinct levels) to work on shared action programmes.

6.6 Work of ADEME

ADEME (*Agence de l'environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Energie* - Agency for the Environment and Energy Management) operates under the joint supervision of the Ministers of Environment, Energy and Research. One of its activities is to promote the NSDS with its constituents:

- Working to promote public awareness and change habits;
- Helping with the preparation of approaches such as Local Agenda 21;
- Developing environmental management methods;
- Promoting sustainable consumption;
- Participating in the definition and implementation of the "Exemplary State" programme (to green administrations);
- Helping small and medium-sized enterprises to develop more sustainable (eco-friendly) products – providing finance for studies and research.

ADEME has found it difficult to describe the NSDS in simple terms. Rather, this is best done on an action-by-action basis – concrete actions have been found better in sensitising people and government to sustainable development issues.

6.7 Other initiatives to raise awareness and push the agenda of SD

Interviewees noted that it can be difficult to distinguish between outcomes that are a direct result of an NSDS and those things which were already planned or would have been done anyway. As one individual put it, "*To what extent is the NSDS the revelation of innovation and change towards SD? To what extent does it reveal a change of pace towards SD?*".

But initiatives were mentioned that, it was felt, signalled outcomes that could be attributed to NSDS. For example, the Ministry of Equipment has now created a Committee of Directors to coordinate its activities in the field of SD. The Minister of Justice based speech on SD considerations, and 150 jobs are to be created to implement the law on risks. Others are described below.

Since 2003, the Ministry of Ecology and SD has organised, in June, an annual week dedicated to sustainable development. One view was that it would be better first to target decision-makers (elected representatives, media, etc.) before turning to awareness-raising amongst the general public. It was commented that the latter requires a “cultural revolution”.

In the field of social affairs and health, the Ministries are planning to implement staff training on sustainable development. A representative responsible for “training on sustainable development” is nominated in each ministry. The Senior Official in charge of Sustainable Development for Health Affairs also led some initiatives (a seminar, Presidency of a Commission) to raise awareness about sustainable development, among the heads of hospitals and social security organisations: eg. including environmental standards in the construction of hospitals (HQE standard) and greening the activities of subcontractors.

The IFORE (*Institut de Formation de l'Environnement* - Training Institute in Environnement) of the Ministry of Ecology and the General Department of Public Administration has set up an inter-ministerial training programme on sustainable development. It has proposed awareness-raising actions and training courses on sustainable development to civil servants from every ministry. A network of representatives in every ministry has been established focusing on “training on sustainable development”. The CNDD was asked by a private institute to propose training on sustainable development in public administrations. With the Home Office, the CNDD also participated profitably in a training exercise to raise awareness about sustainable development (e.g. related obligations of Prefects) amongst representatives of the Prefectorial body. The CNDD recommended criteria (evaluation grids) for Prefets to bring 3 pillars into their decisions.

In the field of education, an objective in the NSDS is to generalise “education dedicated to environment for sustainable development”(EESD). In November 2003, the Ministry of Education (Direction of School Teaching and General Inspection) organised a meeting to raise awareness about this objective. This seminar gathered headmasters, general and regional inspectors, as an essential interface of the NSDS objectives with teachers.

A pilot phase was undertaken in 10 regional education authorities (*académies*) during the year 2003-2004 and the EESD initiative has been implemented across France in 2004-2005. The main related disciplines are history and geography on the one hand and life science and earth sciences on the other hand.

The Ministry delegated to Research (within the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research) provides incentive grants to promote sustainable development. The objective is to mobilise the scientific community on priority and multidisciplinary research themes (energy and climate change; health and environment; agriculture and sustainable development; etc), which better take into account the expectations of civil society. It must also enable better communication between scientists and other civil society actors. The scientific community must be exemplary in all circumstances, including undertaking laboratory experiments which must respect standards and be certified.

The Ministry of National Education, Higher Education & Research has three Senior Officials for SD (perceived as the armed arm for the NSDS implementation within the ministry). There are in charge of, respectively: (i) EESD; (ii) eco-responsibility and (iii) research.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is coordinating a network of 80 “environment/sustainable development” representatives in various embassies. This network aims to monitor sustainable development activities in the countries where they are located and to make preparatory contacts for international meetings on sustainable development. Every two years, network

members meet in Paris for a training seminar. In addition, the theme of the Ambassadors' conference in 2005 will be sustainable development.

Due to its cross-cutting aspect, the Ministry of Economy, Finance & Industry (MINEFI) is directly concerned with almost every policy related to sustainable development. However, its activities are driven by the short-term nature of the annual budget and it is perhaps more difficult here than elsewhere to integrate a long-term approach. The French energy policy, implemented by the MINEFI, is now based on three pillars of equal importance: (i) guaranteeing supply ("*sécurité de l'approvisionnement*") for a country with few energy resources (oil, gas, coal, etc.); (ii) providing energy to companies and households at a competitive price; and (iii) environmental protection, eg. reducing greenhouse gases. The ministry, which employs more than 170,000 people, also wants to be exemplary in terms of being eco-responsible: promoting clean and economical in-house vehicles; optimally managing central administration buildings; recycling papers and waste, undertaking a carbon inventory, etc. Actions have also been taken to encourage civil servants to promote eco-responsible behaviour (eg an in-house publication and intranet network).

In the field of corporate social responsibility, the ORSE¹⁸ is a forum for the exchange of views amongst different economic actors and interest groups such as companies, trade unions, investors, and NGOs. This initiative is not a consequence of the NSDS. According to ORSE, corporate social responsibility issues have not been adequately taken into account by the government, except for the law on New Economic Regulation in 2001 (NRE). Article 116 of this law requires companies quoted on the stock exchange to integrate, in their annual reports, social and environmental impacts arising from their activities. The NRE law lists social and environmental criteria which need to be specified and widens the obligation to report to every stakeholder (NGO, trade-unions, consumers...). And this report must be public. This innovation doesn't mean new social and environmental rules for businesses, but requires them to report on those questions. A report¹⁹ produced by the ORSE, OREE (Companies, local authorities, partner for the environment), and EPE (Companies and Environment) was submitted to the government.

6.8 Internalising costs of sustainable development

It was commented that sectors find different ways to internalise the environmental and social costs of SD. Some sectors find it easier to do this than others. For example, in the transport sector, environmental costs (eg noise, pollution) are included when assessing the utility and benefit of new infrastructure. External costs are calculated and most of the costs are recouped via tax on petroleum products and road tolls.

Through the NSDS, the government pledged to improve the fiscal framework in order to create an effective leverage for SD.

Some initiatives already internalise, at least partially, social and environmental costs such as taxes on petroleum products (TIPP) and pollution (TGAP), departmental tax on natural areas (TDENS), CO₂ emission quota allocation, etc. According to several interviewees, the Environment Charter will facilitate the use of those tools, because it recognises the specificity of ecological tax with regard to redistributive or financing tax (without reconsidering the principal of equality with tax, stated in the constitution).

¹⁸ Observatory for Corporate Social Responsibility. ORSE is a member of the CNDD

¹⁹ « *Bilan critique de l'application par les entreprises de l'article 116 de la loi NRE* » available on www.orse.org/bh/home/download/uk0406critical%20review.pdf.

The strategy also promotes voluntary tools such as certification and labelling. It encourages companies or local authorities to be certified ISO 14000 and to use the standard HQE (High Environmental Quality), particularly for public buildings. The latter is intended to be applied to construction which preserves natural resources (reduction of energy consumption) and responds to quality of life and health requirements. Some interviewees stated that the promotion of such tools would need more effort.

In general, there is no parliamentary or state mechanism that shows both the costs of sustainable development and economic, societal and environmental gains (before and after a decision-making).

7. Monitoring

7.1 Annual reports and indicators

The NSDS states that there should be two annual reports with two separate sets of indicators, on:

- the state of SD in France; and
- the state of NSDS implementation.

The first annual reports were presented to the Council of Ministers on 1st December 2004 and are available on the Internet website of the Prime Minister and the MEDD²⁰.

7.1.1 Annual report on state of SD in France

This report is based on a list of 45 indicators on the state of sustainable development in France (or more precisely the state of sustainability of the French path). It has been developed by an inter-ministerial working group involving representatives from statistical and studies departments of the main ministries²¹. The publication of the report was then coordinated by the *Commissariat General au Plan* (Commission for the National Plan). This list draws also from work undertaken by IFEN (*Institut français de l'environnement* – concerned with gathering environmental statistical information) and takes into account, as a matter of coherence, indicators developed by the OECD, the UN (some were used) and the EU structural indicators (more relevant to France). The issue was to have indicators that are both relevant and for which long statistical data is available.

These indicators measure the state of the environment, economy, health, quality of life and social cohesion to provide a perspective of sustainable development, and can be used for comparison with other countries. They measure on a national scale the effects of the implementation of the NSDS. They encompass a set of synthetic indicators and cover the following areas: aggregate economic indicators; improvement of potential for growth; equity; innovation and research; mode of integration in globalisation; climate change; environmental resources; means of production and consumption; health and environment; social cohesion; way of life and health; and use of human resources (Table 2).

²⁰ Available on http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/article.php3?id_article=3224

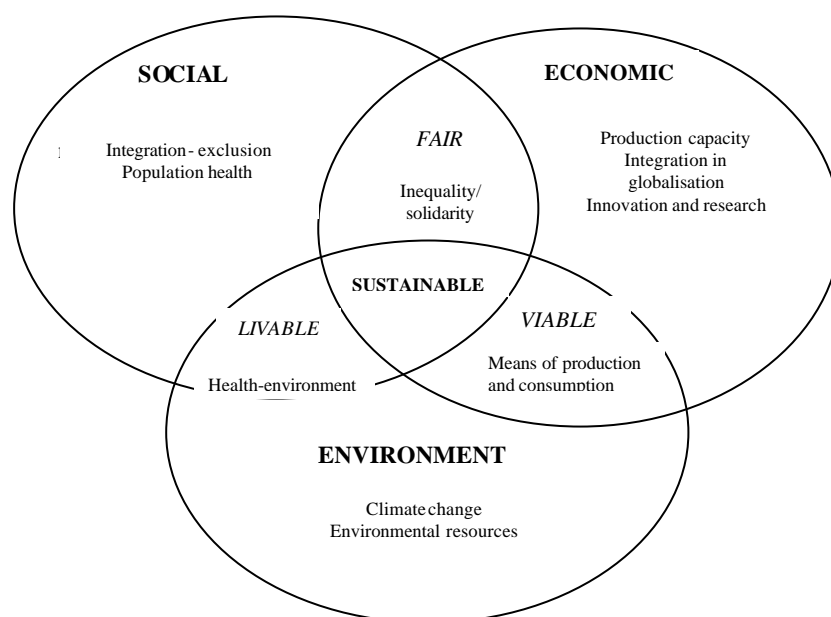
²¹ Ministries of Economy, Ecology, Social Affaires, Labour and Health, Agriculture, Home Office, Equipement and Research.

Table 2: List of the 45 French indicators for sustainable development

ECONOMIC PILLAR	ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR	SOCIAL AND SANITARY PILLAR
<p>I. Aggregate economic indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GDP 1a. GDP per capita 1b. Real GDP growth 2. Birth rate <p>II. Improvement of potential for growth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Corporate investment rate 4. Employment rate <p>III. Inter-generational equity and quality of asset management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Saving rate 6. Adjusted net saving rate 7. Public debt rate <p>IV. Innovation and research</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Proportion of science and technology graduates 9. R&D expenses 10. Number of patents 11. Invested Funds in capital-Risk related to GDP <p>V. Mode of integration in globalisation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Work productivity 13. Unit wage cost in manufacturing industries 14. Foreign Direct Investment in France 15. Overseas development assistance (% of GDP) 	<p>VI. Climate change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greenhouse effect gas emission and GDP 2. Renewable energy production <p>VII. Environmental resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Aquatic resources exploitation 4. Water use per sector 5. Urbanisation and Infrastructure of “territoires” (Land areas) – eg: road, parking, building areas... 6. Alluvial Aggregate 7. Biodiversity: changes in populations of common birds <p>VIII. Means of production and consumption:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Environment-friendly efficiency of transport focusing on road accidents and noise) 9. Waste production and population (highlighting household waste management) 10. Tourism pressure on territories 11. Consumption of raw material and GDP 12. Environment-friendly efficiency of the agriculture sector (focusing on the use of nitrogen substance) <p>IX. Health and environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Air quality (population\exposed to ozone – highlighting particles 14. Inland water pollution with pesticides 15. Risk exposure 15a. Natural hazards (highlighting climate hazard exposure) 15b. Technological risk (highlighting polluted lands and oil spill) 	<p>X. Social Cohesion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Income 1a. Income disparities 1b. Monetary poverty rate 2. Occupancy of housing 3. Unemployment 3a. Long term unemployment rate 3b. Regional differences in unemployment rate 4. Unemployed households rate 5. Share of children in households with a low standard of living 6. Share of young people prematurely leaving school and following no further training 7. Standard of living of elderly people <p>XI. Way of life and health</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Life expectancy with no disability 9. Avoidable premature death rate 10. Rate of youth Suicide 11. Responsible consumption 11a. Alcohol 11b. Tobacco 11c. Obesity <p>XII. Use of human resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Vocational training 13. Employment of women 13a. Relative employment rate of men and women 13b. Wage differential between men and women 14. Professional risks 14a. Indicator of fatal accidents at work and during a travel 14b. Prevalence of professional diseases 15. Proportion of disabled workers employed in establishments of twenty or more employees

Figure 3 presents indicators in a more cross-cutting way. It highlights that some indicators integrate two pillars.

Figure 3: Indicators and the pillars of sustain able development



Source: “Indicateurs nationaux du développement durable : lesquels retenir?”. La documentation française, 2004

This list of indicators was then submitted to the Senior Officials in charge of Sustainable Development but not to the Parliament, as initially planned. In August 2004, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development published this list in a document entitled “*Indicateurs nationaux du développement durable: lesquels retenir?*”. A communication by the Council of Ministers (1st December 2004) make this first publication official.

In December 2003, the CNDD submitted comments on the set of 45 indicators in response to a ministerial request and civil servants in charge of developing indicators²². The CNDD subsequently requested information on progress with the indicators and the report, and on the possible calendar for CNDD work and on the submission to the parliament. But no reply was received. It could not, therefore, see to what extent its advice and comments had been taken on board. The CNDD is likely to make some comments in 2005.

This report on indicators is a first draft and will be improved later following comments, for example from the Parliament. The set of indicators must be updated every year and revised every three years, according to the working programme of the European Union.

7.1.2 Annual report on implementation of NSDS

Each year, the Minister responsible for sustainable development is required to present a report to Parliament describing the status of implementing the NSDS. Every ministry is involved in the production of this report, through their Senior Officials who collect and present the activities of their ministry undertaken during the year.

²² The recommendations « Vers une empreinte de développement durable » are available in French and English

Within its communication to the Council of Ministers on 1st December 2004, the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development presented and published its report on the state of implementation of the NSDS. It is now available on the websites of the Prime Minister and the MEDD²³. The report shows what has been done so far. In the executive summary, it proposes a future development of the strategy and sets out the way to do it.

A very readable, tabular monitoring board on the state of implementation of the 488 actions in the NSDS is also available on the websites of the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and the Prime Minister. It should be updated every 6 months. The example of the monitoring board for transport is shown in Figures 4 and 5. This table presents progress on the actions in each actions programme at four levels: not-started, started, on-going and achieved.

The CNDD reported that it was not aware of the process or schedule for developing this report until the Minister of Ecology and SD spoke about the report at a meeting of the Council of Ministers (1st December 2004). The report was published online on the same date and provided to the CNDD for comment.

Following the production of the first report, some activities have been undertaken aimed at improvement.

Due to the number of objectives and actions in the NSDS, it is important to have a set of indicators to monitor their implementation. The NSDS includes 53 clearly defined indicators for only about a third of its 110 objectives, and these indicators are quite uneven (some are macro, some micro, many are qualitative).

The Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development has launched a project to provide a framework set of indicators to monitor the day-to-day implementation of the strategy, and reduce the differences and disparities of existing indicators. These indicators are being developed by a consultancy company (Eureval –C3E). Its task is to develop an evaluation method for the strategy, involving:

- review against the Rio principles;
- review against 11 national sustainable development issues, identified, adopted and graded by the MEDD and the Senior Officials for Sustainable Development - involving examining documents, interviews and meetings with officials in the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, and a workshop with Senior Officials for Sustainable Development on 30th of November 2004;
- establishing a monitoring tool for implemented actions;
- developing indicators to determine impacts on the state of sustainable development.

This is a first stage before the evaluation of the NSDS in 2005. It aims to demonstrate the interest of a larger evaluation process.

²³ http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/article.php3?id_article=3224

Figure 4: Monitoring board for transport

FRENCH NSDS IMPLEMENTATION

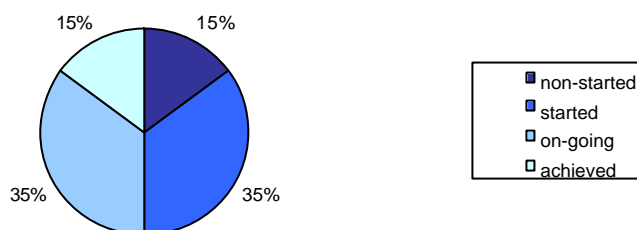
with reference to actions programmes adopted by the government the 3rd of June 2003

ACTION PROGRAMME "TRANSPORTS"

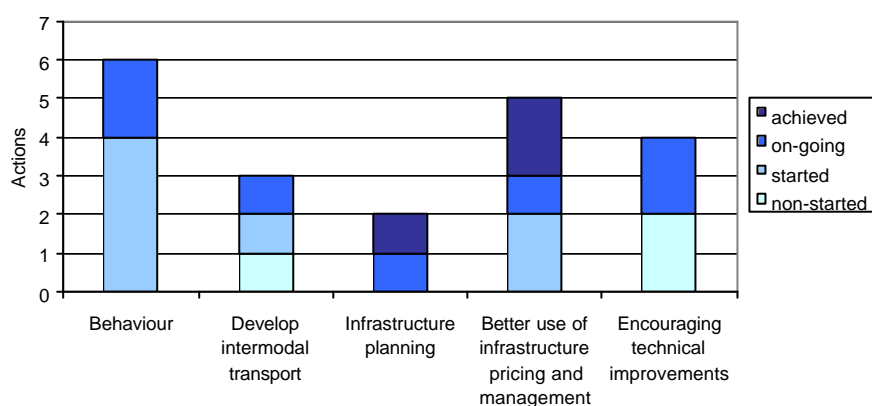
15% of actions of the programme
"TRANSPORTS"
are achieved

State of realisation of NSDS actions

Distribution within the whole programme



Distribution per global objectives



3 new actions

not scheduled in the NSDS have been implemented after its adoption
(highlighted in the table)

Figure 5: Monitoring board for transport: objectives and actions

FRENCH NSDS IMPLEMENTATION

with reference to actions programmes adopted by the government the 3rd of June 2003

ACTION PROGRAMME "TRANSPORTS"

Global Objective	objective	action	Deadlines	Progress by 14/09/04			
				non-started	started	on-going	achieved
IA Behaviour							
	Sensitise economic agents		-		1		
	Improve the organisation of urban deliveries		-			1	
	Implement the research programme PREDIT 3		2006			1	
	Seek complementarity between individual and public transport methods.		-		1		
	Initiate experimentation grants, aimed at optimising daily home-work movements in large cities		-		1		
	Initiate time-related price modulation of the most sensitive infrastructures		-		1		
				0	4	2	0
IB Develop intermodal transport							
	develop combined transport		-			1	
	Develop aids for collective urban transport		-		1		
	Implement policies on urban movements		-	1			
				1	1	1	0
IC Infrastructure planning							
	Take into account SD in project studies		-			1	
	Take into account SD when conducting public debates		-				1
				0	0	1	1
1D Better use of infrastructure pricing and management							
1 D 1 Pricing instruments and fuel taxes							
	Modulated the pricing of the use of infrastructures		-		1		
	Evolution of fuel taxing toward SD		-			1	
	Create an agency for infrastructure financing		-				1
1 D 2 Optimisation of road usage and traffic management							
	Study technical, statutory and pricing provisions		-				1
1 D 3 Managing high road traffic concentrations							
	Increase traffic control and inspection		-				1
	Optimisation of the offer of rail services		-		1		
				0	2	1	2
1E Encouraging technical improvements							
	Extend the framework agreement with European manufacturers to light utility vehicles		-	1			
	Define a new agreement for heavy goods vehicle, boat and locomotive engines		-	1			
	Encouraging technical improvements on aircraft engines		-			1	
	Encouraging research on alternative fuels and hybrid vehicles		-			1	
	Adopt the "Clean Vehicule Plan"		-				1
	Promote maritime transports		-			1	
				2	0	2	0
				3	7	7	3
				20 actions			

7.2 *Interview comments*

There was an acknowledgement that development in France in the past had not been sustainable. It had been driven by economic considerations under what one individual termed “the dictatorship of GDP as the sole indicator”. There is a need for two similarly powerful indicators that can track the performance of society and environment. Views were expressed that too many indicators can cause confusion, and that simple indicators are usually wrong whilst complex ones are not usable. It was commented that Agenda 21 continues to provide a common denominator for SD.

Some interviewees commented that the indicators on the state of sustainable development lack imagination, and do not correspond to the goal of sustainable development or an NSDS. Most of the interviewees stated that those indicators address economic, social and environmental dimensions separately. It has proved difficult to define indicators which truly integrate these three pillars of sustainable development. However some people stressed that some indicators integrate two of the three dimensions of sustainable development (e.g. the three indicators of “health and environment”).

The CNDD stated in its report in December 2003 that the “adopted vision for the proposed indicators was not clear”. It regretted the use of classic indicators – often a bit pedagogic and even irrelevant – which do not enable new required aspects to be measured. The CNDD recommended a systemic approach rather than an analytical one. It was critical, like other actors, of the fact that the 45 indicators were set for individual pillars, with no link between them. It regretted also that there is no link between NSDS objectives and those indicators. In addition, the CNDD recommended to link the two reports (content, process) and the budgetary indicators with the sustainable development ones in order to set real opportunities for leverage.

Several interviewees said that indicators should provide motivation, carry civil society along, and create new attitudes. It is hard to communicate using statistical indicators – it is important for citizens to perceive how they can be involved. The set of indicators for state of SD need to be readable and clear to ordinary people (communicable). They must represent things that people are willing to do something about. The CNDD focused on citizen-friendly indicators rather than indicators that are necessarily the most striking scientifically. The business view is that too much communication kills communication – if everything is covered, there is a danger that fundamental goals will be forgotten. So focus on targeted communication.

Other comments made by interviewees include:

- It is also hard to formulate quantitative indicators for the cultural dimension. One suggestion was that social indicators should be capable of being voted on (eg to assess citizen satisfaction).
- The ‘culture’ of indicators is new in France and not yet implemented.
- Indicators should be easy to use.
- There was a view that debate on NSDS indicators (as opposed to general sustainable development indicators) should proceed without waiting for the process to revise the strategy.
- The CNDD has organised good debates on indicators but views differ from those expressed in government reports – indicating the need for time for discussion.
- Indicators are needed for Local Agenda 21s.
- An indicator to measure political involvement would be useful.
- It would help to explain why particular indicators have been selected (some indicators have place in some cultures, not in others).

- It was noted that information is more likely to be available if pre-established indicators are used, but less likely when new indicators are created.
- Dynamic indicators are needed that reflect relations between current and future generations, and that are internationally comparable.
- Indicators can serve multiple purposes (eg Kyoto, Europe, quotas, national/local/business level (different again); and the same objective can be supported by various measures/indicators.
- There is a need for a clear vision of the learning process and who will use the two sets of indicators.
- There is a need for indicators that continue over decades (eg well-being of population, social cohesion, management of long term risks, performance regarding sustainable production /consumption).
- Regional differences may be more important than national averages.
- The Millennium Development Goals also provide helpful indicators.
- It is important to ensure that global aspects are included in country indicators (eg foreign trade, greenhouse gas emissions).

7.3 Implementation by local offices of government

The Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development has also launched a project to study how local offices of the government (eg Prefects, DIREN) have understood and implemented the concept of sustainable development and how this can contribute to the current NSDS. This will examine the kinds of actions that have been taken at the local level, having particular regard to local aspects (eg geography, culture, history, economic context, etc.). A key issue is to examine how government local offices can develop local strategies (based on local experience, needs, priorities) that can contribute to the national strategy.

The project will start by examining the contents of the Strategic Action Projects (PASER, PASED) and the State-Region Contract (CPER). The latter is an agreement between the Regional Council and the government represented by the Prefect of the Region. It set out a number of shared actions with shared financial means between the government and the Regional Council.

During interviews, the point was made that it is important also to develop local indicators. At present, some Prefects set their own local operational indicators to track implementation of their actions (eg number of meetings, results of actions, changing water quality or use of nitrates by farmers). The CNDD was particularly critical of the lack of local indicators, when it commented on the 45 proposed indicators.

8. Key issues and challenges

8.1 Time

It is generally accepted that a very tight timeframe was set by the government in which to produce the NSDS. This limited the options for the process on the government and stakeholders' sides, restricting the degree of consultation and participation that could be achieved.

However, it was suggested that this short time frame might have been an advantage for this first strategy - if a longer period had been allowed, the political commitment would have waned and the strategy would not have been adopted by government.

8.2 *Role of CNDD*

The CNDD has formal official rights and responsibilities (representing proposals from civil society and local authorities on sustainable development policies) as set out in the Decree of 13th January 2003 – but these were not adequately met during the process of developing the strategy. In the future, there will be a challenge for both the CNDD and the government to work out between them how best to engage with each other so the role of the CNDD can be effective and its contribution maximised.

Most interviewees took the view that the revision process should have much more time available and should be a more participatory process involving the CNDD fully (so that its work is properly integrated in the strategy), as well as other stakeholders. It was suggested that the government and CNDD establish joint Working Groups for the revision process.

The view was expressed that whilst the CNDD can represent civil society, it does not have the capacity to influence government. It is not an elected body like the Association of Mayors. However, there was also a view that the CNDD should be used as a decision-aiding mechanism.

As an addition to the CNDD, it was suggested by one official that the government should engage directly with stakeholders in the strategy process. The question was raised about how the CNDD can engage with a wider range of stakeholders than those represented on its Council. CNDD members have their own (large) networks which can be (and are) engaged in debate on SD.

A question was also raised about why it was necessary to create the CNDD to have dialogue with civil society on sustainable development objectives. It was suggested that there are numerous existing institutions and forums with which the government can have dialogue for particular policies and sectors (eg Economic and Social Council)²⁴.

8.3 *Rolling/iterative strategy*

It was generally agreed that an iterative, rolling strategy should be promoted – to be adjusted and improved with lessons from implementation. The CNDD stresses that this intention - to improve (on an annual basis) the first NSDS document to take a better account of suggested recommendations – was initially communicated to it.

8.4 *Local authorities and Local Agendas 21*

It is important to involve local authorities in the revision process. They are ready to participate fully. But it is not easy for them to involve the public in thinking about the sustainable development and particularly the three pillars concept.

For most people at the local level, sustainable development is seen as a vague concept. It is still interpreted as an environmental issue (about which there is increasing awareness and concern) – and this consciousness can be built on. But a strong communications effort and concrete actions are required to raise awareness about the integrated (three pillars) nature of sustainable development.

In rural areas, progress has been made in forest management. Managers undertake diagnoses (past and present) and consider environmental, social and economic objectives. They tend to be concerned with diverse issues such as quality and quantity of wood (economic pillar), managing biodiversity and

²⁴The CNDD made no comment on this subject

forest regeneration (environmental pillar) and playing a role in tourism (social pillar). The case of sustainable forest management could be a concrete example to show the integration of the three pillars.

Whilst an NSDS will contain national measures, much of the work needs to be implemented locally. So the government needs to work out how it can structure a meaningful dialogue with local authorities about the relevance and application of the NSDS locally, and about local sustainable development approaches that work. Many such approaches have been elaborated through Local Agenda 21s (even if the NSDS and Local Agendas 21 differ).

A clear link between the NSDS, Local Agendas 21 and representative organisations of local authorities would help, plus a commitment to learn from LA 21 experience. An on-going mechanism to exchange experiences and lessons of good practice should be sought, such as that provide by Committee 21 (“*Comité 21*”) for civil society engaged in different cities in Local Agendas 21.

In addition, at the local level, it is much easier to organise debate and find a synthesis between official and civil society positions. It was commented that it is not the aim to try to ‘involve’ everyone, but to provide sufficient information to everyone²⁵.

8.5 Production and consumption

Production and consumption is a matter of major importance. There was a view that government ministries, regional, département and city/town administrations all have an essential role in changing production and consumption patterns. But this requires contact with the private sector. It was suggested that a meeting at national level with company heads would be productive (paralleling that arranged locally in Issy-les-Moulineaux – see Box 5).

The new “public market code” includes environmental factors to enable public administrations to choose “green” goods and services (see Box 6). So companies have an incentive to change their methods of production, especially because the State is an important client in term of volume of procurements.

Box 6: The new Public Market Code

The reform of the Public Market Code, presented in the Council of Ministers on the 7th of January 2004, allows public purchasers to:

- fix conditions of market execution preserving the environment (article 14);
- invite companies to demonstrate their savoir-faire regarding environment preservation;
- include environmental performance among criteria to select companies (article 53).

On the other hand, a Permanent Group of Studying Markets (GPEM) was set up on 9th of January 2004 in order to deal with environment and sustainable development issues. Its mission aims to identify concepts, concrete criteria and relevant information and specify guidelines for purchaser, etc...

A service of the Inter-ministerial delegation for SD is in charge of the secretariat of this group.

According to interviewed people, the NSDS could find ways to build on and promote such processes so that public administrations have an incentive to buy green products and services. At present, this initiative often remains voluntary. It was suggested that the implementation of financial initiatives and actions of education, could reinforce this initiative. Some people stated that it would be useful that public administrations could hire employees who live locally (reduction of transport). At present they cannot do this because they risk charges of discrimination.

²⁵ The CNDD made no comment on this subject

It was agreed that education has a major role to play in influencing consumption patterns. For example, a food chain store offered a green products line 15 years ago but it flopped due to lack of demand. Following environmental education, there is now a high demand and all food retailers have green products.

8.6 Banks

In the development and implementation of a revised NSDS, it is seen as important to involve the Banks which engage directly with many actors and can influence SD through their provision of micro credit and funds for greening businesses, and through responsible investment.

Several banks are members of the CNDD and their participation in the CNDD process has increased their awareness about sustainable development. One bank representative commented that SD needs to be “turned into a business approach, with economic and social realities as operational commercial activities”.

8.7 Revision process

Several of those interviewed referred to the intention to update or revise the strategy by 2008 (five years after the first). In the introduction of the NSDS, the Prime Minister referred to this deadline in the following terms:

“Rather than an academic exercise the government would rather have a document limited in its overall considerations, but backed up with clear guidelines for fast implementation and with five-year policy packages [...].”

However such a revision would be entirely consistent with the internationally agreed good practice which sees NSDS as rolling, iterative processes, and with the OECD and UN definitions of NSDS which highlight this feature.

If the strategy is to be revised by 2008, this provides a good period of time in which to find ways to address the challenges identified here – particularly on introducing mechanisms and processes to broaden the extent of genuine and effective participation – both vertically and horizontally:

- vertically – so as to include stakeholders at national, regional, département/city levels, and also marginalised groups who do not have a voice (e.g. the poor); and
- horizontally – so as to build cross-sectoral dialogues (at all vertical levels) between government departments, the private sector and civil society.

There was a view that the opportunity should be taken now to establish such participatory mechanisms and that they should be used to reflect on the existing NSDS, how it can be improved, re-consider the big issues and challenges to sustainable development, and identify priorities that need urgent attention and those which might better be addressed in future iterations of the strategy.

Thus a major challenge is to decide on the best way to organise and structure the revision of the strategy, and inclusive dialogue and consensus – even on this – would be likely to lead to a stronger and more enduring revised strategy.

8.8 Participation

This background report highlights the issue of participation as one that arose throughout all interviews. There is a clear challenge to significantly improve both the extent and depth of participation, and identify/develop the mechanisms for this. It was pointed out that participation brings together both “the innocents and the culprits” and a key issue is to identify those stakeholders able to leverage

progress. Participation surfaces numerous ideas which all need to be considered, and this means time is required for dialogue, and feedback to explain why particular suggestions were adopted and others not. A communications strategy would help to ensure that stakeholders are kept informed and provide information on SD (in general) and the NSDS process (in particular).

Questions raised included the issue of who should be involved (the use of stakeholder analysis techniques would help to establish upstream who are the stakeholders), the role of representative bodies (other than CNDD), particularly the private sector. The National Committee on Public Debates could play a useful role. And the role of, and mechanisms for dialogue with, the scientific community in developing the NSDS need to be more clearly defined. There was a suggestion that the UN Major Groups categories could provide a framework for engaging stakeholders (as, for example, in Ghana).

Members of the CNDD and associated actors, from civil society and local authorities, stress that the main key lies in the political willingness to choose innovative processes to integrate civil society views and proposals into governmental plans rather than establishing or using bodies. The culture of consultation and the willingness to facilitate it needs to be improved. The establishment of the CNDD was seen as a positive step. Some expressed the view that the culture of stakeholder engagement still needs to mature further until it reaches a level (and acceptance) required for effective participatory decision-making.

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10. Appendices

Appendix 1 : Persons Interviewed

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Appendix 2: Preliminary questionnaire used prior to structured interviews

TOPIC	ISSUES TO BE EXPLORED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and institutional enabling conditions 	<p>A. <u>Preparation and development of the strategy</u></p> <p>1. Priorities of governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the priorities of present and past governments? • What key policies, strategies and initiatives have been put in place? • What are the historical, political and administrative contexts in which previous attempts at integrated strategies have originated and been developed and implemented? <p>2. Political commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there political commitment to the objectives, processes, plans of all strategic initiatives concerned with sustainable development? In what political fora? • Was there political commitment in budget terms? • Was the political commitment partisan or broad-church? • What were the sticking points? <p>3. Responsibilities and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it clear where responsibilities lie for building on existing strategies and their activities, for formulating new strategies where relevant, for implementing them, and for monitoring them? • Do the institutions concerned have sufficient rights, resources and effective relationships to undertake this? [The 4Rs]. <p>4. Co-ordination between institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there effective co-ordination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between these institutions? ○ Between strategic initiatives e.g. NCS, social action plans, etc.? ○ Between these institutions and those central to planning and investment? ○ Between institutions and donors? <p>5. Links with other territorial levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do regional (eg European), national and local strategies relate to each other and how do existing strategies link into the planning and decision-making systems? • What cross-boundary, regional and global issues have been considered? (e.g. conflict, free trade areas, legal agreements, cross-border groups, development aid and debt). <p>6. Other context issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What key factors assisted the development of the strategy (e.g. a past strategy, public pressure, government commitment) and what were the key issues to resolve (e.g. land tenure, resource depletion, poverty)? • From what perspective has the process been driven (environmental, economic, interdisciplinary)? <p>B. <u>Implementation of the strategy</u></p> <p>Same as questions 1 to 5</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of analysis and diagnosis on each of the three dimensions of sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of developing the strategy, was there adequate understanding of the state of resources, trends in their quality and quantity, and the pressures upon them? • Was there adequate analysis of the state of the main sectors and livelihood systems, their interactions with resources (as above), and consequent winners and losers? Was there adequate analysis of sustainability of production and consumption patterns? • Has full use been made of existing studies on poverty and environment, and the opportunity taken to strengthen the body of knowledge in concerned areas? • At what point have the three dimensions (environmental, social and economic) of sustainable development been approached in a global and comprehensive way?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there continuing identification and participation of concerned stakeholders - including government, civil society and market players at different levels, and representatives of global environmental interests - in strategy preparation, planning, implementation, monitoring and review? Do the fora and mechanisms suit the stakeholders? Does representation meet acceptable criteria of identity-with-group and accountability-to-group? • Have pro-active mechanisms been used to engage marginalised stakeholders in the above processes? • What role did public awareness campaigns have in encouraging stakeholder involvement in the process and how has the process strengthened people's participation in, and influence over, the decision making process? • How were difficulties and problems addressed and consensus reached?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of policies and plans 	<p>1. Strategy of integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have clear policies, plans, principles, standards and/or targets been derived from the strategy, in forms which can best elicit positive responses from those various institutions (government, market and civil society) which are supposed to implement the strategy? • Have the directions of the strategy been picked up in other strategic or planning documents? In economic development policies? • Have the axis, aims, plans and indicators of international issues of NSDS been fixed by mutual agreement with partner countries? • Have opportunities for win-win activities supporting poverty alleviation, economic growth and environmental conservation been well defined with those institutions best placed to act on them? For example, have conservation and poverty alleviation strategies been brought together? <p>2. Procedural aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there systems for defining priorities in environmental, economic and social terms, so as to keep the number of strategy objectives (at any one time) manageable? And are these systems compatible with those for analysis and participation? • Are there systems for addressing the hard trade-offs - identifying them, debating them, planning action or compensating for the costs of inaction? • Has there been early and tactical implementation of promising initiatives which will both help build support for the strategy process and test its principles and ideas?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness of regulations and incentives 	<p>1. Tools implemented in the strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there any possible distinction in the strategy between regulatory tools (legislation) and market mechanisms (taxation, greenhouse gas emission exchange)? • What are the aims fixed to these tools (internalization of the external costs, deterrent effect, creation of financial resources for corrective actions)? • Do fiscal and regulatory frameworks internalise social and environmental costs in order to correct for market failure, and open doors to best-practice investment? • Were the voluntary tools (certification procedure and labelling system encouraging sustainable development) sufficiently promoted? <p>2. Assessment of implemented tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these frameworks efficiently monitored and enforced, by government or private bodies as appropriate? • Have measures been included to ensure compliance with international environmental and human rights agreements? <p>3. Sensitisation and education on sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are measures taken to increase public awareness of sustainable development and thus encourage the development of consumer- or civil society-driven incentives? • Are measures planned to widen the general public's education on sustainable development? By which methods?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSDS process management and effectiveness of capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tools/methodologies were useful in enhancing understanding (e.g. poverty assessments, SEA)? How is progress being monitored? • Is capacity being efficiently and equitably utilised, and improved, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop strategies with strong local ownership? ○ Co-ordinate existing sectoral or issues-based strategies to improve their coherence and efficiency in achieving SD? ○ Encourage institutions to make their responses to relevant strategies? ○ Implement strategy-related activities, in a way that is consistent with the broader strategy goals? ○ Monitor the impact of strategic mechanisms and activities? ○ Maintain the 'big picture' of strategy evolution? ○ Review and continuous improvement of the strategy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of Impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas do stakeholder believe are being influenced - positively or negatively - by the strategy, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ecological and climatic processes conserved? ○ Biodiversity conserved? ○ Resource quantity/productivity maintained? ○ Economic efficiency improved? ○ Poverty and inequity reduced? ○ Pollution prevented? ○ Human health improved? ○ Culture conserved? ○ Production and consumption patterns modified? ○ Thinking patterns and governance improved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relations with international partners 	<p>(a) <u>developing countries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been the role of donors in these mechanisms and was their role useful? Is there effective co-ordination between government and donors? <p>(b) <u>developed countries:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the strategy take sustainable development into account at international level? • What kind of measures are included in the strategy to support sustainable development on an international scale (partnership, financial support, backstopping...)? • What is the relationship between different stakeholders and actions defined in the strategies at european, national and local levels? • What is the desired impact of the strategy on international policy (ODA, positions in international fora, national policies with international impact...)? What system (indicators...) is planned to check if international concerns of the strategy are taken into account?
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Source: Modified from OECD/UNDP (2002)

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Notes:

- a) *These issues listed below aim to provide a framework for discussion, and not a rigid questionnaire.*
- b) *Some interviewees will have been involved in only one element of the strategy. Some may have been involved in both.*
- c) *Most of the questions are generic, but some relate more or specifically to one or other component. For ease, they are not separated.*

A. How did the strategy get going and why?

1. In what capacity were you involved in the development or implementation of the strategy?
2. What previous strategy (or near equivalent) processes (a) had been undertaken, and (b) how did the current strategy build on or link/related to these?
3. When was the strategy initiated and by which institution(s)?

B. What were/are the main aims and focus of the strategy?

4. What was the prime motivation/stimulus for it? (eg UNCED, agenda 21, upcoming WSSD, response to public pressure, etc.)
5. Was there a set (or even hidden) purpose or aim of the strategy?
6. What was the main focus of the strategy (eg conservation, physical planning, environmental action planning, more holistic and integrated planning for sustainable development, trade concerns)?

C. How was the strategy developed?

7. Who was responsible for the strategy development process, eg which agency, institution(s)/individual(s), independent secretariat?
8. What structures and strategy management systems were established, eg committees, working groups, communication/information mechanisms?
9. What roles were played by different agencies?
10. Were there any terms of reference? What were these and who set them?
11. How long did the process take? (start – finish)

D. Who participated in the strategy?

12. Who was involved and how (nationally, more locally, governments, NGOs, private sector, civil society, etc)?
13. How was the process and the product (ie the strategy document) received by different stakeholders (eg national government, local authorities, NGOs, private sector)?
14. To what extent was the process:
 - (a) consultative (eg who was asked to comment on draft documents or proposals – both organisations and individuals)?
 - (b) genuinely participative (eg organisations and individuals able to be directly involved in determine/influence the process itself and make inputs to the development/implementation of the strategy)?
15. Was an official mandate for the strategy set?
16. Who determined the strategy process and its duration? and were there any guidelines or restrictions which fixed the approach taken to develop the strategy?

17. Were alternative approaches considered and, if so, which ones were excluded and why? If so, what effect did this have on the strategy?

E. What reporting / monitoring was envisaged as part of the strategy process?

18. Were precise targets and measures envisaged during the strategy development?

19. Was thought given to developing an iterative strategy, building on feedback and results?

20. Were there barriers / constraints to this type of approach?

F. What were the key factors, issues and problems?

21. Were there any factors that particularly assisted the development of the strategy (eg a past strategy as a point of departure, existing public pressure and willingness to cooperate, genuine government commitment to pursue a route towards sustainable development)?

22. What were the key problems faced during the development of the strategy?

23. Has it yet been implemented, and if so, how?

24. Were there any key issues that the strategy had to resolve (eg environmental degradation, land ownership, poverty) which determined the approach/process?

25. Were any major issues/areas not covered? Which ones and why?,

G. How were problems and conflicts solved?

26. Were there any difficulties in defining or resolving different opinions about particular issues?

- How were such difficulties resolved?

- How were choices made?

- What process was used to resolve conflicts/disputes: arbitrators, drafting sessions, round tables leading to compromise texts?

27. To what extent is there consensus about the process and content of the strategy (a) within the national government, (b) at regional and local levels, (c) amongst broader stakeholders?

H. How does the strategy relate with other strategies – and how do the internal and external elements relate to each other?

28. How did the SD strategy process link and relate to existing EU SD strategy, and to other national, regional and local strategic planning processes (eg environmental strategies/action plans, biodiversity strategies, strategies for particular resources or sectors, local Agenda 21 activities) and decision-making systems?

29. How does the strategy relate to the requirement of the Rio conventions to produce action plans, and does it address the requirements and obligations of those conventions (climate, biodiversity, desertification)?

I. What was the driving perspective? and were wider issues dealt with (eg ecological footprints, transboundary issues, effects on – or of - other regions (eg particular geographic regions, developing countries))

30. Was the strategy process and decision-making on recommended actions driven by a particular perspective (eg environmental) or a central discipline (eg economics), or was there an inter-disciplinary and cross-cutting approach?

31. Does the strategy address:

(a) Ecological footprint on other regions or groups of countries?

(b) 'Environmental space' (i.e. available per capita global carrying capacity for particular resources)?

J. Has the strategy led to parliamentary and wider debate – at national and local levels?

32. Was there, or will there be, a parliamentary process concerning the strategy, eg a parliamentary committee or debate on the strategy and the issues it raises?

33. To what extent has the strategy facilitated a 'greening' of the political, business and consumer mainstreams, and of values, lifestyles and choices that underlie and shape them?

34. Did the strategy receive any regional/national press coverage? Was it extensive? Are copies available?

K. What lessons do you draw from the experience of developing the strategy

35. What were the good/successful aspects of the process, and what were the constraints?

36. What opportunities exist for improving it in the future?

37. What opportunities exist for developing a system for monitoring and reporting on progress in implementation of the strategy?

38. How can the strategy better reflect the priorities / views of key stakeholder groups? (civil society organisations / developing countries etc)

Appendix 4: Issy les Moulineaux: Programme of Actions 2004-11-18

VERS UNE VILLE DOUCE :

✓ **améliorer l'intégration des personnes handicapées**

Action n° 1 : Améliorer les déplacements des personnes handicapées

Action n° 2 : Améliorer le service public en direction des personnes handicapées

Action n° 3 : Sensibiliser au monde du handicap

✓ **favoriser la place des jeunes dans la ville**

Action n° 4 : Sécurité des aliments dans la restauration scolaire

Action n°5 : Sensibilisation sur le droit des enfants

Action n°6 : Favoriser les « graffs artistiques »

✓ **préserver, diversifier et augmenter les espaces de respiration (espaces verts et bleus)**

Action n°7 : Acquérir des parcelles pour les jardins familiaux

Action n°8 : Favoriser les techniques culturelles douces et adaptées

Action n°9 : Rationaliser et valoriser la ressource en eau

VERS UNE VILLE RESPONSABLE :

✓ **prévenir les risques et limiter les nuisances**

Action n°10 : Améliorer l'ambiance sonore

Action n°11 : Mettre en place un plan de secours communal

Action n°12 : Informer les entreprises et les habitants sur les conséquences du PPRI

Action n°13 : Appliquer la Charte de Qualité Environnementale d'Isséane

✓ **limiter les gaz à effet de serre**

Action n°14: Mettre en oeuvre le PDU Île-de-France et des actions de communication sur les projets en découlant

Action n°15: Participer et impulser le projet de transport fluvial de passagers

Action n°16: Étudier la réalisation d'un déplacement alternatif à la voiture entre les Hauts d'Issy et le centre ville

Action n°17: Incitation des entreprises locales à réaliser des Plans de Déplacements des Entreprises (PDE)

Action n°18 : Économiser les énergies municipales

✓ **systematiser la haute qualité environnementale des constructions**

Action n°19 : Intégrer des critères environnementaux dans les documents d'urbanisme et organiser la sensibilisation des acteurs

Action n°20 : Mener une opération de construction H.Q.E. pour le CPE Garibaldi

VERS UNE VILLE ATTENTIVE :

✓ **promouvoir les nouvelles technologies au service du développement durable**

Action n°21 : Modernisation de l'administration et projet de guichet unique

✓ **poursuivre la sensibilisation des acteurs locaux au développement durable**

Action n°22: Promouvoir le développement durable, et mobiliser la société civile

Action n°23 : Sensibilisation nouvelle au tri sélectif des déchets ménagers

Action n°24 : Sensibilisation des services acheteurs au développement durable

Action n°25: Les entreprises, repérage des bonnes pratiques et des bons acteurs

Action n°26 : Sensibiliser les enfants, acteurs de demain

Appendix 5: Report on Implementation of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, June 2003 – June 2004: Executive Summary

As expressed by the 1987 Brundtland report «our common future», Sustainable Development is defined as a development that «meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs» and improve the livelihood of human communities within the limits of ecosystems capacity. Through this definition, the international community considers the impact of human activities, both in time and space. It provides development approaches with global and inter-generational solidarities.

Sustainable development has three principal components: Economic, Social and environmental:

- Economic, with growth objectives and economic efficiency;
- Social, with equity and social cohesion objectives, including questions related to health, consumption, education, labour, culture and housing;
- Environmental, in order to improve the management and preserve within the long term the environment

«Sustainable development is generally considered as a theoretical concept. It must now be included in the day-to-day life of every French». In order to answer to this President requirement, the government adopted several measures within the last two years, during three main phases:

- The 28th of November 2002, first inter-ministerial meeting focused on sustainable development: 64 short-term measures are adopted regarding economic activities, regions, prevention and police, public information and education, toward an exemplary state process and international actions. The meeting builds the framework of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, along with a governance mechanism based on an Inter-ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development, chaired by the prime minister and a National Council for Sustainable Development, bringing together local authorities, companies and civil society.
- The 3^d of June 2003, the first inter-ministerial committee for Sustainable Development adopts the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (see <http://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/sndd-2.pdf>), resulting from consultations between the government and civil society. The strategy extends, within a detailed action plan, the short-term measures adopted during the 2002 governmental meeting. It establishes an intervention framework to take into account long term and global effects resulting from economic development and individual behaviour. It directs the governmental action for the next five years and fixes objectives to every minister.
- During the spring session, the parliament adopted the Environmental Charter. This constitutional modification must be now ratified. When it will be done, the Charter will add, according to the wish of the President, the respect of the environment to the fundamental principles of the Republic, stated both in the 1789 human right declaration for civic and political right and the 1946 constitution for economic and social rights.

The Charter principles will stand out through the next laws. At an international level, the Charter expresses the willingness of the French authorities to become an exemplary State in the domain of environment and sustainable development.

The present report points out the implementation of the NSDS. The deep changes involved by a shift of the development approach require the participation of every stakeholders, whether the State or the citizens. The NSDS objectives put forward a range of sectorial tools. The evaluation and evolution of the strategy is also part of the exercise. This executive summary presents the main conclusions drawn by the permanent senior officials committee for sustainable development.

1. Facilitating the participation

With the NSDS, the government promotes the participation of every stakeholder: State, local authorities, companies, NGOs and citizens.

The State: includes institutional measures: the Minister in charge of Sustainable Development, Inter-ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development, National Council for Sustainable Development and Network of senior officials dedicated to sustainable development.

Along with those measures, an inter-ministerial representative for sustainable development is nominated (order n°2004-601, 24 June 2004), in order to:

- Prepare, follow-up and implement Inter-ministerial Committee for Sustainable Development consultations.
- Implement evaluation, training and communication actions and take part in the definition of research programmes on sustainable development
- Coordinate actions of senior officials in charge of sustainable development (article 5 of the order from 21-02-03)
- Take part in the definition of the National Council for Sustainable Development work programmes
- Present his works to the Prime Minister and the Minister in charge of Sustainable development

Local authorities: Several local authorities have started since 1997, projects regarding sustainable development and were mobilised for the Johannesburg Summit. The number of Environmental Charters and «local Agenda 21» increase and are more closely followed by elected representatives at a municipal and inter-communal level. Départements and regions are on the way. This is due to incentives developed by the government and public administrations. Some actions related to sustainable development appear also in the State-region contracts. At this stage, many local actors want the government to establish a shared vision between public administrations on a sustainable development territorial project. This expectation is expressed within the NSDS objectives to reach 500 «local Agenda 21» projects.

Economic stakeholders: are with consumers the main actors of the economic sphere. Their number is increasing. They tend to promote consultations between actors and display coherent strategies with a long-term development. They start to combine their economic interests with a positive image of their actions through sustainable development related messages toward the general public.

This is mainly the case of firms listed in the CAC 40. An effort must be done to help small businesses to take into account, sector by sector, sustainable development objectives. For that purposes, it is important to work with local chambers and professional organisations, especially for vocational and continuing training.

The consumer mobilisation is also very important. To that extend, It is worth to note the initiative « www.consodurable.fr », supported by the Minister in charge of consumption and the Minister in charge of Sustainable Development.

Non governmental organisations: many NGOs have been concerned by environment related issues for a long time. They face now a double problem of reorientation and balanced budget. Some NGOs have started, for example, a global reflection on territories or transport management. They would need some support concerning the implementation of sustainable development engineering.

Citizens: with the media, they are generally more concerned with environmental questions and participate more spontaneously in public debates. The Minister in charge of SD notices this evolution of perceptions and behaviours. If we notice a better understanding of terms including sustainable development (fight against poverty, climate change, inequality), this new acculturation needs to be strengthened. Therefore it is essential to pursue the NSDS approach: explain the concept, available information, trainings, participation of citizens to public debates.

The sustainable development week: was the second edition (16 to 27 June 2004). This year, it combined national and regional actions. The multiplications of manifestations and presentations in different place show the success of this edition. The speeches of several Ministers during the week, along with their attention to actions led by their administration regarding sustainable development, ensure its recognition. The sustainable development week must become the key meeting of putting forward initiatives.

Reliable and available information: to the public is an objective of the national strategy. After its adoption, the present report along with the one regarding the state of sustainable development will be available on Internet. Those documents will enhance the approach credibility with the general public and the European and foreign observers.

Education and training: are essential in the NSDS. Sustainable development is a long-term approach involving a complete change of behaviours. It will be possible if people are aware that an alternative way of development exists. Because, if our current way of development has allowed an unprecedented growth, this path is not sustainable.

To this extent, giving courses at school to young people, can and must play an essential role. In 2003-04, such initiatives have been implemented by the Minister in charge of Education.

This approach must be wider than teaching environment protection practices. The challenge is to raise the awareness that solutions lie in new development strategies, completely different with the one we know now.

This approach must also target adults. It is therefore important to include it in vocational trainings. It must also target elected representatives, at the European, national and local level.

The participation of citizens to public debates: is an objective stated at Rio. Two leverages appear as essential to achieve it:

- An available information to citizens as stated in the Aarhus convention and the directive «plan-programme»
- Public debates that prepares national, regional or local decision-making.

An experience developed throughout debates on water and energy has allowed improvements in public debates methods and a better participation of citizens. However, it is worth to note that practices of public debates come from governance methods from North countries where consensus is part of the political culture. Therefore its adaptation to France, a country with a different political tradition, needs to take precautions in order to avoid both to give an excessive place to lobby and to question the role of elected representatives which constitutes the pillar of our democratic institutions.

2. Actions means

Sustainable development involves almost every public policy. Some have a predominant role.

The research

Research, focused on global or local stakes, must deepen knowledge related to complex systems, particularly human and environmental interactions.

A study undertaken by the Ministry in charge of Research, evaluates, a 2002 budget involving sustainable development approach, at around 1611 millions euros, nearly 18% of the global research budget.

Research on sustainable development, adopted by the Ministry in charge of Research, is based on a global vision, sectorial strategies and concrete actions. It involves the central administration and research organisations. An Inter-directional committee, inside the administration, led by a senior official in charge of Sustainable development, contributes to propose actions. He is supported by research organisation representatives in charge of sustainable development.

The workshop report «Research regarding sustainable development», led by the Professor Guesnerie and decided by the Minister in charge of Research and the Secretary of State in charge of sustainable development, proposed an approach that can be included in the strategy evolution of the whole scientific community:

- Every scientific discipline and fundamental research are concerned with sustainable development
- Sustainable development and research needs a long term approach
- The Society asks for knowledge, technologies, appraisal, decision support and communication
- Sustainable development needs inter-disciplinary and transversal approach and tools allowing integration between research fields, particularly the contribution of human and social sciences

It is essential to move economic knowledge, which has a strategic mission of coordination and integration, toward inter-disciplinary approach to build interface and resolve problems. Those inter-disciplinary conditions must be deepened to combine this objective with the different disciplines objectives.

Those institutional articulations must also involve coordination with both international research and technologic and scientific prospecting.

In addition, cooperation between research, civil society, businesses and administration must also be improved. Development and improvement of scientific communication, but also the adaptation of higher education to sustainable development questions, can contribute to a better account of world stakes. The circulation of researchers within institutions and organisations must also be facilitated.

Enhancing incentives towards economic actors

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), which is a voluntary approach, relates to principles and programmes that companies adopt to answer, beyond the compliance with the law, to demands coming from investors, consumers, employees and the public.

In France, the most committed companies are part of associations that work on those questions. It is worth to note: ORSE (Observatory on corporate responsibility), AERES (Business Association for the reduction of greenhouse effect gas), EPE (companies for the environment), and OREE (Companies and local authorities partnership for the environment).

Regarding CSR, some French companies produce and publish environmental reports or include social data to their annual report in order to respond to an increasing need of information. Thus, social reporting comes from a private initiative and CSR gives a large voluntary initiative framework to businesses.

With this evolution, the truthfulness of speeches and reports are therefore a crucial question. The State controls some sectors with its technical services in charge of environmental police. But generally, corporate social and environmental responsibility is not monitored.

In order to promote this approach, the French administration has given a legal framework to CSR related information provided by companies to their shareholders. According to the article 116 of the law on new economic regulations, companies, quoted on the stock exchange, must provide in their annual reports information on the way they take into account social and environmental impacts related to their activity. The law states social and environmental criteria that require information and widen the obligation to inform both to every stakeholder (NGO, trade unions, consumers...) and to new fields (social, territory, environment). Those innovations don't involve new social or environmental rules but impose on companies to inform about those questions. A report from the Minister in charge of labour and social cohesion and one from ORSE-OREE-EPE highlight the application of the new economic regulations law.

Labels and norms: Nowadays several tools exist to help businesses to adopt sustainable approaches such as French and European norms, auto-evaluation tools, rating agency....

The NSDS advocates that the State encourages companies or local authorities to be certified ISO 14000 or to follow the EMAS regulation. A guide on SD21000 recommendations, realised by AFNOR and its partners, help businesses to implement sustainable development strategies. This guide is undertaken by AFNOR as part of the ISO work.

«Sustainable or green» fiscal measures, along with direct incentives to businesses and consumers, must also be developed in order to become an effective sustainable development leverage. The environmental Charter should facilitate this evolution because it puts forward green fiscal measures in comparison with redistributive or financing fiscal measures.

Tools and organisation toward an exemplary state

The public procurements policy has a strong impact on economic activities. It concerns public administrations as a whole, from local to national, public companies and companies in charge of public services.

The new procurement contract code (10/01/2004) introduces the possibility of taking environmental criteria into account when preparing contracts. A permanent group of market study has been set up for that purpose. For the end of 2004 and the beginning of 2005, it is developing guides and recommendations integrating sustainable development, towards public procurement departments. It anticipates the coming evolutions of the procurement contract code which has to include European directives. It will give an increasing weight to sustainable development related criteria.

The LOLF «loi organique sur les lois de finance» (organic law on budget law) will deeply modified the financial year, both for administrations and for parliament in which power is strongly reinforced. The state budget will

move from a culture of means to a culture of results. It will give more flexibility to the budget execution with a higher credits fungibility.

The public policies coherence, the effectiveness of sustainable development orientations and information to the parliament require a «transversal policy document with regards to sustainable development». The Ministry in charge of sustainable development has asked the production of this document.

The State reform implies many projects:

Following the nomination of their senior officials in charge of sustainable development, several Ministries have set up co-ordination committees to conduct the implementation of sustainable development approach within sectorial policies. But, despite the call of the minister in charge of public services, there is no consideration regarding sustainable development within ministerial strategies of reform (SRM).

The on-going year has allowed to increase trainings of civil servants regarding sustainable development.

At decentralised levels, the new strategic actions plans of the State within regions (PASER) and départements (PASED) refer to inter-ministerial policies. Some refer to sustainable development and to the NSDS.

However, we observe that administrations need more experience in the field of sustainable development. They haven't used yet tools being already tested. The senior officials in charge of sustainable development, helped by some experts, analyse the first experiences, make them sharing and draw recommendations.

3. Evaluation-evolution

As stated in the introduction of the NSDS, «the concerted elaboration of the national strategy is a strong advantage to the implementation success. However difficulties are still numerous. A continuous monitoring process will be put in place with the senior officials committee and the national council for sustainable development. Highlighting differences with objectives will imply correction measures: increasing public awareness, best practices diffusion and if necessary review objectives and measures.» the present report reinforces this diagnosis.

Implementing first

The national sustainable development strategy covers a very wide field: almost every public policies. Its aim is to change policies in the sense of sustainable development. Some decisions taken during the year have already modified some objectives or actions contained in the NSDS: conciliations, a clarification of objectives, etc. The national strategy is evolutionary and the evaluation process must take that into account.

The 64 measures taken during the 2002 inter-ministerial meeting are presented within this report, and a chapter emphasises the state of realisation.

It is proposed that:

- When their contents adopted, the sectorial strategies must be included within the national strategy
- Propositions and recommendations formulated by the National Council for Sustainable Development involve modifications
- Encountered difficulties lead to modifications
- Results and lessons lead to adjustments

With reference points to keep the course

The pragmatism within the formulation must not hide operational objectives stated in the NSDS and recommended by the international community. They are related to anticipations and preventions of short and long term risks. Their stakes are global and essential.

Therefore, indicators on «the state of sustainable development» is an essential measuring tool of the sustainable development approach. They highlight the multi-facetted reality:

- Long term growth factors and heritage to the next generation
- Performance of the production and consumption sustainability
- Social cohesion
- Long term risk management

«The state of sustainable development» allows European and international comparisons. It points out time based evolutions and evaluates policy effectiveness within a long term approach. It gives diversified data for citizen information and public awareness. It supports decision-making process of stakeholders.

Indicators will be regularly updated by a group of expert (Ministries, civil society...), coordinated by the “commissariat general au plan” (Commission for the National Plan). The next versions of the report will reinforce the international dimension in order to appreciate the evolutions of the French development related support and the responses to international co-operation stakes in favour of sustainable development.

The territorial dimension in favour of sustainable development will be also strengthened. It is now presented through regional unemployment rates and tourist pressure. It will be observed through the evolution of regional disparities and territorial cohesion.

In addition, it will be important to account for governance. Indicators will have to translate the evolution of the collective co-ordination, particularly the participative democracy, regarding sustainable development.

Estimating the position of stakeholders for improvement

A hundred of objectives and several hundred of actions are stated in the NSDS. They are included in as many sectorial policies and relate to short and long term issues. Thus, other indicators are necessary to estimate their implementation. Some indicators are acknowledged. Others need to be identified.

In the same time, others procedures need the same kind of indicators in order to monitor and estimate public actions effectiveness: the LOLF law, European programme, etc. The inter-ministerial representative in charge of sustainable development, with the help of the senior officials committee in charge of sustainable development will propose measures:

- Indicators adapted to every sectorial policy, to every administration or to every administrative territory (region, département)
- A monitoring process for indicators at each level

Local stakeholders are directly concerned by those indicators. But the evaluation of implemented actions and related difficulties concern the inspection department. It must, therefore, be involved in the elaboration of monitoring indicators.

Evaluating the process to ensure improvement

The NSDS evaluation requires also the evaluation of related sectorial policies and strategies. It is a technical exercise involving experience and sufficient means. The “Commissariat General au Plan” has this experience.

Evaluating the NSDS, at a global level, is an exercise, which hasn't been undertaken yet with such approach. The evolution of the NSDS will give a first interesting observation and it is important to keep the initial text with objectives and actions as a comparison. Successive improvements listed above, will give an essential historical approach to the global evaluation.

However, the best way to improve the NSDS lies in the comparison with others countries. It is the reason why United Nation set up the Sustainable Development Commission. For the same purpose, the President proposed, at the Johannesburg summit, a peer revue of the French NSDS. This exercise will be undertaken before the spring 2005 and will benefit from the experience of Belgian, British, Ghanaian and Mauritian colleagues. The DG environment of the European Commission will also be part of the exercise.

Sharing a sustainable development culture

Those levels of evaluation and those methods contribute to the shift toward sustainable development. But tools are not the essential: an active participation of every stakeholder as stated in the Rio summit.

How can we translate this objective in our country? What kind of acculturation? This is the major stake. The future jurisprudence of the Constitutional Council based on the Environmental Charter will give the fundamental evaluation and boost.

This is the commitment of the President to see Culture as the engine of sustainable development, not as a fourth pillar but as an active principle.