



## Délégation Interministérielle au Développement Durable



SERVICE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE  
SERVICE DES AFFAIRES INTERNATIONALES

### **Presentation of the NSDS peer review exercise**

January 2005

The Plan of Implementation agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002, specifies in the paragraph 162 (b) that *'States should take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005'*. It also states that the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD) should be a forum for exchange of experiences and good practices and should provide a framework for analysis.

As a following, the president has proposed to the international community gathered in Johannesburg, to entrust the CSD with this role. He specified that France would be prepared to submit its NSDS to the first peer review exercise. The objective of this informal exercise, based on a voluntary basis, should not be considered as an environmental performances assessment. It will propose a review of good practices and will identify obstacles to tackle during the implementation of the national strategy.

The peer review exercise has been initiated by the French Ministère de l'Écologie et du Développement Durable (Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development) and the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (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. The methodology should be replicable, relatively simple and cost-effective, in order to be used by other countries and particularly developing ones. This exercise should also allow France to facilitate the development of the next NSDS by an external vision.

Four voluntary countries are part of the exercise: Belgium, Ghana, United Kingdom, Mauritius. An international organisation with acknowledged expertise in the field of NSDS development, IIED, has been employed to help to conduct the exercise. The European commission and UNDESA will be also part of the peer review. It is then planned to present the methodology and the results of the French pilot case at the next meeting of the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD) in New York in April 2005.

The project will be divided into four steps:

- The first step was to specify the development and implementation process of the French NSDS, with interviews of some NSDS key actors. To prepare those interviews and to widen the circle of advice and comments, a preliminary questionnaire developed with existing UN and OECD documents, was sent more widely.
- Following interviews and answers to questionnaire, a first workshop focused on the development of the methodology was organised in Paris, on 8-9 November 2004. It brought together some French experts and representatives of Belgium, UK, Ghana, Mauritius, European Commission and UNDESA. A first version of the methodology was produced at the end of this seminar.
- On 7-11 February 2005, the methodology will be tested on the French NSDS, during a second workshop bringing together French experts (government and civil society) and representatives of Belgium, UK, Ghana, Mauritius. A second report will then be produced with the results of the pilot review.
- A document summarising the methodology and the results of the French pilot exercise will be prepared for the next CSD event, in New York, in April 2005.