

Effective Contributions to Global Environmental Protection

Sustainable Governance Indicators 2024



Indicator

Policy Efforts and Commitment to a Global Environmental Policy

Question

To what extent is the government committed and credible in designing and promoting global environmental protection regimes and policies?

30 OECD and EU countries are sorted according to their performance on a scale from 10 (best) to 1 (lowest). This scale is tied to four qualitative evaluation levels.

- 10-9 = Government policy and institutions are fully aligned with efforts to achieve global environmental sustainability.
- 8-6 = Government policy and institutions are largely aligned with efforts to achieve global environmental sustainability.
- 5-3 = Government policy and institutions are somewhat aligned with efforts to achieve global environmental sustainability.
- 2-1 = Government policy and institutions are not at all aligned with efforts to achieve global environmental sustainability.

Norway

Score 10

Norwegian governments are highly supportive of international initiatives to address global challenges such as the climate and nature crises. The Ministry of Climate and the Environment is responsible for negotiating, implementing, and following up on international climate and environmental conventions. Norway is a key driving force in international negotiations, such as those under the Paris Agreement for climate and the Convention on Biological Diversity for biodiversity. It actively participates in global efforts to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants through organizations like the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and the Arctic Council.

Norway engages in multilateral work for sustainable development, including initiatives such as the UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy and the Global Green Growth Institute, for which it was a founding member. Norway is a significant supporter and donor to international climate initiatives, with the Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) being the most important and longest-running program under UN REDD+. Norway is also a key donor to the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility, and it contributed to the establishment of the “&Green” fund, which aims to attract risk-taking capital to strengthen investment in sustainable supply chains. Additionally, Norway contributes to multinational development banks and has established bilateral cooperation agreements with environmental authorities in China, India, and South Africa. Priority topics for bilateral cooperation include nature, climate and environmental toxins, marine litter, and the sea. These projects,

mostly aimed at administrative cooperation, involve the Norwegian Environment Agency as an important partner and are primarily financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Norway works to ensure that international trade regulations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and its other free trade agreements promote green growth and support climate and environmental considerations. The government closely follows regulatory developments in the EU. Through the EEA agreement, the framework for sustainable finance, which ensures the financial industry contributes to the transition to a low-emission society and mitigates climate change, environmental, and social problems, will also apply to Norwegian actors.

As the home country of Gro Harlem Brundtland, who famously chaired the UN-appointed World Commission on Environment and Development in the 1980s, Norway has a long-standing tradition as an international champion of sustainable development. Over the past decades, various governments have sought to maintain this role. In this spirit, the current government also aims to be an important driving force for international efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, protect nature, and preserve biodiversity.

The political rationale for this approach begins with the observation that Norway is a relatively small and very open natural resource-based economy with a high reliance on global markets and international trade. Binding international agreements serve as protection against free-rider problems, making capital allocation to support and advance international regulatory frameworks highly legitimate. Additionally, Norway is a “lower-carbon economy than many others” (IEA, 2017: 38). As a result, domestic carbon emission cuts are relatively costly, making mitigation efforts abroad financially more attractive. Norway channels its resources through a broad and multifaceted set of agencies. In addition to Norfund (the government’s investment fund for business in developing countries) and Norad (the directorate for overseas development assistance) – both crucial channels for financial capital – specialists in various fields provide expert knowledge.

Citation:

Klima – og miljødepartementet. 2021. “Internasjonalt klima – og miljøsamarbeid.” <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/klima-og-miljo/innsiktsartikler-klima-miljo/internasjonalt-klima-og-miljoarbeid/id2339820>

Norwegian Ministry

of Climate and Environment. n.d. “Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative – NICFI. About us.” <https://www.nicfi.no/about-us/>

IEA. 2017. Energy Policies of IEA Countries. Norway 2017 Review. <https://www.iea.org/reports/energy-policies-of-iea-countries-norway-2017-review>

Schoyen, M. A., Bjørn Hvinden, and M. Dotterud Leiren. 2022. “Chapter 1: Welfare State Sustainability in the 21st Century.” In M. A. Schoyen, B. Hvinden, and M. Dotterud Leiren, eds., *Towards Sustainable Welfare States in Europe: Social Policy and Climate Change*, 2–27. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839104633>

Schoyen, M. A., and M. Takle. 2022. "Chapter 7: The Norwegian Sustainability Paradox: Leader Abroad, Laggard at Home." In M. A. Schoyen, B. Hvinden, and M. D. Leiren, eds., 153–174. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839104633.00018>

Sweden

Score 10

In 2022, the government implemented a strategy for global development cooperation within the environment, climate, and biodiversity for 2022 – 2030. The strategy adheres to Sweden's international aid target, which aims to create preconditions for better living conditions for people living in poverty and under oppression. It is based on the principles of aid and development efficiency outlined in Agenda 2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) is responsible for implementation, evaluation, and annual reporting related to the strategy's activities, which are funded with SEK 8 billion.

The strategy has clearly defined capacity-building targets, and operations are geared toward contributing to these goals. These targets include increased water safety through sustainable governance of freshwater resources and ecosystems, limited climate impact through greater access to renewable energy and improved energy efficiency, and the development of more environmentally sustainable and inclusive cities and societies. Further goals include sustainable production and consumption patterns, the shift to sustainable food systems, reduced pollution, and sustainable chemical and waste management. The strategy also aims to strengthen the ability to adapt and build resilience against climate change and natural disasters. Additional objectives include creating cleaner oceans and coasts, sustainably using, managing, and restoring marine natural resources, and conserving biodiversity and ecosystems. Moreover, the plan calls for increased protection, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity and strengthened preconditions for the sustainable management and use of land-based natural resources (Utrikesdepartementet, 2022).

SIDA works with climate and environmental goals to strengthen countries' ability to develop sustainably and to improve people's living conditions. The work is guided by the strategy for global development cooperation within the environment, climate, and biodiversity for 2022 – 2030, and the support ranges from global to local organizations, to countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and South America. The efforts focus on a sustainable environment, sustainable climate and oceans, and sustainable use of natural resources (SIDA, 2022).

In late 2023, the government published a climate action plan. The plan emphasizes the importance of international cooperation, but it lacks an assessment of the risk of spillover effects from national environmental policies (Skr. 2023/24, 59). In a report published the same year, which offers suggestions on how to achieve climate neutrality before 2050, it is stated that measures need to be taken if consumption and trade patterns within the EU cause increased emissions in other parts of the world. Such measures shall be decided on an EU level (Hassler 2023).

Citation:

Hassler, J. 2023. Sveriges klimatstrategi: 46 förslag för klimatmötningen i Ljuster av Fit for 55. Stockholm: Klimat- och näringslivsdepartementet.

Sida. 2022. "Sidas arbete med klimat och miljö." <https://www.sida.se/sida-i-varlden/teman/miljo-och-klimat>

Utrikesdepartementet – Regeringskansliet. 2022. Strategi för Sveriges globala utvecklingssamarbete inom miljö, klimat och biologisk mångfald, 2022-2026. Stockholm: Utrikesdepartementet.

Germany

Score 9

Germany is part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, which provide the framework for its climate foreign policy. With a participation rate of 1.0, Germany, alongside Finland, has the highest participation rate in global and regional multilateral environmental agreements .

In 2023, coinciding with the UN Climate Change Conference, Germany adopted its first environmental cooperation strategy, the Strategy on Climate Foreign Policy (Klimaaußenpolitik-Strategie, KAP). While not legally binding, the strategy defines specific fields of action and instruments, signaling Germany's commitment as a reliable and supportive partner (BMUV, 2023).

The KAP focuses on six areas, including reducing global GHG emissions by 2030, ensuring climate justice, and protecting, promoting, and restoring the sustainable use of ecosystems. Capacity-building targets are a substantial part of the strategy. For instance, the KAP calls for tripling installed renewable energy capacities and doubling the rate of energy efficiency improvement. It pledges to work with partner countries to advance renewable energies and enhance energy efficiency (Die Bundesregierung, 2023).

Germany acknowledges that as a member of the G20, it is part of a group responsible for around 80% of global emissions while also benefiting from high economic output. Consequently, the strategy emphasizes the particular responsibility of G20 countries, including Germany, to implement ambitious climate policies. It also addresses "climate justice," highlighting that states and communities in Africa and small island developing states are especially affected by climate change. Germany addresses some of the resulting spillover effects (Die Bundesregierung, 2023).

Existing cooperation policies support capacity-building and skills development for global environmental protection. For example, based on the commitment in the Paris Agreement to Nationally Determined Contributions (Nationale Klimabeiträge, NDCs), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and BMUV initiated the NDC Partnership in 2016. The main objective of the NDC Partnership is to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030

Agenda for Sustainable Development through coordinated bilateral and multilateral donor programs (BMZ, 2023a). Additionally, through the International Climate Initiative (IKI), the BMUV, BMWK, and Federal Foreign Office support measures helping partner countries adapt to climate change or restore natural carbon sinks. From 2008 to 2022, with funding of almost €6 billion, the IKI has approved over 950 climate and biodiversity projects globally in more than 150 countries (IKI, 2023).

Germany is the EU member state committed to paying the highest amount toward the international \$100 billion climate finance commitment under the UNFCCC in 2021, contributing €7,844 million. For reference, France, the second-highest contributor, committed €5,781 million (Eurostat, 2022).

One example of government contribution is a joint funding project in Kenya and Senegal by the BMZ, the Green Climate Fund, and partner governments. Since a majority of the population in Kenya and Senegal cook using biomass (firewood, charcoal, and plant residues), releasing significant greenhouse gases, the project aims to provide improved stoves as low-carbon cooking techniques. The objective is to promote the capacity of a market for efficient cooking technologies and increase the capabilities of both the supply and demand sides. The BMZ, as a main donor, contributed €1.5 billion from 2020 to 2023 (BMZ, 2023b).

Germany also supports technologies for positive environmental development, primarily through financial assistance rather than direct transfer and dissemination of technologies. For example, the German government and the KfW Group created the PtX Development Fund to promote the use of green hydrogen in developing countries as an energy carrier, enabling access to that technology. According to the KAP, the German government plans to invest €70 million into the fund (Die Bundesregierung, 2023).

As Germany's first Strategy on Climate Foreign Policy, the KAP has not yet undergone evaluations to monitor progress in capacity-building in recipient countries. However, an evaluation of bilateral cooperation is planned for the end of 2024 to adapt the strategy accordingly. Indicators will assess whether and how well measures were implemented (Die Bundesregierung, 2023). Additionally, mandated by the BMZ, the German Institute for Development Evaluations analyzes development cooperation activities and measures, including those for global environmental sustainability (DEval, 2023).

Citation:

BMUV. 2023. "Emissionen senken, global handeln, Chancen ergreifen: Die Klimaaußenpolitikstrategie der Bundesregierung." <https://www.bmuv.de/pressemitteilung/emissionen-senken-global-handeln-chancen-ergreifen-die-klimaaussenpolitikstrategie-der-bundesregierung>

BMZ. 2023a. "NDC-Partnerschaft." <https://www.bmz.de/de/themen/klimawandel-und-entwicklung/ndc-partnerschaft>

BMZ. 2023. "Optimised Stoves Reduce Carbon Footprints." <https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/climate-change-and-development/climate-financing/example-kenya-senegal-79816>

DEval. 2023. "Goals and Functions." <https://www.deval.org/en/about-us/the-institute/goals-and-functions>

Die Bundesregierung. 2023. "Die Klimaaußenpolitik-Strategie der Bundesregierung." <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/blob/2633110/7d086ff77b692c97eb0ea82d689d6bd9/kap-strategie-data.pdf>

Eurostat. 2022. "Contribution to the International 100bn USD Commitment on Climate Related Expenditures." https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_13_50/default/table?lang=en

IKI. 2023. "About the IKI." <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/about-iki/>

KfW. 2024. "Integrated Financing for Green Hydrogen – A Perfect Fit and from a Single Source." <https://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de/Our-topics/PtX/>

United Kingdom

Score 9

Since the 1990s, the United Kingdom has been a leading advocate for global environmental sustainability. The UK ratified the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, reaffirming its commitment at the Marrakech COP22 summit in November 2016. Successive governments have consistently pursued goals related to environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions.

In November 2021, the UK hosted the COP26 climate negotiations in Glasgow, positioning itself as a leading voice on the global stage. The UK highlighted its ambitious actions aimed at achieving "net zero" emissions ahead of many other nations. However, the difficult negotiations with the 196 participating nations led to mixed results, with agreements in some areas but insufficient progress to meet the goals set in the Paris Climate Accord. Moreover, decisions in 2023 to delay some interim net zero targets due to concerns about consumer cost burdens may have undermined the UK's moral stance.

The international aid budget includes funding for "clean energy" projects, and the UK supported the implementation of the "loss and damage fund" agreed upon at COP 28 in Dubai, pledging £60 million. Other aid commitments include £316 million for innovative projects worldwide to accelerate the global transition to renewables and £40 million for 64 clean energy projects across Africa, South Asia, and the Indo-Pacific, focusing on local solutions for critical technologies like energy storage, smart grids, and next-generation solar.

The UK has also recently published a National Data Strategy with an objective to support data foundations and improve the quality and availability of data internationally.

In November 2023, the UK hosted the Global Food Security Summit in partnership with the United Arab Emirates and Somalia. It also published a white paper titled "International Development in a Contested World: Ending Extreme Poverty and Tackling Climate Change," signaling a new approach. This ambitious strategy highlights how UK efforts will contribute to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a significant focus on global environmental protection. The strategy states that "the goal of UK international development is to end extreme poverty and tackle climate change and biodiversity loss."

While broadly welcoming the new approach, Professor Melissa Leach, Director of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, urged the

government to stick to its long-term commitments and restore the UK's funding of 0.7% of GDP by proposing a timeline and criteria for doing so. She also praises "the emphasis on harnessing the diversity of science, technology and innovation and on new ways of mobilizing development finance."

Citation:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6560874b0c7ec8000d95bdcf/international-development-in-a-contested-world-ending-extreme-poverty-and-tackling-climate-change.pdf>

Denmark

Score 8

As Denmark is a small economy, the question of what difference national policies can make is frequently debated, and issues such as the costs of being a front-runner with regard to loss of competitiveness have been raised. However, a strong argument in the debate is that there is a responsibility to take action, and that being a front-runner can set an example, and even be an economic advantage in the medium term.

The Danish government has decided that foreign aid will be directed toward projects that promote the green transition. In its strategy for the 2022 – 2025 period, the government focuses on promoting the green transition in developing countries (DANIDA 2021). The government aims to achieve this by supporting projects that sustainably build local markets. Specifically, the government plans to focus on projects related to sustainable water supply systems and the development of sustainable energy systems.

Furthermore, the strategy commits the Danish government to using 0.7% of GDP on foreign aid.

Citation:

DANIDA. 2021. Dansk udviklingspolitisk strategi 2021-2025: Fælles om Verden. https://um.dk/-/media/websites/umdk/danish-site/danida/strategi-og-prioriteter/udviklingsstrategi_faelles_om_verden_2021.ashx

Slovenia

Score 8

Slovenia has signed and ratified many multilateral environmental agreements, reflecting its strong commitment to environmental protection. This commitment is highlighted in the 2022 Environmental Implementation Review, where the EU Commission found Slovenia to have among the fewest violations in 2020, with six cases. Luxembourg had the least with one case, while Spain topped the list with 21 cases.

Slovenia's dedication to sustainable development at regional and subregional levels is demonstrated through various cooperation agreements covering the Alps, the Danube and its tributaries, and the Mediterranean, including the Adriatic. The central

organization for nature conservation, the Institute for Nature Conservation in Slovenia, participates in numerous national and international projects, usually EU-funded, focused on improving nature conservation.

Slovenia's commitment to environmental protection on a global scale is further evidenced by the Slovenian Council for Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection's membership in the Global Network of National Councils for Sustainable Development. This membership aims to strengthen and improve the work of national entities to ensure sustainable development.

However, despite these efforts, Slovenia's contribution to bolstering global environmental protection regimes has been modest.

Citation:

European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment. 2022. The Environmental Implementation Review – Slovenia. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/81867>

Spain

Score 8

In 2021, the Office for Humanitarian Action and Environment and Climate of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) published a guide to integrate environmental protection into humanitarian action and emergencies. Law 1/2023 further strengthens this focus on environmental protection in development cooperation. However, the new director plan, which should outline a roadmap with specific targets, has yet to be published, and the Spanish Cooperation Evaluation Office has not been established. During the Spanish presidency of the Council of the European Union, the government successfully negotiated at COP 28 for increased climate finance and progress in the global green transition. During this period, Teresa Ribera, the Minister for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, emerged as an international leader in climate change, enhancing the influence of Spanish policy actions at the European and global levels.

Tender and procurement processes for Spanish cooperation are open to the private sector and other actors, such as non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs). These processes must include social, environmental, and human rights aspects in the technical specifications, award criteria, and special execution conditions, in accordance with Law 9/2017 of November 8 on Public Sector Contracts.

Law 1/2023 emphasizes policy coherence for sustainable development as a fundamental principle. The objectives of sustainable development cooperation will be integrated into all internal and external policies, working with autonomous communities, local authorities, the European Union, and international organizations, while respecting the competences and capacities of each actor.

According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Spain has implemented several capacity-building initiatives as essential components of mitigation and adaptation projects. These efforts ensure successful and effective implementation and sustainability, with a total of 57 projects reported.

Citation:

UN. 2023. "Implementation of the Framework for Capacity-Building in Developing Countries." 23 March 2023. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sbi2023_03E.pdf

Reuters. 2023. "EU Braces for Possible Loss of Two Climate Change Leaders." July 24. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-braces-possible-loss-two-climate-change-leaders-2023-07-24/>

Austria

Score 7

Austria's approach to global environmental policy has long been marked by contradictions. Rhetorically, Austria – the government, political parties, and the media – has frequently portrayed itself as a frontrunner in global governance, from Kyoto to Copenhagen and Paris. In practice, however, the country has not fully lived up to this self-acclaimed role.

Austria remains proud of its 1978 decision to forgo nuclear energy, being one of the first countries worldwide to do so. This decision has become a national narrative, portraying Austria as a leader in enlightened environmental consciousness. However, in terms of net greenhouse gas emissions, Austria occupies an average position among OECD countries, although the reductions achieved over the past decade have been slightly more significant than in many other countries.

Austria's participation rate in global and regional multilateral environmental agreements has been below average (P20.4). The same is true for Austria's effective contributions to Green Climate Funds (P20.5).

The participation of the Greens in the new government formed in early 2020, and the appointment of a Green climate minister, marked a tangible change in Austria's international performance. However, the exact policy effects remain contested. At the Glasgow climate conference in late 2021, Climate Minister Leonore Gewessler (Green) went out of her way to present and position Austria as a future frontrunner, committing the government to increasing its contributions to the international Green Climate Fund from €26 million to €30 million by 2023. In mid-2023, Minister Gewessler announced that Austria would further increase its payments to the fund to €160 million for 2024 to 2027, or €40 million per year.

The current three-year program of Austrian Developmental Policy 2022 – 2024, agreed upon by major state actors, parliaments, and members from the economic and scientific communities and civil society groups, sets out the principles, goals, and priorities of governmental policy in this area. Bilateral cooperation strategies are being developed in close collaboration with recipient countries, taking into account

different social and cultural settings and including technological advice and support. Particular emphasis is placed on the involvement of women and the protection of the specific rights of children and people with disabilities. There are also Regional Cooperation Strategies, which seek to develop collaborations between different countries in the same region, considering the bilateral engagement of various Austrian actors.

Citation:

https://www.bmk.gv.at/service/presse/gewessler/20230412_gcf.html

https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Entwicklungszusammenarbeit/Dreijahresprogramm_der_oesterreichischen_Entwicklungspolitik_2022-2024.pdf

Finland

Score 7

Development aid in Finland has five emphasis areas: the rights and status of women and girls, quality inclusive education, sustainable economies and decent work, peaceful and democratic societies, and climate change and the sustainable use of natural resources. There is no specific road map for environmental cooperation.

In the realm of climate policy, Finland is committed to fulfilling the objectives of the Paris Agreement. The country actively contributes to international climate and environmental finance efforts, activities supporting environmentally sustainable development, and measures helping vulnerable nations adapt to climate change. In this way, Finland contributes to capacity-building and skills development in developing countries, with the aim of assisting them in formulating and implementing sustainable environmental plans.

While Finland is committed to observing many multilateral and bilateral environmental agreements concerning climate change and air pollution, it is not among the primary agenda-setters for advancing international regimes.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has developed guidelines for organizing environmentally sustainable meetings, conferences and seminars.

To some extent, Finland engages in the development, transfer and dissemination of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms. Finland invests in research and clean energy solutions.

Monitoring in the development aid area is mostly focused on the potential misuse of funds (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland n.d.). Apart from Agenda 2023 indicators, there are no other indicators to measure capacity-building outcomes.

Citation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. n.d. "Monitoring, Oversight and Risk Management of Development Cooperation." <https://um.fi/monitoring-of-development-cooperation>

France

Score 7 France was a key player in the negotiations that led to the Paris Agreement, the landmark climate agreement adopted by the United Nations in 2015. The Paris Agreement has become the main reference point in international climate governance. After coming to power in 2017, President Macron repeatedly pledged his attachment to the Paris Agreement.

According to government figures, France provided €7.6 billion in climate finance in 2022 (€2.6 billion of which was for adaptation), exceeding its target of €6 billion. The French government has also contributed to the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative – an early warning system for vulnerable countries. The French development aid agency, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), was among the first development banks to align with the Paris Agreement.

Despite these figures, France, like the United Kingdom and other countries, is not on track to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Moreover, given France's leadership in the past, its current hesitations may weigh heavier than those of other countries in the international arena.

Latvia

Score 7 Latvia is committed to contributing to global environmental protection and climate change mitigation, as it ranks 25th for climate policy measures in the Environmental Performance Index 2022.

Latvia has a centralized environmental governance system that enables the design of national nature conservation plans and comprehensive, cross-sectoral policy tools. Thematic priorities for bilateral and multilateral development cooperation focus on climate action (SDG 13). Latvia is committed to strengthening human and institutional capacity for climate action, with a key performance indicator that 30% of financed development cooperation will be targeted to climate action by 2027.

Citation:

Wolf, M. J., Emerson, J. W., Esty, D. C., de Sherbinin, A., Wendling, Z. A., et al. 2022. 2022 Environmental Performance Index. New Haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy. <https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2022/component/epi> (accessed 28.12.2023)

The Cabinet of Ministers. 2021. Development cooperation policy guidelines for 2021-2027. <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/322455-development-cooperation-policy-guidelines-for-2021-2027>

Lithuania

Score 7 Lithuanian policymakers contribute to international efforts to strengthen global environmental protection regimes, but this policy area is not perceived as a government priority. Lithuania has demonstrated commitment to existing regimes –

especially those promulgated by the EU or promoted by its institutions – by incorporating international or European environmental provisions into national legislation or strategic documents and implementing them.

In 2012, the Lithuanian parliament approved a national policy strategy on climate-change management to further carry out Lithuania’s commitments in the areas of climate change and energy. Although Lithuanian policymakers typically do not actively advance global environmental strategies, Lithuania contributed to the Warsaw Climate Change Conference in 2013 as part of its European Council presidency. Additionally, Lithuania successfully initiated the 2013 UN resolution on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

The country’s institutions are most active at the regional level, addressing issues related to the Baltic Sea. In recent years, concerns about the safety of the Astravyets nuclear power plant, constructed in neighboring Belarus, have become significant. Lithuania has outlawed the use of electricity generated by the Belarusian nuclear power plant.

Environment protection is among the main strategic directions of Lithuania’s development cooperation policy for 2022 – 2025 (Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024). According to Lithuanian authorities, the country has been assisting Moldova, Armenia and Georgia in drafting legal norms on recycling, supporting the design and installation of modern waste sorting facilities and solar power plants. Lithuania’s effective deposit-refund system for recycling beverage packaging has been showcased to various recipients of development assistance, with some countries adopting it. Since 2022, however, the primary focus of developmental cooperation has shifted to humanitarian and financial support for Ukraine. This has included helping to maintain the functioning of state institutions, ensuring the provision of public services during the war and rebuilding civilian infrastructure.

Citation:

Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Official Development Assistance.” <https://ltaid.urm.lt/en/official-development-assistance/42>

Portugal

Score 7

The Portuguese government is committed to formulating policies that contribute to global environmental sustainability, a fundamental challenge outlined in the 2030 Agenda. To promote sustainable development, the government has established a new interinstitutional mechanism and a control structure to monitor the agenda’s implementation. Internally, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers oversees and monitors the 2030 Agenda, while external coordination is managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This control structure integrates these two government areas, bringing together various governmental and social organizations (Jornal de Negócios, 2023).

The translation of these efforts into concrete action remains to be seen. As highlighted in the National Voluntary Report, public policy planning has gradually incorporated the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs since 2017. However, most public policy instruments do not explicitly reference these frameworks.

Portugal has made significant commitments to addressing climate change in the international community, particularly through active participation in various United Nations conferences. Additionally, its role as the “Champion Country” of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and its political dedication to the Second United Nations Conference on the Oceans exemplify Portugal’s active engagement on the global stage.

Citation:

Jornal de Negócios. 2023. “Para onde caminha o país no roteiro da sustentabilidade?” *Jornal de Negócios* <https://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/sustentabilidade/detalhe/20230920-0934-para-onde-caminha-o-pais-no-roteiro-da-sustentabilidade>

Voluntary National Review Portugal. 2023. “Voluntary National Review Portugal.” https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/Portugal_VNR_Report.pdf

United States

Score 7

The present U.S. administration plays a reasonably prominent role in shaping global environmental protection regimes and policies. It does so through various channels. Historically, the United States has actively engaged in negotiating and participating in international climate agreements, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes. However, the full extent of U.S. participation has sometimes been limited by a recalcitrant Senate, as with the ratification of the Kyoto Agreement, or by hostile administrations, as with President Donald Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.

Nonetheless, on balance, the United States has played and continues to play a key role in environmental diplomacy. The State Department’s Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, for instance, leads diplomatic negotiations and fosters collaboration on a range of environmental commitments. In addition, the United States significantly contributes to global environmental funds. For example, the U.S. government supports the Global Environment Facility, which funds biodiversity and conservation projects while focusing on climate change mitigation and sustainable development. The U.S. government also funds the Global Innovation Lab for Climate Finance, which develops financial instruments to help advance investment in clean energy, energy efficiency, and climate-related projects. USAID runs a “Clean Energy Investment Accelerator,” which seeks to mobilize private investment in renewable energy projects.

The U.S. government also helps transfer and disseminate environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms. Power Africa, an initiative led by USAID, is tasked with providing clean and reliable energy throughout sub-Saharan Africa and is focused primarily on harnessing solar energy.

Estonia

Score 6

Estonia's development cooperation is not focused on the environment. This is not because the issue is seen as unimportant, but because the country is small and directs its efforts elsewhere. Still, Estonia has joined most major global and European agreements on the issue, displaying its commitment to these international targets. Estonia has ratified the Paris Agreement and is taking steps to switch to more environmentally sustainable economic and behavioral models. It agreed to the EU energy and climate goals for 2030 and is negotiating a national plan for the Fit for 55 packages. Additionally, Estonia has actively participated in the UN Climate Change Conferences of the Parties (COP26) and has co-organized several side events.

A global bottom-up civil society movement, World Cleanup Day, originated in Estonia and has become one of the largest contemporary civil society movements worldwide. In 2023, 19.1 million participants engaged in cleanup efforts across 198 countries and territories.

Greenhouse gas emissions per capita remain high and show no diminishing trend, an anomaly influenced by the Ukrainian war and reliance on Russian energy. At the same time, the terrestrial biome protection score is high, and participation in multilateral environmental agreements is relatively robust. Estonia lags behind the average in effective contributions to Green Climate Funds.

Greece

Score 6

Although Greece initially appears to be a laggard in contributing to the Green Climate Fund and participating in multilateral environmental agreements, Greece has become more active in global and regional environmental protection initiatives since recovering from its economic crisis.

In 2019, Greece launched the "Addressing Climate Change Impacts on Cultural and Natural Heritage" initiative at the UN Climate Action Summit, which gained support from over 100 UN member states by 2022. Greece also plays a significant role in the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean coasts and sea, hosting the convention's Coordinating Unit/Secretariat in Athens (Presidency of the Hellenic Government 2022: 188).

Greece actively participates in implementing the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean coasts and sea. Greece hosts the convention's

Coordinating Unit/Secretariat in Athens, and within the context of the convention, it chaired the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development from 2017 to 2019.

In the Eastern Mediterranean region, Greece has initiated or participated in several environmental protection initiatives. In 2023, Greece, Cyprus, and Israel ratified an implementation agreement on the subregional marine oil pollution contingency plan. Since 2020, the three countries have participated in a three-way partnership on renewable energy sources and the development of sustainable energy infrastructure. Since 2018, Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt have engaged in trilateral cooperation on sustainable development, which includes collaboration on electricity grids and environmental education. Moreover, since 2019, Greece, North Macedonia, Albania, and the European Union have signed and begun implementing an agreement on the protection and sustainable development of the Prespa Park area, which encompasses lakes spanning the three countries (Presidency of the Hellenic Government 2022: 184 – 186). Finally, regarding greenhouse gas emissions, Greece ranks above-average among OECD countries (OECD 2022).

In brief, Greece does not provide direct assistance to many other countries in promoting ecological sustainability but focuses its efforts on the Mediterranean region. Yet Greece actively contributes, within its capacity, to international efforts aimed at fostering and shaping environmental sustainability in other countries and on a regional and global scale.

Citation:

OECD. 2022. “Dataset: Greenhouse Gas Emissions.” https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=AIR_GHG

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Ireland

Score 6

The Department of Foreign Affairs/Irish Aid published “Ireland’s International Climate Finance Roadmap” (2022) to align Irish environmental cooperation strategies with clearly defined capacity-building targets in recipient countries. This roadmap integrates finance, climate policy, foreign policy, and development cooperation, contributing to Ireland’s International Development Policy, “A Better World” (2022), which includes capacity-building for global environmental protection. Ireland’s climate finance is primarily grant-based and targets countries and communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, primarily through supporting climate adaptation actions.

The Programme for Government (2020) committed to doubling the proportion of Ireland’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) that counts as climate finance by 2030. At UNFCCC COP26 in November 2021, Ireland set a further target of

providing at least €225 million per year in climate finance to developing countries by 2025. The roadmap emphasizes support for small island states, promoting a sustainable blue economy, ocean protection and biodiversity restoration, and it acknowledges the spillover effects of national environmental policies/regulatory regimes on the global environment. Goal number 4 of the roadmap commits to supporting capacity-building in developing countries for climate-resilient development.

Senior ministries, including the Taoiseach, attend UNFCCC COP meetings, with Minister for Environment Eamon Ryan credited with significant leadership (Harrison, 2023). Although Ireland has signed up to the 1.5-degree target of the 2016 Paris Agreement, the country is not on track to achieve these goals. Ireland's sustained requests for exemptions regarding carbon emissions from the agricultural sector and nitrogen derogations in EU targets and policy appear at odds with these commitments. Two challenges for national policy are the narrow focus on adaptation and the lack of coherent targets and monitoring of outcomes.

Citation:

Irish Aid. 2022. Ireland's International Climate Finance Roadmap 2022. Government of Ireland.

<https://www.irishaid.ie/media/irishaid/publications/2022-Irelands-International-Climate-Finance-Roadmap-Digital.pdf>

Harrison, B. 2023. "Fossil Fuel Lobbyist Fought Tooth and Nail" -Eamon Ryan on How Agreement Was Reached at Cop 28. The Irish Times, December 15. <https://www.irishtimes.com/podcasts/in-the-news/fossil-fuel-lobbyists-fought-tooth-and-nail-eamon-ryan-on-how-agreement-was-reached-at-cop-28>

EU Commission Representation in Ireland. 2021. "The Recovery Plan for Europe in Ireland." https://ireland.representation.ec.europa.eu/strategy-and-priorities/recovery-plan-europe_en

Government of Ireland. 2021. "National Statement by the Taoiseach, COP 26, Glasgow." <https://www.gov.ie/en/speech/2b865-national-statement-by-the-taoiseach-cop-26-glasgow-2-november-2021/>

Italy

Score 6

The Italian government's contribution to international efforts in global environmental policy has generally been positive. Italy has supported coordinated international action, including COP27 (2022) and COP28 (2023), although it has not played a significant leadership role. The Ministry of the Environment has limited political weight and financial resources, while the government's attention and priorities have primarily focused on domestic economic recovery under the Draghi government and domestic issues under the Meloni government.

In selected areas, however, Italian policy has been more innovative. For example, the National Consortium for Packaging Recycling (CONAI) has enabled Italy to exceed the European 2020 targets in this area. This covers a significant proportion of plastic production and provides an efficient model for other countries. Regarding the marine environment, in 2019, Italy joined France and Spain in proposing a Mediterranean Emission Control Area (ECA).

During the Meloni government, there has been less proactivity, with most signed agreements being with small states, such as the 2022 agreement with Caribbean

states. There is a clear difference between the attitudes of the Draghi and Meloni governments. The Draghi administration played an active role in promoting ambitious environmental goals during the G20 meeting chaired by Italy in October 2021, including deadlines for reducing CO₂ and preventing global warming.

Furthermore, the Italian Climate Fund, the main national public instrument for pursuing the country's commitments under international climate and environmental agreements, was established by the budget law for 2022, enacted under the Draghi government. It is a revolving fund with an endowment of €40 million per year from 2022 to 2026 and €10 million per year from 2027 onwards.

In contrast, the Meloni government has not held a significant position in terms of global environmental protection. In the budget law for 2024, the Meloni administration postponed the use of these financial resources until 2027.

Citation:
LEGAMBIENTE. 2023. "Comunicato Stampa sulla Legge di Bilancio 2024."
<https://www.legambiente.it/comunicati-stampa/approvata-in-via-definitiva-legge-bilancio-2024>

Netherlands

Score 6

In the Commitment to Development Index, the Netherlands has dropped over time from the top spot in 2003 to sixth place in 2023. When adjusted for national income, it falls to thirteenth place. Despite this, the country excels in integrating aid and trade, maintaining its top position in the area of trade. This integration was reflected in the renaming of the Department for Development Aid and International Trade to the Department for International Trade and Development Aid under the Rutte IV coalition government. One commentator likened this integration to merging the roles of "pastor and businessman."

A notable example of Dutch global climate diplomacy is its emphasis on national water management expertise. While advocating for climate issues broadly, the Netherlands prioritizes water within climate action frameworks. The government's climate diplomacy efforts in 2023 focused on preparations for the UN 2023 Water Conference, and on influencing global climate agendas to enhance actions under SDG 6 and other water-related goals.

Traditionally, Dutch environmental and sustainability policies are conceptually robust but suffer from weak implementation. Efforts to monitor Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for medium-term progress have been substantial. Identifying synergies and trade-offs among SDGs is crucial for policy relevance. Notably, progress on SDG 13 (Climate Action) can positively impact other SDGs, although SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality) often faces trade-offs. This aligns with national priorities where distributive concerns and "climate justice" are paramount.

In its 2023 policy, the Dutch government aimed to significantly reduce CO₂ emissions. This included doubling financial contributions to tropical rainforest protection to €50 million by 2025, thereby enhancing global carbon sequestration. Additionally, increased funding for clean energy in developing countries aims to expand access to renewable energy for 100 million people by 2030. More than half of the Netherlands' public climate funding will be allocated to adaptation measures, supporting initiatives like safe deltas and climate-smart agriculture in developing nations.

Dutch companies and knowledge institutions excel in solar energy, wind energy, hydrogen and sustainable mobility. Future policies will leverage this expertise by encouraging Dutch investments in low- and middle-income countries, fostering both economic development in these nations and market access for Dutch enterprises. Initiatives like energy partnerships in hydrogen-rich countries aim to accelerate local energy transitions while potentially facilitating export of surplus energy.

Citation:

Center for Global Development. 2023. CDI 20th Anniversary Edition. Netherlands.

Ministry of Economics and Climate, and Ministry of Climate and Energy. 2023. "Letter on Progress in Global Climate Diplomacy." February 20.

CBS. February 2021. "Vijf jaar implementatie van de SDG's in Nederland (2016-2020) monitoring en reflectie."

Rijksoverheid. 2022. "Nieuwsbericht: Nederland verhoogt klimaatsteun aan ontwikkelingslanden." <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2022/10/07/nederland-verhoogt-klimaatsteun-aan-ontwikkelingslanden>

New Zealand

Score 6

New Zealand has demonstrated its commitment to global environmental protection through various actions and policies. Notably, the country is a signatory to several international agreements aimed at environmental protection, including the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and agreements in other areas such as toxic chemicals (Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants), hazardous waste (Basel Convention) and natural resources (Noumea Convention).

As a Pacific nation, New Zealand has also advocated for the concerns of small island states in international forums, particularly regarding issues like climate change impacts and ocean conservation (e.g., Cardwell 2021). In addition, the EU-NZ Free Trade Agreement, signed in July 2023 and expected to come into force midway through 2024, is the first agreement to fully integrate the EU's new approach to trade and sustainable development. It includes a dedicated sustainable food systems chapter, a provision on trade and fossil fuel subsidies reform, and liberalizes green goods and services at entry (Council of EU 2023).

New Zealand's domestic and foreign policies often do not align with its international environmental commitments. Most notably, domestic policies are deemed "highly

insufficient” for limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius as required under the Paris Agreement (Climate Action Tracker 2023). New Zealand is also regularly criticized by its Pacific neighbors for failing to follow up on climate change commitments – most recently in relation to the National government’s decision to lift the ban on oil and gas exploration (Waatea News 2023). Additionally, New Zealand pledged only \$15 million to the second replenishment of the United Nations’ Green Climate Fund in 2023, which is significantly less than other countries with similar population sizes, such as Denmark (2 million) or Ireland (1 million) (Thwaites 2023).

Citation:

Cardwell, H. 2021. “COP26: The Main Issues and What Role New Zealand Plays.” RNZ, November 1. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/454634/cop26-the-main-issues-and-what-role-new-zealand-plays>

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Waatea News. 2023. “Pacific Nations Reject Drill Plans.” 8 December. <https://waateanews.com/2023/12/08/pacific-nations-reject-drill-plans/>

Slovakia

Score 6

Slovakia generally joins the majority of multilateral international agreements. In 2018, Slovakia voluntarily participated in the UN’s High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, resulting in a new strategy for environmental policy (Greener Slovakia, 2019). This document sets measurable goals to be met by 2030.

The Low-Carbon Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2030 with a View to 2050 (NUS), was approved by the government on March 5, 2020. The NUS represents Slovakia’s response to its obligations in the fight against climate change due to its membership in the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). This strategy aims to identify existing measures and propose new ones within Slovakia to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

The plan also includes national reduction targets until 2030 based on European targets, although some of these are set at lower levels. These goals are detailed in Slovakia’s Integrated National Energy Plan until 2030 (NECP). For Slovakia, it is clear that unless additional measures are taken beyond those used in the WEM and WAM models and scenarios, the country will have to address an emissions gap projected to be 7–14 Mt CO₂eq. The monitoring period for this plan is every five years (NUS, 2020: 93).

Slovakia participates in various regional international initiatives, such as the Danube Strategy and the Carpathian Convention, and collaborates with Danube River countries to develop flood management plans.

Citation:

NuS. 2020. "Low-Carbon Development Strategy of the Slovak Republic until 2030 with a View to 2050." The Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic. <https://www.minzp.sk/klima/nizkouglikova-strategia/>

Switzerland

Score 6

The Swiss Federal Council has embedded sustainable development as a state objective in the federal constitution, illustrating a deep-rooted commitment to balancing economic, social and environmental responsibilities. The 2030 SDS, a guiding strategy for federal policy, demonstrates Switzerland's approach to sustainable development, emphasizing the need for policy coherence and the importance of considering the spillover effects of its national policies on the global environment. This approach ensures that the environmental impacts of Swiss policies – particularly those affecting developing countries – are taken into account and addressed in an integrated manner.

At the heart of Switzerland's strategy is the focus on three priority areas: sustainable consumption and production, climate energy and biodiversity, and equal opportunities and social cohesion. These areas are interlinked and underscore the necessity of a balanced consideration of sustainability dimensions. The Swiss government recognizes that its actions in these areas have both domestic and international implications. For instance, the commitment to sustainable consumption and production involves not only domestic measures, but also the promotion of sustainable and transparent supply chains globally.

Furthermore, Switzerland's strategy includes goals and strategic directions for both national and international implementation. These goals, derived from the SDGs and adapted to Switzerland's national context, are monitored and evaluated regularly. The country engages in international programs to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and is active in initiatives such as the UN Ten-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. This international engagement reflects Switzerland's commitment to collaborative efforts in achieving global environmental sustainability.

On paper, the Swiss approach to environmental protection also involves the corporate sector, particularly multinational corporations headquartered in the country. Switzerland advocates for responsible corporate governance along the value chain, emphasizing the importance of due diligence processes and the sustainability of products and production processes. This approach aims to minimize the negative social, economic and environmental impacts of business activities, both nationally and internationally. However, the rejection of the initiative that would have imposed stronger rules on multinational companies to follow environmental standards, and the strong involvement of economic groups to fight it, shows the gap between the intentions claimed and the concrete contribution of Switzerland to global efforts on protection regimes (see P17).

Global environmental policy is given moderate weight among Switzerland's foreign policy priorities, and the country has played a role in designing and advancing global environmental-protection regimes. However, as a small country, Switzerland has limited independent influence. The European Union has taken a leading role in this area. Thus, Switzerland's impact depends in large part upon efficient collaboration with the European Union.

Citation:

Swiss Federal Council. 2021. "2030 Sustainable Development Strategy." Bern, June 23.

Australia

Score 5

Australian policy has moved toward more credible global environmental protection and cooperation strategies. However, the reluctance of Australian governments to demand or lead the decarbonization of the economy, which itself is a reflection of the economic and political power of the resources industry, has hindered progress in this area.

Domestic politics around climate change have been contentious, with environmental issues contributing to the downfall of several prime ministers. Internationally, Australia has been considered a laggard in global environmental sustainability due to high per capita emissions and resistance to ambitious targets for reducing emissions and transitioning to renewable energy. This reflects the traditional – and continued – importance of coal and gas production in the Australian economy, which makes decarbonization a more costly proposition than in many other countries.

The 2022 federal election, seen as a "climate change election," with environmental issues featuring prominently in the parties' manifestos and debates. Pro-environment parties and candidates fared well in the election, and the new prime minister, Anthony Albanese, promised a new approach to global environmental sustainability.

Australia has strengthened its emissions reduction target and enshrined this commitment in law. The government has also signed up to the Global Methane Pledge, joining 130 governments that have committed to a reduction of at least 30% in methane emissions by 2030 (IEA 2023). The government has also introduced a range of policies and strategies to accelerate the country's energy transition.

Despite such progress, Australia continues to hinder global sustainability efforts by not fully decarbonizing its power generation industry. Commentators argue that a comprehensive price on greenhouse gas emissions, as seen in the UK, Canada, and Scandinavia, would accelerate progress (Turnbull 2023).

Citation:

IEA. 2023. "Australia has raised its climate targets and now needs to accelerate its clean energy transition, says new IEA review." IEA50. <https://www.iea.org/news/australia-has-raised-its-climate-targets-and-now-needs-to-accelerate-its-clean-energy-transition-says-new-iea-review>

Turnbull, T. 2023. "Has Australia Cleaned Up Its Act on Climate?" BBC September 8. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-65606208>

Belgium

Score 5

Belgium has been proactive in addressing climate issues, largely due to regulations imposed by the European Union. This commitment is evident in its National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) for 2021-2030, which outlines actions including objectives for greenhouse gas reduction. Despite the European Union deeming these objectives insufficient, they are expected to impact the global environment due to the transboundary nature of greenhouse gas emissions.

The integration of environmental and climate objectives into all aspects of development cooperation is mandated by the 2013 Belgian Law on Development Cooperation. In 2014, the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD), in collaboration with several development cooperation actors, developed a Strategy Note titled "Environment in the Belgian Development Cooperation" (FPS Foreign Affairs 2022). This strategy serves as a comprehensive roadmap for environmental cooperation, integrating conservation and environmental protection across various sectors such as education, infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, and food security. Building on this, the DGD formulated a "Climate Vision" in 2018 (OECD 2021).

An internal evaluation in 2021 commended Belgium's diversified, integrated, and relevant climate action. However, it also highlighted limitations, including significant but insufficient results in relation to the climate challenge, potential for further climate prioritization, the lack of a clear vision and criteria, and a need for more concrete climate expertise at the project level. The political implications of these recommendations are yet to be determined.

In terms of assessing the effects of development programs on climate and environment objectives, a supporting tool was developed by the research platform KLIMOS, although its use is not systematic. This comprehensive approach underscores Belgium's commitment to integrating climate and environmental considerations into its development cooperation efforts.

Finally, Belgium's contribution to the Green Climate Fund (the international commitment of \$100 billion for climate-related expenditure) has seen a limited and fluctuating increase since 2014, rising from €142 million to €282 million in 2021, according to Eurostat data. This funding level has been criticized by Belgian associations, including Oxfam, which argues that Belgium's "fair" climate financing should amount to 500 million euros per year. The CNCD's 2023 environmental report notes that spending on environmental protection has generally been higher during this legislature than the previous one, although it remains relatively limited, accounting for around 5% of public development aid.

Citation:

Website for the National Integrated Energy-Climate Plan: <https://www.nationalenergyclimateplan.be/en/>
<https://climat.be/politique-climatique/belge/cooperation-internationale>

FPS Foreign Affairs – Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. 2022. “Strategy note – Environment – Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation.” <https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/policy/policy-areas/striving-global-solidarity/environment>

OCDE. 2021. Integrating Environmental and Climate Action into Development Cooperation: Reporting on DAC Members’ High-Level Meeting Commitments. Paris: Éditions OCDE. <https://doi.org/10.1787/285905b2-en>

Special Evaluation Office of the Belgian Development Cooperation. 2021. Evaluation of the International Climate Finance by the Belgian Federal Government. Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. https://diplomatie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/2022-04/ade_ses_climate_finance_evaluation_final_report_volume_i-main.pdf

KLIMOS website: <https://ees.kuleuven.be/eng/klimos/index.html>

Eurostat data: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/sdg_13_50__custom_9277293/default/table?lang=en

Oxfam thinks Belgium’s contribution should be higher: <https://trends.levif.be/a-la-une/politique-economique/le-financement-climat-ou-lhistoire-dune-promesse-non-tenue-a-100-milliards-de-dollars/>

CNCD-11.11.11. 2023. Rapport 2023 sur la coopération belge au développement. Bruxelles: Office de publication du CNCD. Available at <https://www.cncd.be/Rapport-2023-sur-la-cooperation>

Canada

Score 5

The Canadian government supports sustainable development, but Canada is also a major exporter of dirty oil (tar sands) and forestry and other natural resources. The production, sale, and distribution of these unsustainable products are facilitated by numerous federal and provincial policies, subsidies, and programs.

Nevertheless, the Canadian government, both in principle and occasionally in practice, supports the design and advancement of various global environmental protection regimes. This includes participation in international treaties to ban ozone-depleting chemicals, protect wetlands and wildlife, and numerous bilateral treaties with the the United States aims to protect migratory birds and reduce sulfur dioxide and other harmful emissions.

The Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), signed in November 2018 by Canada, the United States, and Mexico at the instigation of the Trump administration, replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). CUSMA includes a chapter on environmental cooperation with the stated aim to “promote mutually supportive trade and environmental policies and practices.” Although experts criticized CUSMA for being weak on environmental protection – particularly because it does not directly address climate change – the new agreement no longer includes NAFTA’s investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) system. The ISDS system was often used to challenge Canadian environmental decision-making, which many commentators believed had a chilling effect on environmental regulation in Canada.

More recently, at the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), Canada participated with Germany and Britain in releasing the Climate Finance Delivery Plan, which aims to deliver \$100 billion in finance.

Canada has also committed to doubling its contribution to international climate finance to \$5.3 billion over the next five years to assist developing countries in combating climate change. However, significant results and expenditures have not yet been achieved.

Citation:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/canada-international-action/climate-finance/delivery-plan/progress-report-2022.html>

Japan

Score 5

While Japan was a global leader in tackling global warming in the 1990s and hosted the Kyoto conference in 1997, it has remained largely passive since the beginning of the 21st century. Among other factors, withdrawal from actively promoting global climate policies was motivated by the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant crisis caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, which led to an increase in Japan's reliance on fossil fuels.

During COP28 in December 2023, Japan promised to create a new African Development Bank fund, and increase the World Bank and Asian Development Bank loan capacity by approximately \$9 billion. On the other hand, Japan has blocked discussions on decarbonized transport and power systems in international fora such as the G7 and the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. Instead, Japan has led the Asia Zero Emissions Community (AZEC) – hosting a summit in Tokyo in December 2023 – to promote “clean coal” technologies in ASEAN countries. This initiative met with protests from climate activists, who criticize it for prolonging the use of fossil fuels instead of promoting renewable energy sources.

Citation:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. 2023. “Development Cooperation Chart.” <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100514705.pdf>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. 2023. “White Paper on Development Cooperation 2021: Japan's International Cooperation.” <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100497686.pdf>

Siripala, Thisanka. 2023. “How Green Is Japan's COP28 Commitment?” *The Diplomat* December 8. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/12/how-green-is-japans-cop28-commitment/>

Czechia

Score 4

Czechia has traditionally been a reluctant follower rather than a leader in global environmental policy. By international standards, it is a high net greenhouse gas emitter and has been among the worst donors to the Green Climate Fund, established in 2010 to help developing countries with projects to reduce carbon emissions. The Babiš government contributed nothing to the fund, arguing that Czechia was itself not a wealthy country and that it was already working on cutting its carbon emissions.

However, new Prime Minister Petr Fiala attended the COP 27 climate conference in November 2022 and pledged that, starting in 2024, Czechia would donate \$1 million annually. Although this is a modest and largely symbolic amount, it marks an improvement. If the promise is kept, Czechia would no longer be one of the few non-contributors among the world's richer countries.

In other respects, Czechia has continued to uphold its commitments as an EU member. During the 2022 Czech Presidency of the EU, the main priorities were the Fit for 55 climate package, biodiversity protection, the circular economy, and avoiding deforestation. The achievements of the Czech Presidency included the completion of negotiations on all climate components of the Fit for 55 package, the establishment of the Social Climate Fund to help households transition to modern energy, and the implementation of stricter rules for the emission allowances market and the use and recycling of batteries. Additionally, the Czech Republic will receive CZK 95 billion from the EU under the National Renewal Plan for projects aimed at improving physical infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions.

Hungary

Score 4

Hungary signed the Paris Agreement and has adhered to EU agreements. János Áder, the country's president from 2012 to 2022 and founder of the Blue Planet Foundation, has been active internationally. As Fidesz's "man for the environment issues," he has praised the Orbán government's environmental commitment and policies. However, the Hungarian government has opposed most attempts to strengthen the European Union's environmental ambitions. Hungary was among the four countries that – eventually without success – tried to block the European Union's plans to become carbon-neutral by 2050. The country's attempt to include nuclear power in calculation registers in European climate-change policies has been more successful. Environmental policy in Hungary has faced issues including a lack of commitment, institutional fragmentation and weak implementation. Even if the government's campaign against "climate hysteria" has been softened, the very existence of this campaign shows that the present Hungarian government is not supporting international attempts to tackle environmental challenges adequately.

Israel

Score 4

Environmental collaboration in the Middle East is crucial. However, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict complicates the development of a strategic plan with specific goals and measures. Generally, there is more willingness from the Israeli side to collaborate than from Israel's neighbors. Consequently, most policy efforts are based on scattered programs and loosely coordinated initiatives. Since the 1990s, there have been several environmental collaborations between Israel, Jordan and the

Palestinian Authority. These collaborations can be divided into three types: sustainable agriculture, training and education on sustainability, and biodiversity preservation.

In the field of agriculture, several projects are underway. These include the promotion of organic pesticides, which encompasses developing infrastructure, and providing training and information. The Ministry of Regional Collaboration sponsors the project, with additional local partnerships between regions in Israel and Jordan. Other initiatives involve training and guiding farmers in Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, as well as promoting joint agricultural projects.

One challenge to such collaboration is the discrepancy between farmers' willingness to receive guidance and their need to conceal this cooperation for political reasons. Consequently, expanding collaboration is difficult and is often based on bottom-up initiatives.

In the field of sustainability education and training, all projects are conducted by non-governmental research centers and organizations that receive some support from the government. These projects include research collaborations with Palestinian and Jordanian scholars and students, joint ecological centers, and student exchange programs. However, all these projects are limited in scope because they are non-governmental.

In the field of biodiversity protection, an Israeli-Jordanian collaboration aims to protect the coral reef in the Red Sea. This collaboration includes a joint effort to monitor oil pollution in the Red Sea, as well as joint projects between the IDF and the Jordanian army to protect various species and engage in research collaborations. However, as in other fields, the Jordanians and Palestinians are reluctant to develop broader collaborative projects due to the conflict (Mitvim, 2020).

After signing the normalization agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Israel has also begun collaborating to promote joint environmental research and development projects in the fields of climate change, desert management, and agriculture with the United Arab Emirates.

Overall, there are various collaborative projects; however, they are not coordinated by a single governmental organization nor is there a comprehensive policy that covers this issue.

Citation:

Mitvim. 2020. "Environmental Regional Collaboration." https://mitvim.org.il/wp-content/uploads/Hebrew_-_Israel-Arab_Environmental_Cooperation_-_Yael_Teff_Seker_-_June_2020.pdf

Poland

Score 3

As was the case with national environmental actions, the PiS government did not prioritize international environmental commitments in its foreign policy. Poland lacked a distinct strategy for international environmental cooperation, but did participate in global initiatives. The Multiannual Development Cooperation Program 2021 – 2030 served as the framework for international environmental protection. The government primarily focused on an EU-level policy coherence for development approach, ensuring that sectoral policies aligned with sustainable development goals.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as additional ministries and offices collaborated on key action areas outlined in the Development Cooperation Plan for 2021 and 2022. Poland has engaged in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), participating in various initiatives and forums. The country has chaired the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties three times, emphasizing the social aspect of transitioning to a low-emission economy. The Ministry of Finance engaged in other climate action initiatives, including the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action and collaboration with climate funds.

Poland's environmental transition projects focus on energy efficiency, municipal investments, renewable energy and postwar reconstruction assistance in Ukraine. Poland's technological transfer extends through multilateral programs like the GreenEvo Program. While Poland's development assistance programs were subject to evaluation through 2020, there has been no research on capacity-building since 2021.

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