



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme

2014–2020



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund



Renewable Community Empowerment in Northern Territories

Sweden – Policy Brief; Existing Policy Baseline



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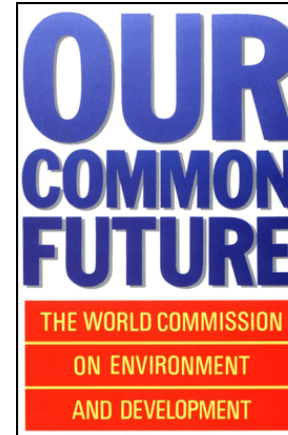
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Introduction

On an international level, sustainable development has been driven by the Bruntland Report of 1987 which defined it as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.”

Subsequent to publication of the Bruntland Report there have been several global summits relating to Climate Change, each seeking to put mechanisms in place to control Climate Change and reduce emissions of harmful gases. These summits include the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which agreed international targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a target percentage of 1990 levels and allowed for emissions trading between nations. Several major countries opted out of this, however, including the USA and Canada. More recently a new agreement, in the form of the Paris Agreement of December 2015 saw major nations including the USA sign up to an agreement to, amongst other targets, a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.



The outcome of signing up to such agreements has been seen in the creation of sustainable development strategies cascading down from global to European to national and regional levels.

In Europe, the EU put in place the Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2001 (Revised in 2006 and 2009) as an overarching policy to drive work in this area. All members were required to agree and sign up to the policies and outcomes set out within this policy. The EU SDS sets out several key objectives that form the backbone of the strategy and feed down to local level. The objectives include “To promote sustainable consumption and production patterns” and this is particularly relevant to the work SEAI hopes to carry out.

Another key document at European level is the Europe 2020 document. This is a ten year strategy setting out targets in the areas of employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy with targets to be reached by 2020. This document provides targets at a European level for various topics including green-house gas emissions, level of energy consumption from renewable sources and other topics. Individual Nations can set their own targets, for example the European target for energy consumption from renewable sources is 20% by 2020 but Ireland has set a target of 16%. Latest figures available show that in 2013 Ireland had reached 8%.

Local Policy

Sweden as a member of the European Union is committed to the EU energy and climate policies and targets. In a nation context, agreements on long-term energy and climate policies and targets have been concluded as follows:

2016: agreement on Swedish energy policy:

Sweden's energy policy should build on the same three pillars as energy cooperation in the EU. The policy therefore aims to combine:

- ecological sustainability
- competitiveness
- security of supply

Sweden must have a robust electricity network with high security of supply and low environmental impact, and offer electricity at competitive prices. This creates a long-term perspective and clarity for actors in the market and helps generate new jobs and investment in Sweden. The energy policy is based on the fact that Sweden is closely linked to its neighbours in northern Europe, and aims to find joint solutions to challenges in the common electricity market.



Targets

- By 2045, Sweden is to have no net emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and should thereafter achieve negative emissions.
- The target by 2040 is 100 per cent renewable electricity production. This is a target, not a deadline for banning nuclear power, nor does mean closing nuclear power plants through political decisions.
- An energy-efficiency target for the period 2020 to 2030 will be produced and adopted no later than 2017.

2017: Climate Policy Framework

The Swedish parliament took a decision on the introduction of a climate policy framework for Sweden containing new climate goals, a Climate Act and plans for a climate policy council. The purpose of the framework is to create a clear and coherent climate policy. The framework is based on an agreement within the Cross-Party Committee on Environmental Objectives.

The climate policy framework is the most important climate reform in Sweden's history. It will provide the long-term conditions for business and society to implement the transition needed to solve the challenge of climate change.

Local Policy - continued



For the first time, Sweden will have an act stating that each government has an obligation to pursue a climate policy based on the climate goals adopted by the Riksdag. Each government must also clearly report on the progress of its efforts. For the first time, Sweden will have long-term climate goals beyond 2020 and an independent climate policy council that reviews climate policy. The reform is a key component of Sweden's efforts to comply with the Paris Agreement.

The climate policy framework consists of three pillars: a Climate Act, climate goals and a climate policy council.

The Climate Act

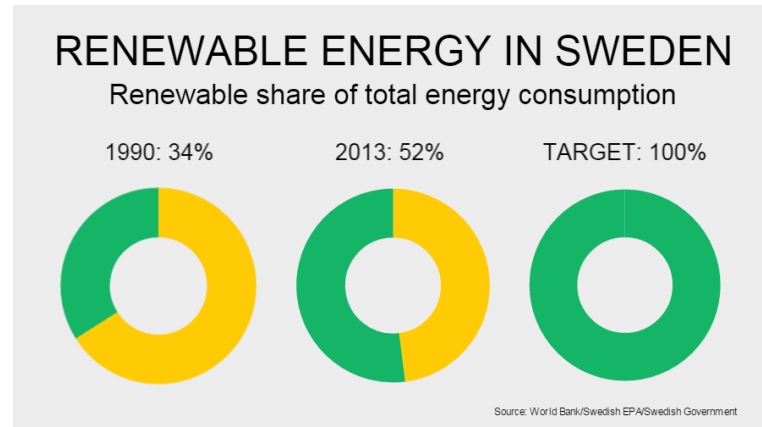
The Climate Act establishes that the Government's climate policy must be based on the climate goals and specifies how work is to be carried out. The Government is required to present a climate report every year in its Budget Bill. Every fourth year, the Government is required to draw up a climate policy action plan for how the climate goals are to be achieved. The new Climate Act will enter into force on 1 January 2018.

Climate goals

- By 2045, Sweden will have net zero emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and should thereafter achieve negative emissions. Negative emissions mean that greenhouse gas emissions from activities in Sweden are less than, for example, the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed by nature as part of the ecocycle, or less than the emissions Sweden helps to reduce abroad by investing in various climate projects. However, the remaining emissions from activities on Swedish territory will be at least 85 per cent lower than in 1990.
- Emissions in Sweden in the sectors that will be covered by the EU regulation on the division of responsibilities should, by 2030, be at least 63 per cent lower than emissions in 1990, and at least 75 per cent lower by 2040. The emissions covered are mainly from transport, machinery, small industrial and energy plants, housing and agriculture. These emissions are not included in the European Union Emissions Trading System, which covers most of the emissions from industry, electricity and district heating output, and flights departing from and arriving in the European Economic Area (EEA).

Local Policy - continued

- In a similar way as for the long-term goal, parts of the goals may be achieved by 2030 and 2040 through supplementary measures, such as increased uptake of carbon dioxide by forests or by investing in various climate projects abroad. Such measures may be used to achieve a maximum of 8 and 2 percentage points respectively of the emission reduction goals by 2030 and 2040.
- Emissions from domestic transport, excluding domestic aviation, will be reduced by at least 70 per cent by 2030 compared with 2010. The reason domestic aviation is not included in the goal is that domestic aviation is not included in the European Union Emissions Trading System.



Climate policy council

A climate policy council tasked with assisting the Government by providing an independent assessment of how the overall policy presented by the Government is compatible with the climate goals. The council will evaluate whether the direction of various relevant policy areas will increase or reduce the likelihood of achieving the climate goals.

