

Sustainable Development Goals: first meeting of the Commission's high level multi-stakeholder platform

The launch of this platform reflects a new approach which brings together stakeholders to support the Commission's work. Representatives from academia, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), businesses, civil society, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions came together to support and advise the Commission in delivering the SDGs at EU level. International organisations such as the World Bank, the United Nations and the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN) participated as observers.

Commission First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans**, responsible for Better Regulation, Interinstitutional Relations, the Rule of Law and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, who chairs the platform, said: *"Sustainability is a European brand, and sustainable development is at the heart of the European Commission's agenda. We need to work from the grassroots up and use the knowledge and skills of a wide range of stakeholders to reshape our economies and societies. The multi-stakeholder platform is an opportunity for experts to come together and learn from each other. I am looking forward to working closely together to develop the vision and the tools we need to succeed in delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals."*

Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen**, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, added: *"The circular economy and sustainable finance are examples of an innovative and European way to ensure that our investments not only create economic growth but that they do so while bringing new benefits to our planet and our citizens. The experience that the platform members bring will help us deliver real results for a sustainable growth strategy post-2020."*

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. They represent a comprehensive plan of action that the European Union shares with all its partners, and which are being embedded across all of the Commission's work. By bringing together a diverse group of experts with different backgrounds and areas of knowledge, this multi-stakeholder platform complements the Commission's own expertise and provides a forum for the exchange of best practice at local, regional, national and EU level.

To increase transparency and open up the reflection process to all citizens, members of the public are invited to provide their suggestions for the successful follow up to the Sustainable Development Goals, which will then be transmitted to platform members. The platform will also help the Commission prepare the selection process for an annual sustainability award.

The platform members agreed at their first meeting to work on a joint

contribution to the Commission's Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030", which was announced in the Commission's 2018 Work Programme and will be adopted later this year. This Reflection Paper is part of the [Future of Europe debate](#) launched by the Commission in 2017. Platform members also identified several priorities for future discussion, including how to mainstream the SDGs in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework, how to generate both inclusive and sustainable growth, and how to monitor and report on progress. Overall, members agreed that the platform should assist the Commission in applying the SDGs in the European context.

Background

The Communication "Next steps for a sustainable European future" adopted by the Commission on 22 November 2016 announced the launch of a multi-stakeholder platform, chaired by First Vice-President **Timmermans**, to play a role in the follow-up and exchange of best practices on the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Commission adopted its Decision to create the platform on 22 May 2017 and published a call for applications on the same date, to which more than 160 applicants responded. 30 members have been selected for the platform, representing a well-balanced mix of stakeholders, including NGOs, companies, civil society and academia, and covering the economic, social and environmental sphere as well as the internal and external dimension of the Development Goals.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 associated targets are global in nature, universally applicable and interlinked. All countries, developed and developing alike, have a shared responsibility to achieve the Development Goals.

The EU's answer to the 2030 Agenda includes two work streams. The first work stream is to fully integrate the Development Goals in the European policy framework and current Commission priorities. A second track includes the reflection on our longer term vision and the focus of sectoral policies after 2020.

For more information

[EU Approach to Sustainable Development](#)

[The multi stakeholder platform on SDGs](#)

[Members of the platform](#)

[Monitoring of SDGs in Europe](#)

[List of Stakeholder platform Members](#)

[Commission Communication next steps for a sustainable European future](#)

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[1/2018 : 10 January 2018 – Opinion of the Advocate General in the case C-266/16](#)

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[Revised safe intake for 3-MCPD in vegetable oils and food](#)

EFSA's experts have used an updated scientific approach to reassess the possible long-term adverse effects of the food processing contaminant 3-MCPD on the kidney and male fertility.

Consumption levels of 3-MCPD in food are considered safe for most consumers but there is a potential health concern among high consumers in younger age groups. In the worst case scenario, infants receiving formula only may slightly exceed the safe level.

Updated 2016 opinion

The chemical 3-monochloropropane diol (3-MCPD) and related substances called 3-MCPD esters are food processing contaminants found in some processed foods and vegetable oils, mainly palm oil. 3-MCPD and its esters are formed unintentionally in these foods, in particular during oil refining processes.

EFSA's expert panel on contaminants first assessed the [potential risks of 3-MCPD](#) in 2016 together with another food processing contaminant called glycidyl fatty acid esters (GE). EFSA concluded that GE are a concern for public health because they are genotoxic and carcinogenic, i.e. they can damage DNA and cause cancer.

The European Commission is finalising [new EU legislation](#) aimed at reducing GE levels in vegetable oils and food.

The current update is for 3-MCPD and its esters only and EFSA's previous assessment of GE has not changed.

Why has EFSA updated its assessment of 3-MCPD?

Prof Christer Hogstrand, who chaired the scientific group that developed the 2016 opinion and the update, said: "EFSA decided to review its assessment

after the UN's Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives [JECFA] subsequently established a different safe level – tolerable daily intake or TDI.

“In the meantime EFSA updated the method we used to calculate our previous TDI – what's called the [benchmark dose \(BMD\) approach](#).

“The panel applied the revised method to its reassessment of 3-MCPD and, as a result, it has increased its previous safe level two and a half fold.”

3-MCPD Tolerable Daily Intake (TDI) in µg/kg bw*

EFSA 2017	2.0
JECFA 2016	4.0
EFSA 2016	0.8

**Micrograms per kilogram of body weight*

Potential risks for the kidney and male fertility

Prof Hogstrand added: “We checked again the data concerning effects on development and reproduction, particularly on male fertility as these were highlighted by JECFA.

“We calculated the levels at which possible adverse effects on the kidney and on male fertility could occur. The updated TDI is protective for both types of effects.”

Technical differences, same overall conclusions

EFSA's new TDI is closer to JECFA's TDI. EFSA and JECFA used the same toxicological data but different BMD modelling techniques. Despite these technical differences, both bodies came to the same overall conclusions on the possible adverse effects of 3-MCPD and the level of concern for public health.