



FEDERAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN A NUTSHELL

Three guidelines and six action
themes for the federal government



Commission Interdépartementale
pour le Développement Durable



Introduction

LTV?

The long-term vision for sustainable development consists of 55 goals that the federal government wants to achieve by 2050. They contribute to greater social cohesion, an adapted economy, environmental protection and a federal government that accepts its social responsibility. They are linked to federal competences, such as reducing poverty, public health, mobility, energy, climate change and development cooperation. The vision also includes specific indicators to monitor whether Belgian society is on track to achieve the goals.

Before you is a brief overview of the Third Federal Plan for Sustainable Development (FPSD). An ambitious plan, because by 2030 we as a country want to be a leading example of sustainable development in Europe.

There is a great sense of urgency. We are currently facing enormous challenges, and are confronted with a number of international crises. Moreover, the health crisis has compounded inequalities and demonstrated more than ever the need for systemic change. It also delayed our sustainable development, and the implementation of the SDGs in Belgium is not on track.

Under this plan, the federal government is stepping up a gear to achieve the UN's Agenda2030 with the SDGs and the Federal Long-Term Vision for Sustainable Development (LTV).

COHERENCE AND COOPERATION

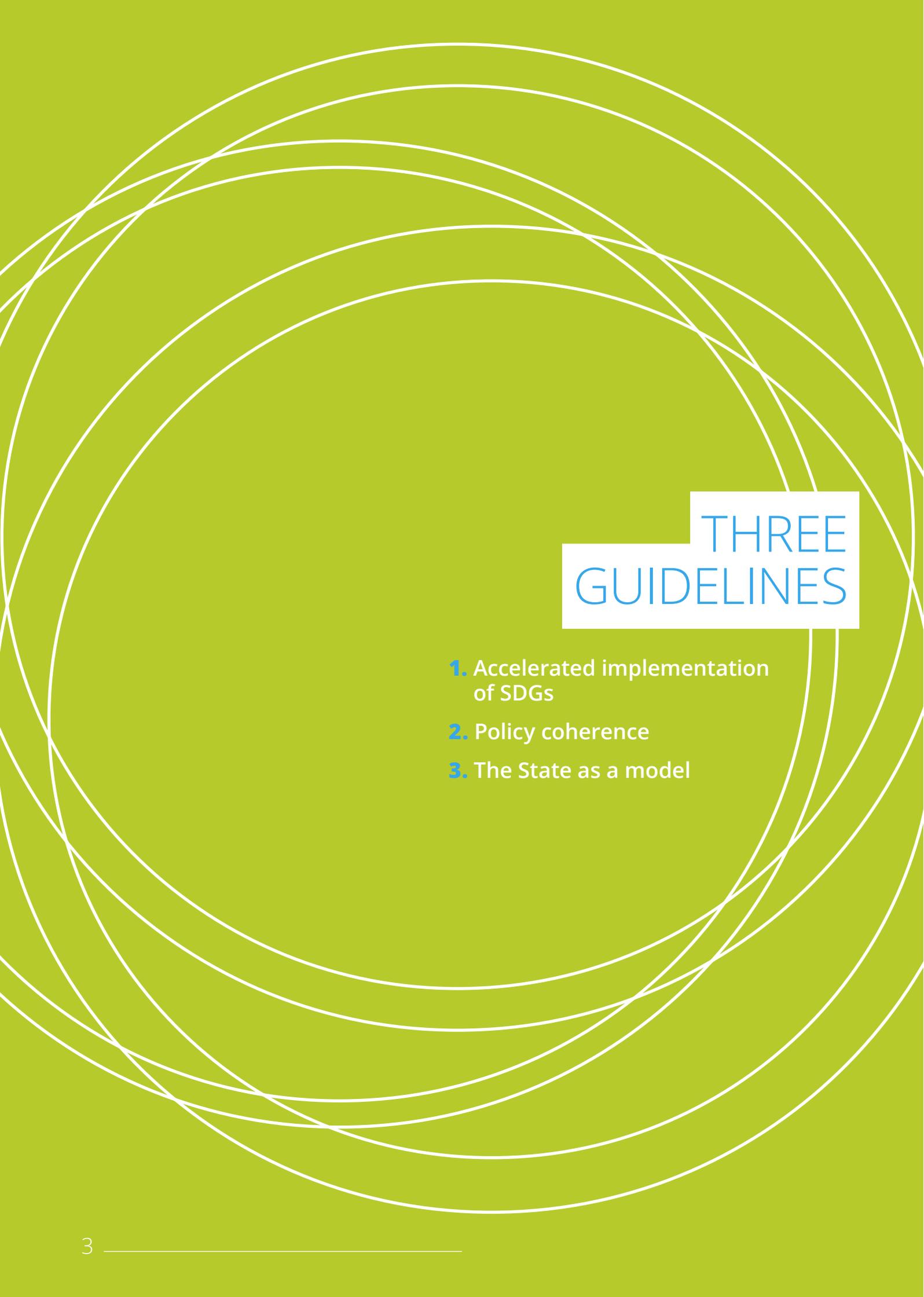
An effective sustainable development policy must be a policy based on several competencies at the same time. Only in this way can we meet the complex challenges facing us today and achieve a policy that always takes into account the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Greater coherence and cooperation within the federal government are therefore crucial. To this end, the plan puts forward three guidelines and six themes for action or areas of work. They allow for cross-cutting, targeted measures that are necessary to achieve the SDGs and the LTV. The plan will therefore augment the policies of the FPSs and ensure greater coordination in terms of sustainable development.

PARTICIPATION AND FOLLOW-UP

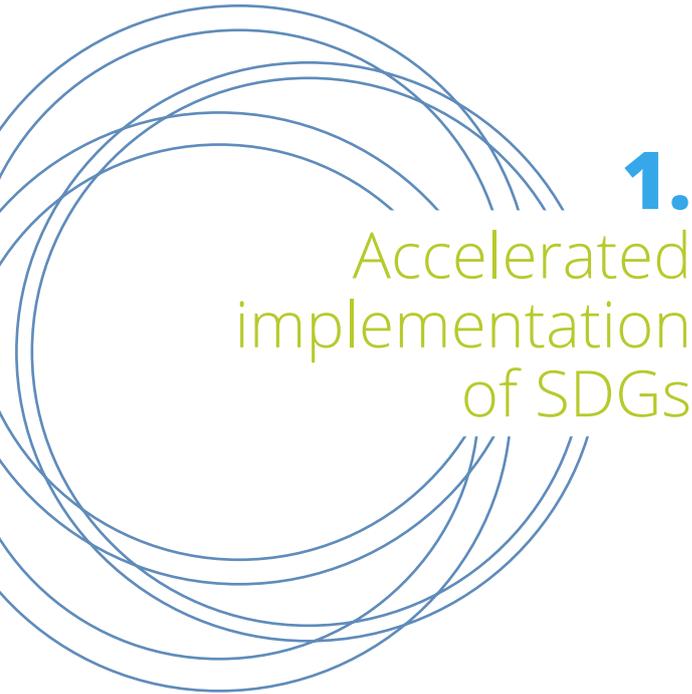
As sustainable development dictates, this plan was developed through a participatory process with stakeholders from society and various sectors. This participatory logic will also be extended to following up the plan.





THREE GUIDELINES

- 1.** Accelerated implementation of SDGs
- 2.** Policy coherence
- 3.** The State as a model



1. Accelerated implementation of SDGs

The sustainable development goals will be incorporated into all commitments made by the federal government.

- The SDGs will be translated into national objectives and indicators in order to monitor them.
- Every major policy plan will indicate how it contributes to the goals.
- There will be more communication about the SDGs, both to the public and within government.
- The FPSs will be given support and tools to integrate the SDGs.
- Stakeholders will be actively involved in sustainable development policy.

1.1. CLEAR OBJECTIVES

The SDGs will be translated into clear objectives in the national context. They will be enshrined in a quantifiable pathway that is coherent, achievable and consistent with European, federal and regional policies.

1.2. EFFECTIVE MONITORING

The federal government will monitor the SDGs structurally and on a regular basis. In this framework, it will establish indicators that cover all aspects of the SDGs and tie in as closely as possible with the indicators of other plans of the federal government.

1.3. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ALL COMMITMENTS

Sustainable development will become a coherent part of every competence.

- All members of the federal government will include sustainable development in their policy documents.
- All strategic plans will include sustainable development goals.
- Each Federal Public Service (FPS) will develop specific measures that contribute to the SDGs. The sustainable development units will implement them.
- The Federal Public Services (FPSs) will monitor the sustainable development measures. Their report will be sent not only to the Council of Ministers and the Chamber of Representatives, but also to the main advisory councils. This way we will create a strong dialogue on how to implement the SDGs within federal policy.
- To ensure that policies are coherent, gender-sensitive and sustainable, we will strengthen the ties between the sustainable development coordinators and the coordinators for gender mainstreaming, diversity, poverty and policy coherence for development.
- Sustainable development goals will also become an integral part of the regulatory impact analysis.



1.4

INFORMATION AND PRACTICAL TIPS

More information, support and practical tools must be provided to make it more feasible for the FPSs to implement the SDGs.

- There will be a comprehensive information campaign on the SDGs.
- There will be an inventory of existing tools for implementation. The tools must cover all themes and target groups, and be expanded as necessary.
- A guidance programme will help the FPSs integrate the SDGs into their strategy.
- Staff and managers will be able to receive training on sustainability, and the subject will become part of the managerial evaluation process.
- Communication on SDGs will become a permanent feature. Each institution will articulate the SDGs in its draft policy document, agreements and plans. The SDGs will also feature in annual reports, conferences and communication with the public.

1.5

A STRUCTURAL DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

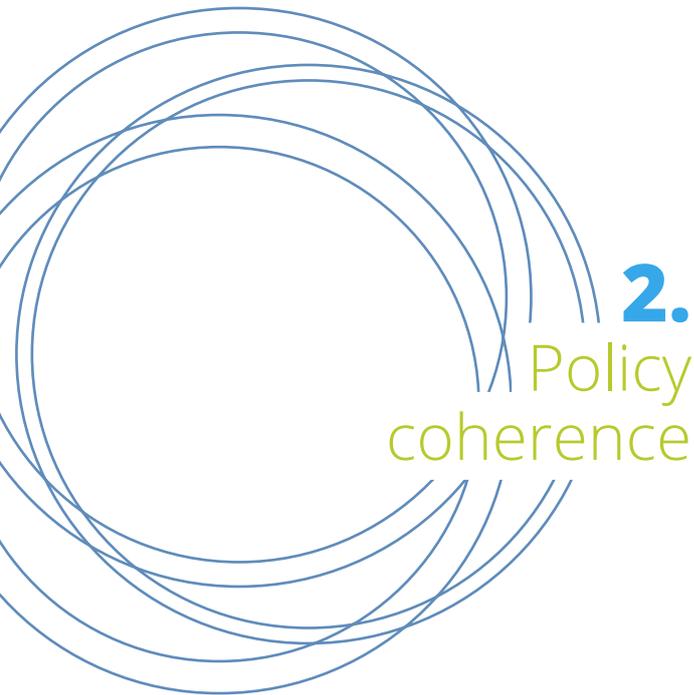
The federal government is stepping up its participative approach and making it easier for FPSs to involve stakeholders in policy.

- There will be an inventory of federal advisory councils, tools and interfederal institutions. This will make it easier to identify and contact stakeholders.
- There will be a charter with an overview of participatory processes. This should help determine when a given participatory method is appropriate.
- There will be a structural dialogue between stakeholders and the principal advisory councils on the implementation of Agenda2030.
- Each public service is looking at how experience experts can play a role in policy. Existing projects will be used to determine in which situations it is efficient for them to be deployed.



SDG?

The Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs) are part of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. All United Nations member states adopted this agenda in 2015 to put the world back on track towards sustainability. The SDGs consist of 17 goals and 169 sub-targets that we must achieve by 2030. Together, these goals form a comprehensive, universal agenda that aims to permanently change our modes of development.



Policy measures sometimes clash with each other or have unforeseen negative effects. We are planning actions to make policies more coherent and avoid such negative impacts.

- The coordination of the Agenda2030 actions will be assigned to a member of the government.
- Interdepartmental mechanisms will work more closely together.
- There will be greater alignment and exchange between FPSs.
- We are working on an intersectional approach to action plans.
- We are reviewing the regulatory impact analysis process.
- We are taking initiatives to improve coherence between the federated authorities.
- We are monitoring and will integrate developments in policy coherence at international level.

2.1.

EFFECTIVE COORDINATION

A member of the government will be tasked with coordinating the Agenda2030 actions. By doing so, we want to ensure that the SDGs are part of the major political processes and that there is coherence between the initiatives of the FPSs.

The networks of existing interdepartmental mechanisms – such as the gender mainstreaming coordination group or the federal diversity network – will work more closely together. They will coordinate their respective resources and ensure that their plans contribute to Agenda 2030.

2.2

POLICY COHERENCE

We will combat *spillovers* and trade-offs with greater cooperation and an intersectional approach.

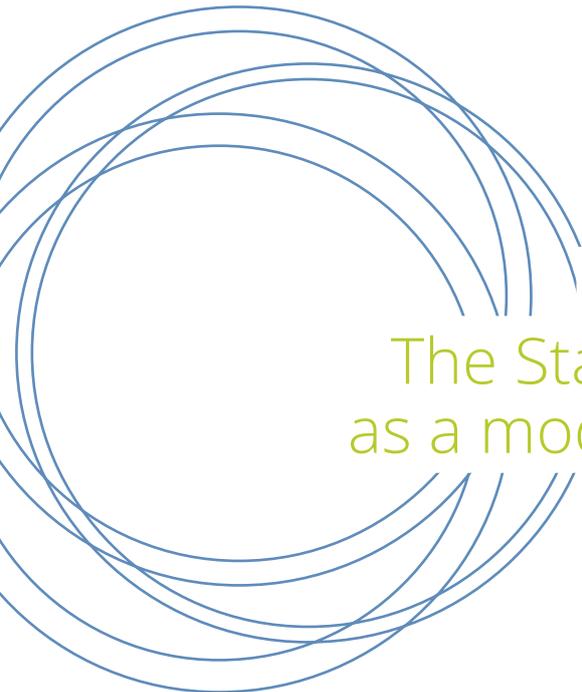
- A new working group on policy coherence will be responsible for the exchange of knowledge between government departments, coordinate departmental focal points and ensure a permanent link with the Advisory Council on Policy Coherence for Development.
- Coordinators of federal and interfederal thematic plans will work more closely together. They will coordinate their plans more effectively and work towards an intersectional approach. Such an approach will ensure that a plan takes into account diversity within target groups that are sometimes considered too homogeneous.
- Coordinators will exchange knowledge and practices and receive training in intersectionality, and practical tools will be made available to facilitate an intersectional approach to future action plans.

2.3

GREATER COHERENCE IN GOVERNMENT ACTION

We are working towards coherence at every policy level.

- The proper application of regulatory impact analysis will enhance policy coherence at federal level. We are updating the tools.
- We are also taking initiatives to improve coherence between actions of the federated entities.
- We will align sustainable development policy with development cooperation policy to avoid *spillovers* between the two areas.



3. The State as a model

The federal government will become a sustainable organisation with a sustainable procurement policy.

- We will take measures for gender equality within government, the reintegration of civil servants on long-term sick leave, career prospects for lower-skilled employees, diversity, responsible governance and environmental management.
- Sustainable elements will be given greater prominence in the awarding of public contracts.

3.1. SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

The federal government is making its own organisation more sustainable. Inspiration can be drawn from initiatives already launched by many FPSs.

- Each FPS is committed to social responsibility in its own area and supports voluntary work.
- The federal government is looking into how it can better take account of employee health.
- We will improve the reintegration and reorientation of employees. For employees for whom there is no internal solution, cooperation between institutions can offer prospects.
- All employees will be offered career and development opportunities. Each C and D staff member can attend training courses.
- The federal government's workforce must reflect the diversity of society:
 - > FPSs will receive support in drafting a gender equality and diversity policy and there will be a role description for diversity officials.
 - > The gender dimension will be incorporated into recruitment, we will encourage women to opt for top management positions and we will take measures to break through the glass ceiling.
 - > We will recruit more people with disabilities, encourage more people with disabilities to apply for jobs in the federal government and improve their working conditions.
 - > Diversity will become a part of our internal communication.
- We are investigating ways of making the vehicle fleet greener, selling written-off computers to staff, biodiversity in federal areas and sustainable food in federal restaurants.
- We will make it easier for federal civil servants to cycle to work.

A NEW AWARD PROCEDURE

We are making our procurement policy more sustainable as a federal government.

- We are reviewing the procedure for awarding public contracts to ensure that sustainability is taken into account when choosing a supplier. For a number of product groups, we will be making sustainable criteria mandatory in the specifications.
- The Institute for the Equality of Women and Men is taking actions to coordinate activities around sustainable development, gender and public procurement more effectively.
- Any framework contract for the purchase of devices such as computers and laptops must take sustainable criteria into account. This is a step towards integrating human rights due diligence into public procurement and public-private partnerships.
- We are looking into the implementation of the social procurement guide #webuysocialEU.
- We will be implementing the European farm-to-fork strategy and setting criteria for the sustainable supply of food.

> ***New information on due diligence in IT procurement and sustainable food supply will be available on the platform www.gidsvoorduurzameaankopen.be***





SIX INTERDEPARTMENTAL THEMES

- 1.** Leave no one behind
- 2.** Greater resilience to risks
- 3.** A reformed Belgian economy
- 4.** A new mobility model
- 5.** Sustainable financing
- 6.** International



1.

Leave no one behind

A sustainable policy is one that leaves no one behind. We will take measures to promote social cohesion, paying attention to the most vulnerable groups and the gender dimension.

- We will make social rights and justice accessible to all.
- We will ensure that there are coherent poverty plans within the federal government and between the various levels of government.
- We will assess the social impact of employment policies, simplify leave schemes and examine the impact of working from home.
- We will fight inequality and increase our knowledge of it.
- We will take measures to tackle poverty.

1.1.

RIGHTS FOR ALL

Social rights and justice must be accessible to all.

- We will set up legal assistance offices with multidisciplinary teams and review their effectiveness.
- We will inform beneficiaries more effectively about their social rights and automate the granting of these rights, or facilitate it as much as possible.
- For the homeless, we will strengthen the system of reference addresses to make it easier for them, too, to access their rights.
- Information on support for single-parent families is being collated.
- We are looking at the possibility of increasing certain support measures and providing income-dependent, progressive assistance.

1.2

EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF PLANS TO TACKLE POVERTY

Poverty and inequality require a structural, cross-cutting approach. The Federal Poverty Reduction Plan will provide it. The plan requires all authorities to cooperate as best they can.

- We will strengthen cooperation between federal government departments to draft and oversee the plan.
- We will cooperate with other levels of government to coordinate and thus strengthen the plans of the various authorities.

1.3

OPTIMAL WORKING CONDITIONS

We will make sure that flexible forms of work are in line with our labour laws and social security system, that employees can achieve a healthy work-life balance and that there is a framework for working from home.

- We will assess the social impact of regulations on flexible jobs, extra work, the sharing economy and feasible and manageable work. We will create a common evaluation model for all FPSs and a platform for exchanging good practice.
- We will simplify, harmonise and optimise leave schemes for reasons of care and the reconciliation of work and family life.
- We will examine the positive and negative effects of different forms of working from home - with a particular focus on gender and disability - and how working from home can be made more widely available.

1.4

GREATER SOCIAL COHESION

Too many people are currently facing inequalities. We will take action against these inequalities, increase our knowledge about them, and develop a specific approach to tackling inequalities in health.

- We will fight against discrimination and inequality.
 - > We will promote gender equality, strengthen our anti-discrimination policy and fight racism.
 - > We are committed to international campaign days and will promote the rights of minorities in international negotiations.
 - > We will integrate a gender perspective into federal government policy and adopt a gender-sensitive external communication policy.
 - > We will improve the effectiveness of our legislation and heighten the focus on anti-discrimination, and anti-discrimination laws will be reviewed.
 - > Hate crimes will be recorded more efficiently and more accurately.
 - > Communications from the federal government must be accessible and clear to each target group.

- We will improve the collection of data on equality and the use of that data.
- We will tackle inequalities in health.
 - > We are developing a tool – a Health and Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) – to identify and anticipate the effects of measures on risk groups.
 - > We will simplify the administration of chronic illnesses with better cooperation between social services.
 - > We will take action to ensure that every citizen takes out sickness and disability insurance.
 - > To help prevent debt, we will strive for clear and transparent information on the real cost of care, both directly to the public and through the education of healthcare providers.

1.5

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TACKLING POVERTY

We are stepping up the fight against poverty with four major actions.

- There will be an intergovernmental strategy for tackling homelessness, with clear roles and responsibilities for each level of government.
- We will increase minimum benefits towards the poverty line.
- We will put an end to the legal uncertainty of cohabitants. We will harmonise all social security and welfare systems so that the status of cohabitants means the same thing everywhere and perverse effects are eliminated.
- We will take measures against easy credit and improve information to vulnerable consumers on the risks of debt.



2. Greater resilience to risks

A great many global challenges can have serious consequences for the economic, ecological and social situation in our country. We will do more to anticipate crises and reduce our vulnerability.

- We will make crisis management more professional, develop an adaptation policy and improve the resilience of our health system.
- We will combat illicit trafficking in timber and animal species and increase inspections of e-commerce.
- We will ensure that the marine environment is healthy.
- We will launch a national action plan on endocrine disruptors.

2.1. **WORKING ON DISASTER RISK**

The global climate and biodiversity crises are not separate processes, but rather intensify each other. We will reduce risks by increasing our resilience on economic, social, health and environmental fronts simultaneously.

- We are creating a national consultation platform, specialised in crisis management, with experts from the relevant FPSs. The platform will make contingency planning more professional, facilitate the role of the National Crisis Centre in the event of disasters and guide the various sectors in their preparations for a crisis in their sector.
- The federal government is developing a general adaptation policy for climate change with a specific adaptation policy for healthcare and a Belgian Knowledge Centre for Climate.
- We will learn lessons from the COVID-19 crisis and prepare more effectively for future health crises from an interdepartmental, national and international perspective. There will be an in-depth reflection on Belgium's financing, organisation and strategy in relation to public health. That debate must dare to propose fundamental transformations and reforms, be multidisciplinary and involve all health sectors.

> These actions will build on the Paris Agreement and the COP15 Accords.

2.2

FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

Illicit trafficking threatens biodiversity and can have a devastating impact on people's livelihoods and local economies. The fight against illicit trafficking is a priority, within a European and international framework, and across multiple departments.

- We will strengthen the resources for combating illicit trafficking. We will enhance our expertise in timber through a forensic timber centre and increase the exchange of knowledge with all control authorities and the legal system on trends at European and international level. Outreach actions will be undertaken with countries of origin and destination.
- There will be more inspections of e-commerce. The federal government wants to guarantee a level playing field, fight unfair competition and strengthen the fabric of Belgian business. There will be strong e-commerce inspectorates, cross-cutting and cross-FPS, with the right profiles: from data scientists to app developers and e-commerce experts. We will inform the general public about the dangers of e-commerce and the initiatives being taken to combat those dangers.

2.3

A HEALTHY MARINE ENVIRONMENT

A healthy marine environment with clear rules about what can and cannot be done on the Belgian seabed is important for sustainable development. However, the Marine Environment Act is 20 years old and in need of updating: human activities at sea have increased, the Belgian legal framework has evolved and there are many new international regulations.

A draft amendment of the law, supported as far as possible by all competent government departments, will be submitted to the Minister for the North Sea.

2.4

FEWER ENDOCRINE DISRUPTORS

To reduce the exposure of the population and the environment, the federal government is developing a National Action Plan for Endocrine Disruptors (NAPED) that will pay specific attention to people in precarious situations and to the different impact these substances may have on men and women.

- > Awareness campaigns will target the general public and health professionals regarding the risks of endocrine disruptors.
- > Together with other European countries, we are collecting information on endocrine disruptors. By sharing this information with producers and distributors, we can support front runners and speed up measures to replace these substances.
- > We are investigating which economic instruments can reduce the use of endocrine disruptors. We will explicitly take into account the potential impact on poverty, SMEs and the gender dimension.
- > Better-informed employees and employers can take better prevention measures. There will therefore be a discussion of the risks of exposure to endocrine disruptors in various joint committees and training for the prevention services. It may also be possible to amend relevant regulations, such as those concerning the protection of motherhood.
- > To gain a better understanding of the link between health and endocrine disruptors, we are creating a central database with data. It will be accessible to all competent services.



3. A reformed Belgian economy

The Belgian economy needs to evolve into one that contributes to the sustainable development goals. With alternative economic models and increased sustainability in consumption, production and food systems.

- We will support and promote the circular economy, the functionality economy, the social economy and the sharing economy.
- We will encourage consumers to switch to sustainable patterns of consumption.
- We will promote digital signatures.
- We will contribute to more responsible production methods by investing in nanomaterials and more sustainable sand extraction in the North Sea.
- We will create support for the transition to sustainable food systems.

3.1. **A CLIMATE-NEUTRAL SOCIETY AND ECONOMY**

Climate change is causing extreme weather conditions that have a huge social, economic and human cost. They hit the most vulnerable communities hardest. To limit global warming, we need to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- > The federal government fully supports the European Green Deal, the fit-for-55 package and the Paris Agreement.
- > We will ensure that we better define federal climate policies and measures, structurally monitor their implementation and evaluate their impact.

3.2 **MORE CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

The federal government wants to promote the circular economy. We will translate the European plans at national level into a new federal plan for the circular economy. The plan will include a whole series of actions such as the start-up of *Belgium Builds Back Circular*, the replacement of hazardous chemicals and the fight against greenwashing.

3.3 **MORE SHARING ECONOMY**

We want to better understand and promote the sharing economy. It is constantly evolving. We will gather additional knowledge about it, disseminate this knowledge more widely and create an effective framework for it.

3.4 **MORE FUNCTIONAL ECONOMY**

We want to gather and disseminate knowledge about the functionality economy: there will be an economic analysis of the model to identify its strengths and weaknesses and possible policy measures to promote it among businesses.

3.5

GREATER VISIBILITY AND CREDIBILITY FOR THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

With an accompanying policy, we will promote the social economy – a regional competence. We will promote social entrepreneurship, raise the profile of the social economy and make it known to the general public. We will involve the regions in our plans.

- We will map out the expectations and possible actions at federal level through interdepartmental consultation with relevant FPSs.
- We will draw up a federal action plan for the social economy.
- Together with the three regions we are working on national indicators for the social economy and its support.
- Besides the three regions, the federal government also supports an ambitious Belgian position on the development of the social economy at European level.

3.6

PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

We will make it easier for consumers to choose sustainable products.

- When buying an energy-intensive product, we will inform consumers about its annual cost in electricity. This will make it easier to choose a sustainable purchase. A first pilot project is under way for electric cars. A campaign to inform citizens is being developed.
- Energy labels have been revised to provide consumers with better information on which are the most economical, environmentally friendly and energy-saving appliances on the market. This information is also being made available through a European database. There will be a comprehensive information campaign to inform consumers.
- We will raise awareness and provide information with:
 - > a gender-sensitive awareness campaign on the use and maintenance of products, sustainable consumption, reuse, repair and recycling,
 - > actions for healthier and sustainable food,

- > a campaign on working conditions and unfair competition in the platform economy,
- > the continuation of *#BeBiodiversity*, including a campaign to raise awareness among young people of the impact of our consumption patterns on biodiversity and an educational tool for schools,
- > the relaunch of www.energievreters.be.

3.7

TRUST IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Electronic signatures make transactions more secure, save paper and reduce travel. The federal government will therefore encourage businesses and consumers to use them and inform them about the legal framework, the benefits and the ways to implement them.

3.8

RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION METHODS

We are continuing to innovate in nanoparticles and optimising sand extraction in the North Sea. In this way we, as the federal government, will contribute to more responsible production methods.

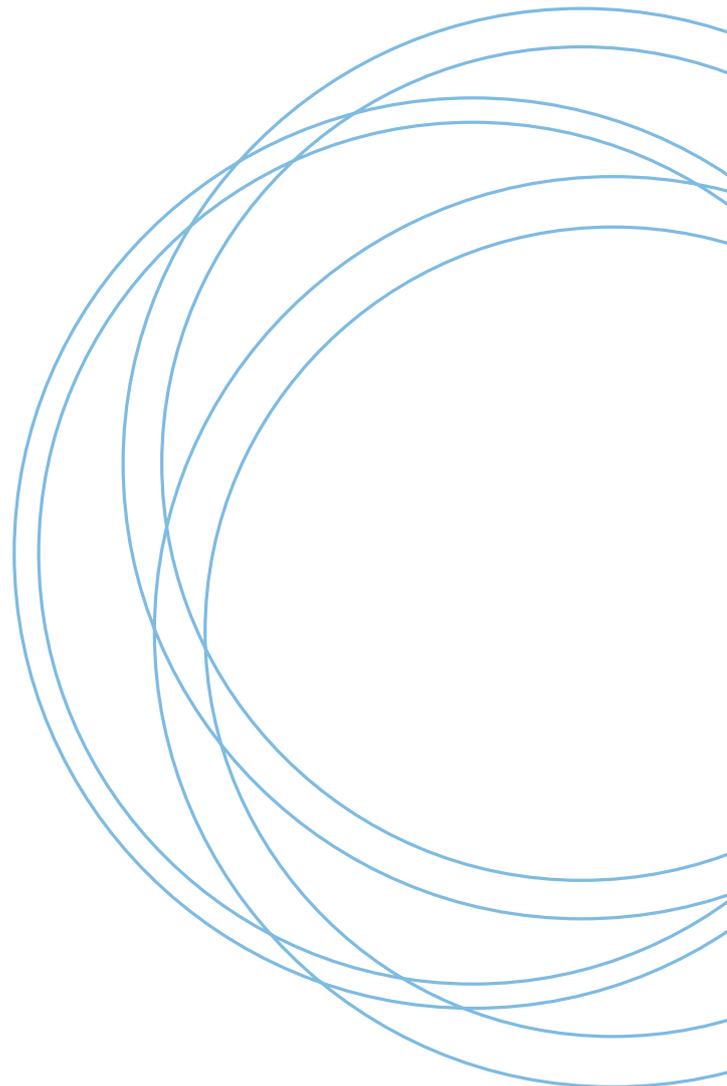
- Initiatives are being developed at both national and international level to promote innovation in nanomaterials while protecting consumers, employees, the environment and human health. Belgium has its own nanoregister, in which companies record the nanoparticles that they produce or use. To reinforce this scientifically, we are investing in a platform for the characterisation of nanoparticles.
- Sand extracted from the Belgian part of the North Sea is mainly used as construction sand and for sand replenishment. We are looking at options to make the extraction of marine sand more sustainable and in line with environmental management and exploitable reserves.

THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

We will focus on alternatives to crop protection and organise a broad social debate on the food transition.

- There will be a plan for the reduction of pesticides, supervision and control of the trade in pollinators and pollen, and research into alternative substances and methods for plant protection. In addition, we will raise awareness among consumers and key market players. Through these actions we will promote agricultural production that is better for biodiversity.
- We will organise a broad public debate on how Belgium can make the transition to a sustainable food system. The *Futures4Food* project is developing a methodology for two test cases: the protein transition and the transition to the sustainable production of grains. In a subsequent phase we will look into how that methodology can be applied to other themes.
- We are also taking measures to make food import chains more sustainable. These measures are part of our *Beyond Food* strategy.

> ***The Beyond Food strategy is one of our actions at international level. Read more in action point 6.4.***





4. A new mobility model

Our current mobility model has a negative impact on the climate, air quality and public health. We are making the shift to a new mobility model in which soft, shared and multimodal mobility is central.

- We will reduce the environmental impact of road traffic.
- We will punish traffic offenders and repeat offenders.
- We will promote cycling.
- We are calling for a reduction in air traffic and its emissions.

4.1. LESS ROAD TRAFFIC AND FEWER EMISSIONS

Road transport is one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Belgium. We want to reduce both the number of cars on the road and the impact they have individually on the environment.

- We are looking at the possibility of only allowing the sale of zero-emission vehicles.
- We will strengthen and simplify the mobility budget.
- By 2026, all commercial vehicles will be carbon-free.
- We are looking at reviewing the taxation of company cars and commercial vehicles.
- We support higher product standards at European and international level.
- We support sharing platforms for cars, bicycles or other means of transport.

4.2 FEWER TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS

By 2030, the number of road fatalities must be reduced by 50% compared with 2020. The number of serious injuries should follow the same trend. Belgium will thus be following the objectives of the European Commission and the United Nations.

- We will mobilise the whole of Belgian society in a States General for Road Safety.
- We will tackle re-offending and impunity. The aim is to check one in three drivers annually for violations and to see how repeat-offending can play a greater role in the processing of violations.
- We will develop alternative penalties.
- We will refine the procedure for prosecuting cross-border offenders.



4.3

MORE BICYCLES

We will promote cycling with a number of actions.

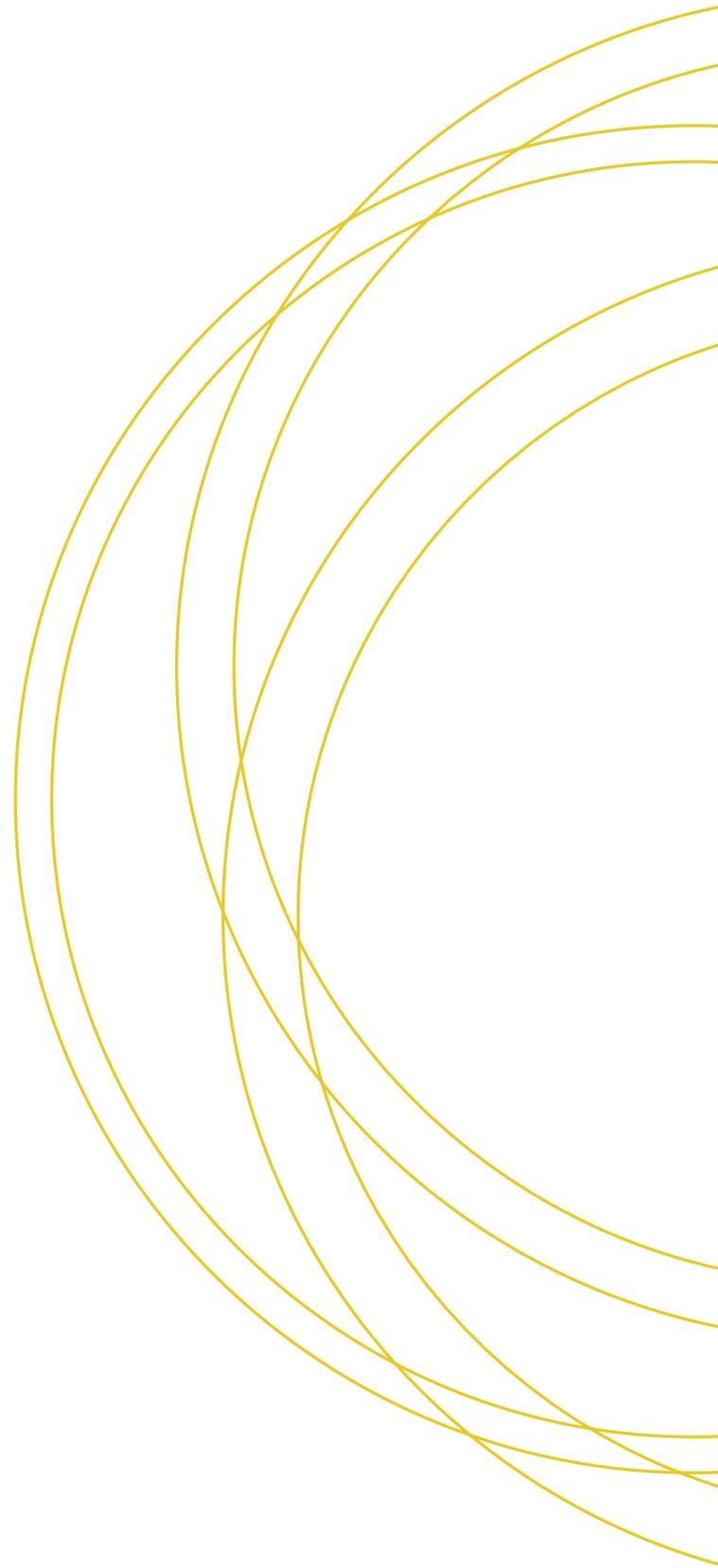
- We are calling for a reduction in the VAT rate on bicycles, electric bicycles and *speed pedelecs* at European level.
- There will be a national register to combat bicycle theft.
- The NMBS/SNCB is developing a bicycle and train strategy and will take into account access for people in poverty, including through the automation of social tariffs.
- We are looking at how the traffic regulations can be amended to improve the sharing of public roads.

4.4

LESS IMPACT FROM AIR TRANSPORT

The price of transport should be proportionate to its environmental and health impact.

- We are studying how to apply the ‘polluter pays’ principle to our aviation.
- At European and international level, we are calling for a review of the tax exemption on paraffin, a ban on short-haul flights and the promotion of fully-fledged alternatives such as the train.





5. Sustainable financing

Sustainable development also means greater sustainability in finance, savings, investing and public investment.

- We are developing a strategic plan to align the financing of economic transition with the sustainable development goals.
- We will investigate the options and thresholds for sustainable savings and investments, including in pension funds and insurance.
- We will ensure that the recovery and investment plan contributes to sustainable development.

5.1. FINANCING THE ECONOMIC TRANSITION

The federal government wants to redirect its spending and make it compatible with the sustainable development goals. At the same time, it also wants to make the financial sector more responsible.

- The federal government will invest less in fossil energy and fuels and withdraw by 2030 from companies that emit greenhouse gases intensively and are not committed to energy transition.
- The government will create an incentive for investment in companies that contribute to the ecological transition.
- The Federal Participation and Investment Company is drafting a 'social responsibility' charter.
- We are looking at which voluntary measures should become mandatory for market operators.
- We will analyse the opportunities and barriers for sustainable investments in Belgium and investigate how to stimulate savings and investments in sustainable projects.
- We will monitor the evolution of Belgian savings towards sustainable financial products.
- We will promote the use of European financial labels in Belgium.
- We are looking into the possibilities of discouraging investments in pension funds and insurance companies that are harmful to the environment and health and encouraging investments in energy transition.

> These actions will form the sustainable finance strategy for Belgium following the example of other European Member States. For development, the federal government relies on the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument.

5.2 THE RECOVERY AND INVESTMENT PLAN

The government is developing an investment strategy that will ensure a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable society in the longer term. It will ensure coherence between the strategic investment plan and the sustainable development goals and will carry out a gender analysis for each investment. The government is seeking investments that contribute to multiple SDGs simultaneously and to projects with positive impacts on nature and the environment.



6. International

Through our foreign policy, foreign trade and development cooperation, we will contribute to democracy, human rights, gender equality, peace and security and the reduction of poverty worldwide.

- We will advocate for an equitable transition and provide additional funding.
- We will link business to respect for human rights.
- We are committed to combating trafficking in endangered species.
- We are taking measures to make food import chains more sustainable.
- We will promote universal social protection.
- We support international standards for decent work.
- We want to punish ecocide nationally and internationally.

6.1. **SUSTAINABLE TRANSITION AND CLIMATE FINANCING**

We will take action on the diplomatic front and increase our efforts on the financial front.

- We will engage in climate and energy diplomacy for a rapid reduction of emissions, as well as for a fair energy transition. We must avoid the relocation of polluting and unhealthy production processes to other countries.
- Part of our international climate policy is climate financing. We will add an increasing additional contribution for climate to the development cooperation budget. This way, we can support partner countries in biodiversity, climate-smart agriculture and sustainable urban socio-economic growth.

6.2 **A POLICY FOR BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development goals are inextricably linked. We want to create policies that are coherent with this, based on human rights.

- Any partnership of the federal government to achieve Agenda2030 will take into consideration accountability and respect for human rights.
- The Second National Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights states with measurable indicators how it will contribute to sustainable development goals.
- At multilateral level, we are committed to a binding UN convention on business and human rights; at European level, we are calling for legislation on the duty of care of businesses and the obligations of directors.



6.3 COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN ENDANGERED SPECIES

We remain committed to the *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. In concrete terms, we will support actions to finance the *Combating Corruption linked to Wildlife and Forest Crime and Corruption in Africa* fund. Such financing will strengthen the capacity of local investigators and magistrates.

6.4 SUSTAINABLE FOOD IMPORT CHAINS

The *Beyond Food* strategy will make our food import chains more sustainable, with measures against imported deforestation and for the transformation of our food system. The strategy promotes sustainable chains at national, European and international level, and includes actions on fair wages, biodiversity, human rights – with a specific focus on women’s and children’s rights – and the fight against climate change.

- We will launch the *Beyond Food* strategy, organise task forces for priority commodities and define actions.
- For each priority commodity, we will implement and monitor public-private partnerships.
- We will implement, evaluate and review the *Beyond Food* actions.

6.5 UNIVERSAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

Social security is a recognised human right. Demand for support in developing social protection systems is growing. Belgium has already made significant technical and financial contributions in the past. Through three actions, the federal government wants to continue to promote social security internationally.

- We will make Belgian expertise in social protection available. Our experts will assist partner countries through Belgian and European projects.

- We are increasing our efforts to promote ILO standards of social protection.
- We are calling for international funding for social protection and, through our development cooperation, we support social protection in developing countries.

6.6 DECENT WORK

The federal government supports the ILO’s Decent Work Agenda. Our deputy membership of the ILO governing body and our EU Presidency in 2024 are opportunities to play a greater role in this. We will also continue to advocate for the inclusion of occupational safety and health in the fundamental principles and rights of the ILO.

6.7 COMBATING ECOCIDE

The federal government supports the demand to make ecocide an autonomous international crime. At national level, we are looking at the inclusion of ecocide in the new Criminal Code. At international level, we are taking diplomatic initiatives to include crime in the Rome Statute.

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