



# MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENT

DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION **FUNDAMENTALS**

# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

**A healthy climate and environment** is core to sustainable development. Long-term development is not possible if rivers are polluted, soil is depleted, and ecosystems are destroyed.

**Mainstreaming environment** is the integration of environmental concerns into all areas of development co-operation. It enables environmental considerations to be addressed systematically across policies, plans, budgets and activities, and facilitates a consistent approach, helping to avoid contradictory policy choices.

Mainstreaming efforts are often accompanied by activities that emphasise co-benefits and triple wins as well as more direct investments in the environment. Transitioning to more sustainable growth also holds the promise of significant development opportunities and jobs.



Leadership shows a sustained commitment to environment. Policies, guidance and tools for mainstreaming are in place.



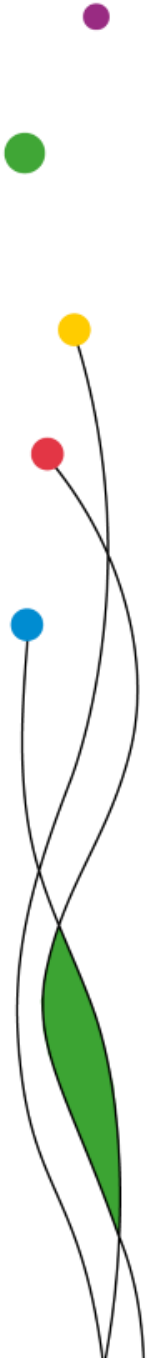
Incentives and accountability are clear, and staff have skills and knowledge to mainstream.



Environment is addressed systematically across policies, plans, budgets and activities.



Development co-operation activities contribute positively to environmental sustainability.



# BASIC STANDARDS

Learning by Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members identifies [five building blocks](#) for effectively integrating environmental concerns into development co-operation.



Many DAC members emphasise the need for **an integrated approach** to mainstreaming, where climate and environment are integrated into all development co-operation activities.

The [OECD DAC Peer Review Analytical Framework](#) sets out the DAC's expectations with regard to including environment and cross-cutting issues in policy and integrating them into development co-operation efforts.



# GOOD PRACTICES



## Strong policy commitment and leadership

- The [EU strategy to implement the 2030 Agenda](#), the new European consensus on development, sends clear signals to staff to apply regulations on mainstreaming.
- [France](#), [Norway](#) and [Iceland](#) have developed dedicated development co-operation strategies to support the conservation and the sustainable use of the ocean across economic sectors.
- The [G20 commitment](#) to reduce additional pollution from marine plastic litter to zero by 2050 and the [Ocean Plastics Charter](#) have helped to place oceans high on the agenda.
- Setting targets can also help to incentivise action. **The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's (Sida)** environment targets, with baselines against which to measure performance, have helped to place environmental issues high on the operational agenda, ensuring all staff treat these issues seriously.



# GOOD PRACTICES



## Robust systems, processes and tools are in place

- **Sida's** Environmental Management System (EMS) manages the potential environmental impacts of its diverse role as financier, analyst and dialogue partner. The EMS applies to the full cycle of planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Under **Canada's** Environment Integration Process, mainstreaming occurs throughout project implementation. Environmental clauses are required in all contracts and agreements. Follow-up measures, such as reviews of project documents and due diligence assessments, must be undertaken after approval.



# GOOD PRACTICES



## Staff have capacity and continue to develop their skills

- In **Sweden**, training has shaped a common understanding among staff of the diverse and context-specific challenges relating to environment. This has been most effective when it identified links with other cross-cutting issues, notably gender, and included partners.
- Environment and climate staff networks can help to provide a space for learning and exchange across units and departments.
- To complement limited staff capacity, the **European Commission** recruited an external provider to run an in-house mainstreaming facility. It provides awareness raising, technical assistance, staff training, tracking of financial commitments to the Rio convention objectives, and prepares guidance materials.



# GOOD PRACTICES



## Shared knowledge, learning and engagement

- Sida's [Statistical Handbook](#) offers instructions for classifying activities against the environment policy marker of the DAC Creditor Reporting System, including the use of environmental assessments, active use of environmental information, setting specific environmental objectives and activities, and monitoring them.



## Well-supported country systems

- The **European Commission** supports programmes for in-country mainstreaming, including with country presence to sustain day-to-day work with public and private stakeholders. These efforts have strengthened capacity, supported institutional reforms, increased finance flows and helped build social demand and support.



# MEASURING SUCCESS

## How do we know if DAC members are moving in the right direction?

- ▶ All bilateral ODA and non-export credit other official flows are screened against the OECD DAC Environment Policy Marker and Rio Markers.
- ▶ A growing share of that finance has environment as a significant objective.
- ▶ Evaluations of projects and programmes take into account the environmental impact of interventions in partner countries.

DAC members have also agreed to monitor the share of ODA that supports sustainable ocean economies and to identify good practices in this area.





# RESOURCES

A 2020 [OECD Council Recommendation](#) sets out how environmental assessments should be applied to development projects and programmes at all stages, and recommends an environmental checklist for decision makers.

This OECD [report](#) shares lessons from the DAC on greening development co-operation, based on a peer learning exercise. This OECD [publication](#) provides lessons on mainstreaming cross-cutting issues more generally, including gender.

A recent OECD report provides evidence and examines the scope and nature of [development co-operation in support of sustainable ocean economies](#), identifying good practices and scalable approaches.

Recent OECD DAC statistics on financing for environment and climate are [available here](#).

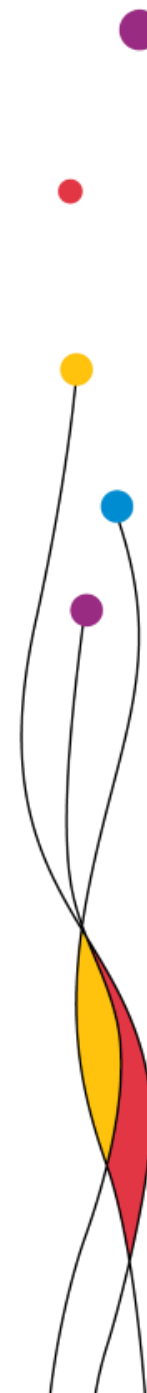
Find relevant evaluations via the [DAC Evaluation Resource Centre \(DEReC\)](#).

## Relevant topics in this series

**People and skills**, as expert capacity and skilled staff are essential for mainstreaming.

**Thematic and geographic allocations** [forthcoming]

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# DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION FUNDAMENTALS

This series unpacks development co-operation standards and illustrates how DAC members are applying them. Applying standards can help all actors to fulfil their ambitions and commitments.

Each *Fundamentals* document introduces a **key aspect** of effective co-operation, sets out **basic standards**, offers **good practice** examples, and identifies **relevant resources**.

Other topics in this series, which is being expanded and updated regularly, can be found [here](#). For any comments contact [DCD.TIPs@oecd.org](mailto:DCD.TIPs@oecd.org).

