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Results of the "Cardiff-Processes" – Assessing the State of Development And Charting the Way Ahead

**Report to the Federal Ministry for the Environment,
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety**

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R. Andreas Kraemer

With contributions of

**Uwe Büsgen, Keya Choudhury, Anneke Klasing, Anne-Gabrielle Mazurek
Stefanie Pfahl und Dennis Tänzler**

**Ecologic, Pfalzburger Str. 43-44, 10717 Berlin, Germany
Tel. +49 30 86880-0; Fax: +49 30 86880-100; Kraemer@Ecologic.de**

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1 Summary

1.1 Background

The present report provides an analysis and assessment of the results of the "Cardiff Process" obtained until the end of 2000. It was compiled by Ecologic as part of the research project "Future Development of European Environmental Policy – Elements for a Sustainable Development Strategy for the Period 2000 to 2010 with Emphasis on the Integration of Environmental Protection Requirements into other Community Policies" (Research Report Number: 299 19 120 (UFOPLAN)). The results are preliminary because the development of the Cardiff Strategies is still ongoing.

The European Council in Cardiff under British Presidency in June 1998 was fundamental for the subsequent development of the process. In its Conclusions, the Presidency requested all relevant Council configurations to develop their own strategies for integrating environment and sustainable development into their respective policy areas. In this way, part of the foundations for fulfilling the obligation in Article 6 of the EC Treaty to integrate the requirements of environmental protection into the definition and implementation of all Community policies was laid. The Council, and thus all its configurations, was asked to bring the work to a conclusion and to submit comprehensive strategies to the European Council meeting under Swedish Presidency in Göteborg in June 2001.

There are informal guidelines for the content and the structure of the Cardiff Strategies, which were agreed under the Finnish Presidency. Accordingly, the integration strategies should include an analysis of environmental problems, trends, and policy responses; objectives and targets; actions, measures, actors and stakeholders; time-tables for measures; and provisions for monitoring and reviewing.

The Cardiff Process for the development of strategies for integrating the requirements of environmental protection and sustainable development into other policies consists, in fact, of several parts. These process parts are similar to one another in structure, content, and speed, but – like the various voices singing a canon– they have different starting times. In June 1998, the Cardiff European Council specifically asked the configurations "Transport", "Energy", and "Agriculture" to start the process. The European Council in Wien created a second group of Council configurations in December 1998, namely "Development", "Internal Market", and "Industry". The European Council in Köln in June 1999 then asked the General Affairs Council, the Ecofin Council and the Fisheries Council to also submit their respective reports on the development of Cardiff Strategies by the year 2000. In October 1999, the Council (Environment) adopted Conclusions on "Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns" in which a range of environmental policy issues and objectives as well as requirements for the further development of the Cardiff Process were formulated.

1.2 Overall Assessment of the Results of the Cardiff Process

There is great variation in the results achieved and the documents submitted. The differences relate to coverage and scope; existence, orientation and ambition of objectives; level detail and degree of strategy development; continuity and institutional capacities for implementing the Cardiff Process in the individual sectors.

The apparent inability or unwillingness of some Council configurations to recognise the full range of (negative) environmental consequences of their policies and decisions, and the tendency only to address specific problems with obvious solutions, raise concern about the likely success of environmental policy integration in the European Union. In some cases, the task of developing a strategy was begun without first analysing and assessing the environmental impact of the sectoral policy. Thus, an opportunity was missed for questioning the current policy approaches and developing a future-oriented vision for the individual Councils. Instead, some of the reports and strategies provide little more than a description of past policies, extant legislation, and new initiatives already "in the pipeline".

The overall assessment – here according to the "stars systems" also used for hotels – reveals that the Council configurations which have developed full strategies fare significantly better than those which have so far submitted only reports.

Council Configuration	Assessment					Overall
	Environmental awareness					
	Objectives & targets		Measures & actions plans			
	Criteria:			Indicator development		
					Time-frames & follow-up	
Transport	+++(+)	+++(+)	++++	++++(+)	++++(+)	++++
Energy	+++(+)	+++(+)	++++	+++	++++(+)	+++(+)
Agriculture	+++	+++(+)	++(+)	++++	++	+++
Development	+++(+)	++++	++++	+++(+)	+++	+++(+)
Internal Market	+	+	++	+	++	+
Industry	+++	++	++	++	++	++
General Affairs	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ecofin	+	+	+	[++++]	++	+(+)
Fisheries	+++	++	++	+	+++	++

Grades ranging from +++++ = very good to + flawed or insufficient; (+) denoting interim grades

The awareness of environmental problems and protection requirements covers the whole range from advanced problem recognition to ignoring the need to integrate environmental protection requirements into the sectoral strategies. Comparatively good are the sectors with an obvious environmental relevance and which were already included as "target sectors" in the Fifth EC Environmental Action Programme (transport,

industry, agriculture, and energy). In all sectors, the description of specific integration requirements remains to be completed.

Objectives and (more concrete) targets should be developed on the basis of a previous analysis of problems. However, with the exception of the strategy of the Transport Council, none of the Cardiff documents (reports and strategies) have been developed to be consistent in this sense. Overall, the setting of objectives and targets in all the Cardiff documents is unsatisfactory in the sense that no precise, quantified targets connected to dates or deadlines have been laid down. The analysis of the objectives and targets shows that those reports and strategies which adequately address the existing environmental issues are also relatively advanced in the setting of policy objectives if compared with those strategies which deal with environmental problems only superficially or not at all.

Plans for future activities and measures and the allocation of responsibilities to the various actors are key elements of every strategy, as it could otherwise not be implemented. The comparative assessment of the strategies shows that the measures, particularly in the transport and energy sectors, correspond in detail to the environmental problems identified and the general objectives set. In the agricultural strategy, the measures are partly consistent with environmental problems and objectives. In the areas of energy, development policy, and fisheries, reference can be made to programmes, regulations and activities which identify measures and allocate responsibilities. In all other sectors, the measures are either not specific enough or there is no allocation to responsible actors. The reports "Internal Market" and "Ecofin" lay down policy guidelines or measures that are likely to work to the detriment of environmental policy.

Any strategy aiming at a continuous improvement of procedures, goal definition and goal attainment needs indicators for measuring the problem to be solved and the degree to which solutions are successful. Otherwise it would be impossible to verify strategy success or to adapt strategies to changing needs and priorities. Only the Transport Council has developed specific indicators for the integration of environmental protection requirements. In the other sectors, reference is made to existing indicators and their further development is suggested. On the whole, the development of suitable indicators and the incorporation of existing and future indicator systems into the present Cardiff Strategies is still insufficient.

The fixing of time frames for measures to be undertaken is a necessary part of any strategy implementation process. Without timeframes and deadlines, the adherence to which can be verified, a control of the functioning of a strategy would be just as impossible as its adaptation to changing circumstances. Overall, this area is underdeveloped in all Cardiff Reports and Strategies. As a rule, measures are identified without connection to a (future) date. Exceptions can be found mainly in relation to work delegated to the European Commission, which is in some cases linked to a (soft) deadline. Normally, these cases concern intermediate procedural steps in the (further) strategy development, with only indirect environmental effects.

1.3 Institutional Stability and Analysis of the Process

A number of arguments lead to the conclusions that the Cardiff Process, based on Article 6 of the EC Treaty, can be characterised as binding and committing. Legally, the binding nature is rather weak, but the political commitment is strong. Of significant importance are the various self-commitments of the Council configurations to further refine or revise the strategies and the work packages delegated to the European Commission or specific working groups.

The institutional strengthening of environmental policy integration is most advanced in the areas of transport policy, and energy and climate policy. Apart from these examples, there are no reflections about providing institutional continuity in the Cardiff Strategies. In some cases, such as in the development policy, the assumption is that existing structures and procedures are sufficient. The process of institutionalisation was only partly successful, as environmental integration policy found its institutional basis not in the Council but in the European Commission. The Council configurations effectively rely on the work provided by the Commission services. No capacities have to date been built that cut across the Council configurations. In many cases, Council work is driven by the current presidency with little lasting effect in the Council structure.

A number of factors appear to facilitate or accelerate the development of environmental integration strategies, such as ongoing reform processes (agriculture, development); policy crises (fisheries, transport, agriculture); and international negotiations (climate). At the same time, the dynamism of ongoing reforms can impose paths, trends and rhythms which can accelerate the development of Cardiff Strategies but can also narrow their scope.

The co-operation between the Directorate-General Environment and the ministries of environment in the Member States on the one hand and the Directorates-General and the sectoral ministries on the other hand was specific for each sector and changed over time. It deteriorated in several areas after the European Council in Wien, without apparent reason.

1.4 Conclusions and Future Challenges

Given the dynamism already developed in the process, it would not be possible to stop the Cardiff Process. Instead, the lessons learned so far should be used to adapt and improve it. In order to guarantee the continuity of the work begun, the Council configurations already involved should be encouraged to complete the documents submitted thus far. For this, detailed and precise terms of reference should be developed on the basis of the current (informal) structure. The terms of reference should be validated and legitimised by their adoption by the European Council. The main objective of this exercise is to ensure a minimum of internal consistency of the Cardiff Strategies. The following questions should be addressed in detail.

In principle, the foundations for an external evaluation of the Cardiff Strategies and their implementation should be laid. For the assessment of strategy results on the basis of indicators, the existing structures of the European Environment Agency can be

used. Its work in the field of transport and environment, for instance, can provide a model for other policy fields. For the verification of operational functioning and political effectiveness, a formalised system of peer reviews by experts from the Member States is an option, similar to the Environmental Performance Reviews of the OECD. This would require the establishment of a central unit – in the sense of a secretariat or focal point – for co-ordinating the necessary work and logistical support.

Direct dialogue among those responsible for environmental protection, nature conservation and the management of natural resources in the "environmental policy community" and those in other policy sectors must be part of the Cardiff Process. Such dialogue can be organised through joint committees, Joint Council meetings etc. In general, the individual Council configurations evidently have difficulties in understanding the environmental protection requirements to be included in their deliberations, even if these are established in international agreements or are contained in Commission Communications. Given this diagnosis, the relevant requirements must be formally laid down by those responsible for environmental policy. The Council conclusions "Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns" of October 1999 are a step in the right direction but are still rather general.

Because of the sectoral approach taken, a number of salient issues in environmental policy cannot adequately be addressed in the Cardiff Process. Examples are climate protection, biological diversity, and resource management and consumption. For these and possible other issues, horizontal Cardiff Strategies should be developed, each with the involvement of the most relevant Council configurations and Directorates-General of the European Commission. Another option would be the elaboration of "Thematic Strategies" within the framework of the future Sixth EC Environmental Action Programme.

Within the framework of the Cardiff Process, an initiative should furthermore be taken to promote the implementation of the various sectoral Cardiff Strategies in the Member States and for the development of national processes for environmental integration. The objectives, among others, would be to establish national processes mirroring the Cardiff Process, to

- build a harmonised reporting mechanism and other instruments for information exchange,
- facilitate comparative assessments (peer reviews) and, on that basis,
- promote a process of trans-national policy learning and the development of networks of experts.

Further aims should be to create a continuous and stable process at the European level and thereby stabilise environmental integration policies in the Member States and other countries.

For this part of the Cardiff Process alone, a co-ordination network should be created consisting of the Directorate-General Environment of the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, the environment ministries of the Member States and the relevant advisory bodies (Environment Forum, European Network of Advisory Councils). This could build upon existing structures and networks, primarily on the

Environmental Policy Review Group (EPRG) and the co-operation among the EU Co-ordinators of the Member States' ministries of environment.

1.5 Institutional Capacity & Co-ordination: "Article 6 Committee"

Specific institutional measures are necessary in order to realise the close co-operation and co-ordination among representatives of the European institutions and the Member States across sectors and frontiers. In a nutshell, a new committee could be created within the Council and supported by the General Secretariat of the Council (Focal Point), which may bring together representatives from the heads of state and government and representatives from the environment ministries of the Member States. This composition would ensure that competence in the inter-departmental or inter-ministerial co-ordination in government is coupled with the essential knowledge of environmental concerns. Representatives or nominees from the European Parliament, the European Commission (General Secretariat and Directorate-General Environment) and the European Environment Agency might also be involved. The Committee could:

- ensure the fulfilment of the obligations established by Article 6 of the EC Treaty (hence "Article 6 Committee");
- observe and assess all relevant measures and activities of the Community and the Member States, and report and give advice where appropriate;
- establish best practice, give guidance and eventually lay down minimum requirements for integration processes and policies, reports and strategies etc.;
- initiate evaluations and studies in that context, receive reports and invite statements from interested parties;
- report regularly to the European Council, possible via a Council – the General Affairs Council with its responsibility for horizontal and institutional issues or the Environmental Council;
- promote the exchange of information and experience both among the Member States and other countries and among Council configurations;
- document experience and publish (or publicise) reports on environmental policy integration;
- serve as a forum for general or strategic questions of environmental protection and nature conservation and of the integration of environmental protection requirements into other policies.

In addition, the Article 6 Committee could provide continuity for further activities relating to individual Cardiff Strategies and the Cardiff Process as a whole. It should provide some independence from short-term changes in political priorities and the agenda-setting of individual presidencies. For this reason, separating the presidency of the Article 6 Committee from the Council Presidency and rotating the chair of the Committee approximately every two years might be considered.

2 Introduction to the Cardiff Process

2.1 Environmental Integration since the Luxembourg European Council

The preparation of the Cardiff Process began with the inclusion of relevant clauses in the Conclusions of the European Council in Luxembourg in December 1997¹. The European Commission then submitted – in the form of Commission Communication and thus with the agreement of all the Directorates-General concerned – fairly general guidelines for the integration of environmental protection into other policies².

Under British Presidency, the European Council in Cardiff in June 1998 laid the foundations for the subsequent process. In its Conclusions, the Presidency³:

- Recalls the Treaty of Amsterdam and the obligation to integrate environmental protection requirements into other policies, in order to achieve sustainable development (Point 32);
- Requests all relevant Council configurations to develop their own strategies for integrating environment and sustainable development into their respective policy area (Point 34);
- Asks specifically the configurations "Transport", "Energy", and "Agriculture" to start the process (Point 34);
- Invites the Council and the Commission to keep under review their organisational arrangements necessary for carrying this forward (Point 34);
- Underlines the need for strategies for meeting the commitments under the Kyoto Protocol (Point 35).

The three Council configurations named here form the "first group", which began their work on the Cardiff Strategies relatively early and maintain to this day the resulting lead over later groups⁴. The European Council in Wien created a second group of Council configurations in December 1998. The first group had by then already submitted reports on strategy development. In its conclusions, the Austrian Presidency⁵:

¹ European Council (Luxembourg), 12 and 13 December 1997, Presidency Conclusions [SN400/97], No. 56: "The European Council stresses its conviction - expressed in the future Article 6 of the Treaty - that environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the Community's policies and activities, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development. With this in mind, it asks the Commission to submit a strategy to it, before its June 1998 meeting, for achieving that goal".

² Commission of the European Communities 1998: *Commission Communication to the European Council. Partnership for Integration - A Strategy for Integrating Environment into European Union Policies*. COM(98)333, 27 May 1998.

³ European Council (Cardiff), 15 and 16 June 1998, Presidency Conclusion [00150/98].

⁴ Buck, Matthias, R. Andreas Kraemer and David Wilkinson 1999: "Der 'Cardiff-Prozess' zur Integration von Umweltschutzbelangen in andere Sektorpolitiken." *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* (B 48/99), 12-20.

⁵ European Council (Wien), 11 and 12 December 1998, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/98 REV].

- Reaffirms the commitment of the European Council to integrate environmental protection requirements and sustainable development into all Community policies (Point 66);
- Asks the Council to continue the strategy process particularly in its configurations "Development", "Internal Market", and "Industry" (Point 67);
- Underlines climate change, environmental aspects of development and enlargement of the European Union as cross-sectoral issues (Point 67).

The European Council in Köln in June 1999 then received a report from the European Commission on the integration of environmental aspects into all relevant policy areas⁶. It asked the General Affairs Council, the Ecofin Council and the Fisheries Council to also submit – by the year 2000 – their respective reports on the development of Cardiff Strategies⁷.

In October 1999, the Council (Environment) adopted the Conclusions on "Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns"⁸ in which a range of environmental policy issues and objectives as well as requirements for the further development of the Cardiff Process were formulated. In particular, the need is underlined "to translate the spirit and requirement of the EC Treaty into more operational policy commitments according to a set of long and short term goals, indicators and timetables for further measures [...]". In addition, the Council demands "that the implementation of the integration strategies needs to be further strengthened and these strategies should be reviewed at regular intervals and revised as necessary" For this purpose, the "European Council, on the basis of Commission reports, regularly monitors the implementation of EC Treaty requirements regarding environmental integration, inter alia the implementation of the sectoral strategies".

The Cardiff Process reached another milestone with the European Council in Helsinki in December 1999 when the first group of configurations presented their first strategies and the second group each submitted a report. In view of the progress made, the European Council asked the different Council configurations to bring the work to a conclusion and to submit comprehensive strategies to the European Council in June 2001.⁹ The possibility of including a timetable for further measures and a set of indicators for these sectors was explicitly mentioned, and the Commission and the Council were urged to develop adequate instruments and applicable data for regular

⁶ Kommission der Europäischen Gemeinschaften 1999: *Arbeitspapier der Kommission für den Europäischen Rat: Bericht für den Kölner Gipfel: Einbeziehung der Umweltbelange. Mainstreaming der Umweltpolitik*. SEC(99)777, no date.

⁷ European Council (Köln), 3 and 4 June 1999, Presidency Conclusions [150/99], No. 32: „The European Council [...] calls upon the Council (General Affairs, Economic and Financial Questions and Fisheries) to report back to it in 2000 on the integration of environmental issues and sustainable development into each of the policy areas“.

⁸ 2207. Council Meeting (Environment), 12 October 1999 [11654/99].

⁹ European Council (Helsinki), 10 and 11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/99], No. 46.

evaluation, follow-up and monitoring, leading to adjustments and deepening of the strategies¹⁰.

According to a decision of the European Council in Santa Maria da Feira in June 2000, which corresponds to the Presidency Conclusions of the Helsinki meeting, the European Council intends to undertake a comprehensive review of the Cardiff Process as a whole at its meeting in Göteborg in June 2001.¹¹ At the same meeting, the future European strategy for sustainable development is to be adopted.

2.2 Background to this Report

The present report provides an analysis and assessment of the results of the "Cardiff Process" obtained until the end of 2000. It was compiled by Ecologic as part of the research project "Future Development of European Environmental Policy – Elements for a Sustainable Development Strategy for the Period 2000 to 2010 with Emphasis on the Integration of Environmental Protection Requirements into other Community Policies" (Research Report Number: 299 19 120 (UFOPLAN)). The results are preliminary because the development of the Cardiff Strategies is still ongoing.

A structured approach was developed for the analysis and evaluation of the relevant documents coming out of the Cardiff Process. Since the individual reports and strategies are highly different from one-another in content and form, the strategies were first analysed using a standard grid. This was based on the (informal) guidelines of the Council, developed under the Finnish Presidency, for the issues to be addressed by the individual Council configuration and the structure (or outline) to be followed. It consisted of "environmental problems, trends, and policy responses", "objectives and targets", "activities, measures, actors and stakeholders", "timetables for measures", and "monitoring and review". These headings were superimposed with the analytical framework used for policy evaluation and indicator development by the OECD consisting of "driving forces", "pressures [on the environment]", "state [of the environment]", "[socio-economic] impact", and "policy response". The resulting grid was used to analyse the text of the documents and check the content for completeness and consistency. The information having been structured could then be compared across Council configurations to arrive at a consistent evaluation.

The original German version of the study report contains brief summaries of the Cardiff Strategies (transport, energy and agriculture) and reports (of all other Council configurations except the General Affairs Council). These have not been translated and readers are referred to Volume 2 of the IEEP London report "The Effectiveness of EU Council Integration Strategies and Options for Carrying Forward the 'Cardiff

¹⁰ European Council (Helsinki), 10 and 11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/99], No. 47.

¹¹ European Council (Santa Maria da Feira), 19 and 20 June 2000, Presidency Conclusions [200/1/00], No. 48.

Process"¹². Volume 2 (Annexes) contains summary evaluations, which provide a good background for the present study and report, although they follow a different approach.

This introduction is followed by an overview of the state of the Cardiff Process with information being condensed into tables (chapter 3). Chapter 4 then presents the result of a comparative assessment using the information guidelines for the content and structure of Cardiff Strategies as section headings. Here again, summary information on each of the Strategies and Reports is condensed in tables. Chapter 5 contains a synthesis of results and an overall assessment leading to conclusions. Policy options and suggestions are developed in the final chapter 6.

¹² The main report can be downloaded at <http://www.ieep.org.uk/Cardiff-report.pdf> and the annexes at <http://www.ieep.org.uk/Cardiff-annexes.pdf>.

3 Overview of the State of the Cardiff Process

3.1 Comments on the Development of the Cardiff Process

Even though the Cardiff Process originated as a pure Council process, the European Commission participated in the whole process, gave important input and accelerated process. For instance, not only the cross-sectoral or overarching Commission Communications and reports were submitted. In addition, almost all the relevant Directorates-General prepared Communications on the integration of environmental requirements and sustainable development into their area of competence. The exceptions are the Directorates General for Industry and for Trade whose draft Communications failed to meet expectations to the extent that an agreement within the Commission services was not possible. Also, the Directorates-General working for the General Affairs Council commenced their preparation of Communications or other papers relatively late. In this area, there is currently no Commission Communication or Council strategy, although work is on course for the European Council in Göteborg.

In addition, the European Commission and the European Environmental Agency have worked on the identification, development and testing of suitable indicators for verifying the attainment of objectives set by Cardiff Strategies, as did individual Council configurations.

During the preparation of the European Council in Göteborg, all current work should be brought to a conclusion with the effect that many Council configurations are addressing environmental policy integration during the first half of 2001. A summary of the process to date and currently foreseeable developments is given in the following tables.

The tables are structured according to the individual "groups" of Council configurations, which were asked, respectively, by the European Councils in Cardiff, Wien, or Köln to prepare their Cardiff Strategies. The assessment is based on the main output of the individual Council configurations, and the most important documents are listed with their date (column 2) and a short description (column 3). Column 4 identifies the Commission or the Council as the initiator or main supporter of the process. In column 5 "Co-operation Commission", the co-operation between or among the relevant Directorates-General is characterised. Column 6 gives explanatory remarks concerning the individual dossiers. Table 3.2.4 "General and Cross-Cutting Reports, Indicator Work" summarises the formulations of environmental protection requirements, overview reports and similar working papers, and cross-configurational documents on indicators. Finally, in the same table, key messages are listed (see also section 5.2 "Analysis of the Process: Summary of Results").

These tables give a good overview of the current state in the individual Council configurations or policy areas, and of the development and main influences can be gained.

3.2 Tables Summarising the Results of the Cardiff Process

3.2.1 "First Group" (Cardiff): Transport, Energy, and Agriculture

Council Configuration	Date	Main Output	Lead by Council / Commission	Co-operation Commission	Remarks
Transport	6/98	Joint Council Meeting [9403/98]	Joint C'cil (UK Prs.) & Commission	Good/Fair ¹³	Much previous & ongoing work (some cited in strategy) Decision taken to review strategy (due in 6/01) Good co-operation to be continued for review. Member States to present strategies to Council in 2000 Expert Group on Transport and Environment (EGTE) (formed by the Commission but perceived as "in Council") Communication COM(2000)422 on sustainable transport Development of 27 Indicators (TERM) test run report 1/00 Links with Kyoto Protocol and EU enlargement. "Commission led work was "greener" than Council work" "EGTE work has been of great importance for C'cil strat.)"
	12/98	Communication 98/716			
	Wien	Council Report [13811/98]	Joint Council meeting: innovative and effective		
	Helsinki	Council Strategy 2y [11717/99]			
	1/00	EEA/TERM Indicator Report Communication 00/422			
	4/01	[Council Resolution]	Commission to drive with communications		
	4-6/01	[Revised Comprehensive Strategy] [Develop operational part 2002-04] [Regulation permanence of TERM]			
	12/02	[Revised Strategy ?]			
Energy	Wien	Council Report [13805/98]	Council (A Pres.)	Good/Fair	Much previous and ongoing work (cited in strategy) "DG Environment was consulted throughout" Commission to act on strategy & action programme European Climate Change Programme (expert fora) Commission to report on measures post 2002 by 12/00 ¹⁴ Communication long-term strategy for sector after COP6 Link to Kyoto & EU enlargement (in review), 2y reporting "Commission is more progressive than Council"
	10/98	Communication 98/571	Later Commission, working for Council		
	Helsinki	Council Strategy 3y [13773/99]			
	[5/01]	[Comm. Paper "beyond 2002"]			
	5/01	[Council Resolution]			
	5/01	[Revised Strategy (long-term)]			
Agriculture	12/98	C'cil Resolution Forestry [14127/98]	Council, based on Commission work on CAP	Good	Much previous and ongoing work (cited in strategy) DG Environment closely involved (in Agenda 2000) Intergovernmental character of CAP "Commission now working for Council" CAP to be reviewed again [Agenda 2007] EUROSTAT to lead on data and indicator work Communication on "sustainability" without environment?
	Wien	Council Report [13091/98]			
	1/99	Communication 99/22	Commission now taking it forward		
	Helsinki	Council Strategy [5y] [13078/99]			
	1/00	Communication on indicators 00/20			
	I-II/01?	[Communication on data]			
	4/01	[Council Conclusion]			
	2001?	[new Communication: sust. ?]			

¹³ The co-operation became more difficult after the Helsinki European Council because of the merger of DG Transport and DG Energy.

¹⁴ This deadline was not met and it is unclear what the next step will be (paper, report, communication, etc.)

3.2.2 "Second Group" (Wien): Development, Internal Market, and Industry

Council Configuration	Date	Main Output	Lead by Council / Commission	Co-operation Commission	Remarks
Development	1997	Independent Evaluation Dev. Policy	Commission	Good, also	"DG Development worked closely with DG Environment"
	10/99	Communication 99/499	Member States want to get involved	with DGs	1997 independent env. evaluation of development policy
	11/99	Commission progress report		Relex, Trade,	Ongoing revision of legislation and internal procedures
	Helsinki	Council Report [13644/99]		SCR	Council asked Commission to develop Strategy by 2001
	5/00	Communication 00/264			Member States ask for establishment of expert groups
	11/00	Regulation 2493/00 (General)			Informal meetings of development & environment experts
	11/00	Regulation 2494/00 (Forestry)			Development policy to support implementation of MEAs
	[5/01]	[Council Conclusion/Strategy]			Communication 00/264 on new Development Policy
[5/01]	[Communication 01/XXX]			Commission drafting specific strategy for S. Pres.	
[6/01]	[Council Comprehensive Strategy]				
Internal Market	1999	Communication 99/263	Council (SF Pres.?)	Good, but	Germany, Spain & Denmark add statements to Report
	Helsinki	Council Report [13622/99]	S Pres. drafting for	deteriorating	Communication on procurement & environment to come
	6/01	[Council Conclusion]	Gothenburg ER		Recommendation on greening fin. information to come
	2001?	[Communication on procurement]			Commission report to Council on indicators expected
	2001?	[Commission report on indicators]			"DG Market is intransparent; difficult to assess progress"
2001?	[Recommendation fin. Information]				
Industry/ Enterprise	10/99	Commission WorkP SEC 99/1729	Commission	Good; bad	Communication blocked by DG Environment (et al.?)
	Helsinki	Council Report [13549/1/99]	+Council (S Pres.)	after Helsinki:	Germany & Denmark ¹⁵ add statements to Report
	5/01	[Council Conclusion]		internal	Commission to submit action plan on Sustainable Ind. Pol.
	I-II/01	[Action Plan "Sustainable Ind. Pol."]		change	Commission indicator study (policy & performance) I-II/01
					"DG Enterprise lack political will to follow integration"

¹⁵ Denmark's comments are very critical.

3.2.3 "Third Group" (Köln): General Affairs, Ecofin, and Fisheries

Council Configuration	Date	Main Output	Lead by Council / Commission	Co-operation Commission	Remarks
General Affairs	4 or 6/01	[Council Strategy (Göteborg?)]			GAC has a broad remit and needs separate analyses..
• Relex	4/01	[Communication expected]	Commission/Council	Good, recent	Commission study on policy options & recommendations
• Trade		[Communication failed; [adoption as issue paper by Art. 133 Committee?]	Council (S Pres.)	None	Communication blocked by Secretary General, DG Development and DG Environment; Intergovernmental nature of CCP (Art. 133 Committee)
• Development		[Communication expected]			
• Enlargement					[so far not an issue ¹⁶]
EcoFin	11/00 Nice Nice Nice	Communication 00/576 Council Report [13054/1/00] Council Report indicators [13217/00] EPC Report indicators [13170/1/00] [Council Strategy (Göteborg?)]	Commission Council (F Pres.)	Good	Regular monitoring with existing system, new indicators: Ecofin Council Report on Structural Indicators (no env.) based on Economic Policy Committee (EPC) report, poor on environment ¹⁷ ; not agreed with Env.]
Fisheries	6/00 [12/00] [12/00] 2/01? I-II/01	Communication 99/363 Council Report [9386/00] [new Communication] [Green Paper on CFP] [Council to adopt Communication] [Council Comprehensive Strategy]	Commission Council (S Pres.) on separate process	Good, but: ? (unclear)	Communication 99/363 is "joint" DGs Fish & Environment DG Fish drafting Green Paper on Common Fisheries P. DGs Fish & Environment drafting new Communication providing input to Green Paper on env. integration Indicators to be developed later Swedish Presidency drafting strategy in parallel process

¹⁶ Conclusions of the General Affairs Council (Monday 4 December 2000) „Complete Picture of the Enlargement Process“ makes no mention of environment.

¹⁷ EcoFin Council Report to the Nice European Council on "Structural Indicators: An Instrument for Better Structural Policies" is silent on environment; Economic Policy Committee (EPC) report contains three environmental indicators: Aggregated emission of 6 greenhouse gases (climate change), nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) in rivers (water quality), and industrial waste generation [kg/1000 USD GDP] (waste).

3.2.4 General and Cross-Cutting Reports, Indicator Work

Subject	Date	Main Output	Title/Subject
Environmental Requirements	10/99	Council Conclusions	"Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns"
Overviews	5/98	Communication to Cardiff 98/333	"Partnership for Integration - A Strategy for Integrating Environment into European Union Policies."
	6/99	Commission WorkP SEC 99/777	"Integration of Environmental Requirements. Mainstreaming of Environmental Policy"
	11/99	Commission WorkP SEC	"From Cardiff to Helsinki and beyond."
	10/99	99/1941C'cil Conclusion [11873/99]	Council Conclusions: "Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns" (12 October 1999)
On Indicators	11/99	Commission WorkP SEC 99/1942	"Co-ordinated Report on Indicators for Environment to Helsinki Summit"
Key Messages	<p>Cardiff Process is originally a Council Process; Council was asked by the European Council to submit reports and strategies.</p> <p>Commission was motivated to contribute; with cross-cutting papers, and there are now "Cardiff Communications" from most relevant DGs.</p> <p>On the whole, Commission led on strategy content, Council more reluctant (there are exceptions here).</p> <p>Driving role of Council depends largely on Agenda setting and background work by the Presidency.</p> <p>Some dedicated Presidencies have made important contributions through Council.</p> <p>Ongoing reforms (agriculture, development), policy crises (fisheries, transport, agriculture) or international processes (climate/energy) seem to facilitate.</p> <p>Council itself appears to have no appropriate structures and procedures to ensure environmental integration.</p> <p>Formal strategy development is highly variable, with "early" Council Configurations in the lead.</p> <p>Indicator work can benefit from work elsewhere, e.g. OECD (agriculture, development) or EEA (transport)</p> <p>In general terms, Commission holds "greener" views or is "more progressive" than Council.</p> <p>Co-operation between "environment" and "others" is variable, and deteriorated in several areas after the Helsinki European Council.</p> <p>Co-operation deteriorates, it seems, when structures and internal hierarchies become unstable.</p> <p>Work on indicators is proliferating, but is rather uncontrolled; may lead to inconsistent results.</p> <p>Possibility of incorporating many indicators in the broad economic policy guidelines of Ecofin (Lisbon Process).</p> <p>Future EU Sustainable Development Strategy may give additional impetus/guidance.</p>		

4 Comparative Assessment of the Sectoral Cardiff-Strategies

Following the summary of the state of the Cardiff Process in the previous chapter, the results obtained so far within the relevant Council configurations are directly compared in this chapter. For each of first five sections, a table summarising the content of the strategies or reports has been developed. Each table is followed by a brief evaluation giving additional explanations. The final section of this chapter then discusses aspects of continuity, stability and institutional strength of the Cardiff Process.

4.1 Environmental Issues, Trends, and Existing Policy Approaches

Analysing and assessing the (negative) environmental effects and risks generated by a sector or policy area is a precondition for the development of a strategy designed to solve the problems caused by a sector. Such effects and risks may include restrictions on the development and implementation of effective environmental policy measures or the choice of the most suitable regulatory instrument. An analysis of a problem can be presented explicitly in a separate chapter, as suggested by the informal requirements for Cardiff Strategies adopted by the Council under the Finnish Presidency. There are no such chapters in many Cardiff strategies or reports.¹⁸ It is also possible that the results or conclusions of an analysis of problems are implicitly included in a text, for instance in the description of planned measures or existing policy approaches.

4.1.1 Table: Comparing Environmental Awareness in the Sectors

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Transport	Strategy [11717/99]	In strategy good, tending towards satisfactory : Focus on Kyoto, mentioning of additional key issues, assessment of driving forces (good), discussion of consequences of enlargement, maintenance of infrastructure (avoidance of new construction). Extensive description of regulations and approaches used to date. Good in recognising non-sustainable trends in the transport sector. Better (good) in EEA/TERM Report (2000) on indicators.
Energy	Strategy [13773/99]	Satisfactory tending towards good , even in the absence of a formal analysis of problems (energy policy is cross-sectoral). Current and planned programmes are nevertheless problem-oriented with foci on energy efficiency, renewable energies, the Kyoto Protocol, and flexible instruments.
Agriculture	Strategy [13078/99]	Satisfactory : problem analysis is lacking. The objectives still show a systematic approach and a good information base: fertiliser and pesticides, specific intensive agricultural practices, reduced diversity of varieties; consequences for soil, water and bio-diversity; the consideration for biological diversity is good. On the whole better (good) in Communication COM(1999) 22.

¹⁸ Only the strategy of the Transport Council is satisfactory in this respect.

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Development	Report [13644/99]	Satisfactory tending towards good , problem analysis is lacking. However, the 1997 evaluation of environmental performance was incorporated: Problems with competencies in the partner countries, internal weaknesses in structures, procedures, staff levels and training.
Internal Market	Report [13622/99]	Flawed in form and content: Problem analysis is lacking. Otherwise, the text shows no satisfactory understanding of environmental protection requirements or of the obstacles for environmental policy created by internal market policies; dogmatic views border on ignorance or rejection of environmental concerns.
Industry	Report [13549/1/99]	Satisfactory , problem analysis is implicit; recognition of existing imbalance to the detriment of ecological concerns, resource consumption, production patterns and consumer behaviour. The analysis is still too general for strategy development.
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report [13054/1/00]	Flawed in form and content: Problem analysis is lacking. Otherwise, the text shows no satisfactory understanding of environmental protection requirements.
Fisheries	Report [9386/00]	Satisfactory : problem analysis is lacking. Description of existing approaches and conclusions show problem awareness. The consideration of (marine) conservation policies is good.

[Numbers in square brackets denote the relevant Council documents.]

No distinction between Cardiff reports and (later) strategies is necessary when assessing the quality of a problem analysis, because these analyses must always be part of the first steps in developing strategies. In the identification and analysis of environmental issues, reference can be made to the statements of critics, whose arguments can either be rejected or accepted. The General Affairs Council is possibly an exception to this general rule.

Following the tabulated summary of the awareness of environmental issues and trends and the existing policy approaches, an assessment and conclusions are given in the subsequent section.

4.1.2 Assessing the Environmental Awareness in the Sectors

The awareness of environmental problems and protection requirements covers the whole range from advanced problem recognition to ignoring the need to integrate environmental protection requirements into the sectoral strategies. Among the cross-cutting issues that were raised by the European Council¹⁹, only climate protection and the Kyoto Protocol were normally included. Comparatively good are the sectors with an obvious environmental relevance, and which were already included as "target sectors" in the Fifth EC Environmental Action Programme (Transport, industry, agriculture, energy). In all sectors, the description of specific integration requirements

¹⁹ European Council (Cardiff), 15 and 16 June 1998, Presidency Conclusions [00150/98], No. 35.

remains to be completed. It should be noted, however, that establishing environmental protection requirements cannot be achieved by the individual sectors but has to be undertaken in partnership with those responsible for environmental protection and nature conservation.

The European Biodiversity Strategy²⁰ is not part of the Cardiff Process as such but should still be taken into account in the individual Cardiff strategies. It identifies the segmentation and degradation of ecosystems through human activities as key problems for the protection of biological diversity. The underlying reasons for this are in particular but not exhaustively: intensive forms of land use by agriculture and forestry, infrastructure and urban development, mass tourism and pollution of soil, water and the air. With the exception of the strategies on agriculture and fisheries, these problems are not articulated comprehensively in the relevant sectoral strategies, such as transport or energy.

4.2 Objectives and Targets

Objectives and (more concrete) targets should be developed on the basis of a previous analysis of problems. However, with the exception of the strategy of the Transport Council, none of the Cardiff documents (reports and strategies) have been developed to be consistent in this sense. In the assessment of the sectoral results in the setting of objectives and targets in the Cardiff Process, the following points need to be considered among others:

- Environmental protection objectives and the objectives of the "other" sector (problem of inverted or "perverted" integration);
- Long-term, strategic, or abstract objectives for future policy formulation on the one hand, and short or medium-term, concrete, or quantified targets directed at the implementation of policies on the other hand;
- Absolute targets (for instance, total emissions or maximum resource consumption) which can be derived from environmental quality objectives, at least in theory, and relative targets such as percentage reduction rates which, given the dynamics of economic development, may be useful as interim targets;
- Objectives and targets relating to environmental performance, which directly describe a desired state or improvement of the environment, and operative targets, such as the adoption of directives or the introduction of economic instruments.

In assessing the results of the Cardiff Process with regards to objectives and targets, reports and strategies must be treated differently. Specific or precise targets, which can be linked to indicators and evaluations of goal attainment, can only be expected in a strategy. A report, however, needs to include at least a procedure for identifying and setting targets, for instance on the basis of a (future) Commission Communication or in

²⁰ Commission of the European Communities 1998: *Communication of the European Commission to the Council and to the Parliament on a European Community Biodiversity Strategy*. 4 February 1998.

the remit of an expert group. In many cases, policy objectives have already been set before the elaboration of the Cardiff reports and strategies, such as in the Fifth EC Environmental Action Programme or in international agreements.

Overall, the setting of objectives and targets in all the Cardiff documents is unsatisfactory in the sense that no precise, quantified targets connected to dates or deadlines have been laid down. This may in part be due to the rather political character of the Cardiff Process in the Council. Future versions of the sectoral strategies cannot be without concrete targets. For the time being, however, the assessment has to take account of the rather general and conceptual character and relative brevity of the reports and strategies. A strategy describing differentiated environmental objectives and not just political principles can, under the present circumstances, be considered to be satisfactory.

As in the previous section on environmental awareness, the comparative presentation of the objectives and targets in the individual sectors in the form of a table is followed by conclusions from the assessment.

4.2.1 Table: Comparing Objectives and Targets in the Sectors

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Transport	Strategy [11717/99]	Good tending towards satisfactory: General objectives, broad thematic approach, un-coupling of transport activities from environmental consequences (priorities on climate change, water, and air); no concrete targets (description of future measures also not quantified but rather extensive); a procedure for the setting of further objectives is sketched out.
Energy	Strategy [13773/99]	Good tending towards satisfactory: Explicit objectives are rather general principles: Priority on energy efficiency and CO ₂ reduction; an action programme is outlined for 1999 to 2002, with specific measures and deadlines; a procedure for further developing the strategy (after 2002) is sketched out.
Agriculture	Strategy [13078/99]	Satisfactory tending towards good: Explicit differentiation between general objectives and specific targets; some setting of agricultural policy objectives for environmental policy; environmental objectives are well differentiated but not quantified; targets tend to be operative in nature and not focused on environmental performance; addressing the issue of biological diversity is good.
Development	Report [13644/99]	Good: explicit objectives are merely general principle, but in substance, reference is made to the 1997 evaluation of environmental performance with (operative) targets for internal procedures, organisation development etc. as well as capacity building and mechanisms for participation in partner countries. A procedure for further developing the strategy (until 2001) is outlined; the report is already strategic in character.
Internal Market	Report [13622/99]	Flawed: Separate chapter on objectives (good), but largely setting of internal market objectives as (restrictive) conditions for environmental policy and restrictions on the choice of policy instruments (perversion of integration obligation under Article 6 ECT). Environmental objectives for internal market policy are purely operative.

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Industry	Report [13549/1/99]	Sufficient: No explicit setting of objectives, but implicitly in the substance of the report: Mention of changes in production and consumption, Integrated Product Policy, eco-efficiency, resource productivity, Kyoto targets (quantitative); partly setting of industrial policy objectives imposing restrictions on environmental policy.
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report [13054/1/00]	Flawed: Separate chapter for objectives (good), distinction between economic and environmental policy objectives; recognition but subordination of environmental objectives; largely sets out economic policy objectives as (restrictive) conditions for environmental policy (Exception: operational target of introducing energy taxation).
Fisheries	Report [9386/00]	Sufficient: Reference to environmental objectives in existing legislation and agreements; no explicit mention; welcome recognition that past (and current) policy objectives were not attained (maintaining catches, protection of marine eco-systems); mentions the habitat directive. A procedure for revising the EC fisheries policy (in 2002) is sketched out. Await strategy.

4.2.2 Assessing Objectives and Targets in the Sectors

Whilst recognising the differences in the details, it should be noted that all three strategies pass the assessment with similar results and – in view of the comments at the beginning of this section – can be classified as good or satisfactory. Among the reports, a further two fall into this category. This is encouraging particularly as the comprehensive strategies are yet to be published. On the one hand there is the development policy report, which describes an ongoing strategy process and thus achieves itself a strategic character²¹. On the other hand there is the – in some respects significantly weaker – report on the Common Fisheries Policy, which apart from targets in fishing technology also shows a solid trend towards the integration of environmental and nature conservation objectives²². Here, the Cardiff Strategy will allow a better assessment.

The reports of the Council configurations "Internal Market" and "Economic and Financial Questions" (Ecofin) are failures with respect to their content. In particular the report on internal market policy reveals a tendency to pervert the obligation under Article 6 of the EC Treaty to integrate environmental policy requirements into other policies²³. In the setting of objectives, the reports of the Ecofin and industry Councils intend to obtain restrictions on environmental policy with respect to its overall approach

²¹ Report of the Council (Development) to the European Council (Helsinki) on the Integration of Environment in the Community's Development Policies, 2 December 1999 [13644/99].

²² Report of the Council (Fisheries) to the European Council (Santa Maria da Feira) on Integrating Environmental Issues and Sustainable Development into the Common Fisheries Policy, 16 June 2000 [9386/00], e.g. No. 48.

²³ Report of the Council (Internal Market) to the Council (Helsinki) on the Integration of Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development into Internal Market Policy, 30 November 1999 [13622/99], No. 4-10.

and choice of instruments, which would reduce the effectiveness of environmental protection and nature conservation²⁴. It must be hoped that a different concept will be followed in the elaboration of the Cardiff Strategies of these sectors.

The only Cardiff documents dealing with the protection of biological diversity are those relating to agriculture and fisheries. The agriculture strategy sets objectives both directly for maintaining biological diversity and in areas with indirect consequences for bio-diversity.²⁵ The objectives (and instruments) for protecting biological diversity consist of good agricultural practice, agri-environmental measures, specific measures targeted at less-favoured areas as well as the preservation of valuable ecosystems and landscapes. It should be noted, however, that there is no indication as to how and when the general objectives are to be reached. The availability of agri-environmental measures for the protection of biological diversity remains restricted, since they are also meant to finance other environmental objectives and the total funds are relatively small.

The report on the Common Fisheries Policy recognises the failure of past approaches directed at the decline of fish catches (failure in the protection of species). It also notes the "the adverse effects of fishing on the sea bed, certain habitats and on those components of marine ecosystems which are of no direct interest for fishing"²⁶, and explicitly mentions the conservation of marine ecosystems as an option for future policy development. A further assessment of the fisheries sector will be possible once the full Cardiff Strategy is available. The other sectors did not so far refer to the protection of biological diversity and have not formulated policy objectives.

The analysis of the objectives and targets shows that those reports and strategies which adequately address the existing environmental issues are also relatively advanced in the setting of policy objectives if compared with those strategies which deal with environmental problems only superficially or not at all. This consequence of inadequate attention to the (negative) environmental impact of a sector can be seen even in the strategies with specific targets. Such targets either address environmental protection requirements only in very small segments of the strategies - as is the case for instance in relation to agricultural policy - or they remain rather general even though, as in the case of transport policy, they could be more precise. Nor, on the whole, do strategies exhibiting a low level of environmental awareness contain credible environmental integration objectives yet.

²⁴ Report of the Council (Ecofin) to the European Council (Nice) on Environment and Sustainable Development, 28 November 2000 [13054/1/00]; Report from the Council (Industry) to the European Council (Helsinki) on the Integration of Sustainable Development into European Union Industry Policy, 9 November 1999 [13549/1/99].

²⁵ Council Strategy on the Environmental Integration and Sustainable Development in the Common Agricultural Policy. - Report from the Council (Agriculture) to the European Council (Helsinki), 15 November 1999 [13078/99], No. 29-35.

²⁶ Council Report (Fisheries), 16 June 2000 [9386/00], No. 46.

4.3 Activities, Measures and Action Plans

Plans for future activities and measures and the allocation of responsibilities to the various actors are key elements of every strategy, as it could otherwise not be implemented. In this context, a distinction can be made between a) measures that can be implemented directly, and b) specific interim steps for the identification and decision on implementation measures. In the context of the European Union, directives, regulations, or the establishment of specific programmes are measures which can be implemented directly. Intermediate steps could be the delegation of further work or requests (usually directed at the Commission) to develop action plans, or the establishment of an expert group for studies and deliberations concerning specific issues.

Whilst an assessment of the environmental consequences of a sectoral policy and the establishment of (at least qualitative) policy principles and objectives should be part of any Cardiff report, the description of specific measures can sensibly be given only in the later strategies. In the evaluation of the results of the Cardiff Process, a distinction thus needs to be made between reports and strategies. A strategy can be sufficient only if it sets concrete intermediate steps and a procedure for establishing implementation measures, if possible with a time frame. A report is already sufficient if the setting of measures in the future strategy is promised (self-commitment).

It must be noted that, in general terms, there are no dates or deadlines in the reports and strategies. Exceptions are various procedures for the development of Cardiff strategies, which are tied to deadlines. In some cases, the delegation of further work is likely to lead to decisions on measures and deadlines.

4.3.1 Table: Comparing Action Plans of the Sectors

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Transport	Strategy [11717/99]	Relatively good: Extensive but general descriptions of necessary measures (without allocation to actors), broad in scope, contains specific operational measures, Commission is to elaborate a large number of documents. Member States were to submit national strategies, separate work programme for the Council; first evaluation (review) of the strategy (in 2001) with a plan for the further development of the strategy.
Energy	Strategy [13773/99]	Relatively good: Identification of areas for priority action (rather general), outline of an action programme 1999-2002 with references to ongoing programmes, which contain specific measures and time frames. Commission is invited to submit further proposals. A procedure for deciding on future steps (after 2002) is sketched out.
Agriculture	Strategy [13078/99]	Sufficient tending towards satisfactory: Largely a description of measures already decided (agenda 2000 package), part of these are detailed to some extent but motivated primarily by agricultural policy interests (direct payments to farmers linked to ecological requirements). Few new approaches, no procedure for identifying and deciding on further measures.

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Development	Report [13644/99]	Good (for a report): extensive but rather general description of measures proposed and key strategy elements (at the political level, in programme planning, and on institutional aspects); focus on environmental impact assessments and national strategies for sustainable development; reference to 1997 environmental performance evaluation, and recent legislation. A procedure for the development of a concrete strategy (involving Commission and Member States) is laid down.
Internal Market	Report [13622/99]	Sufficient (for a report): Future measures are formulated in general terms; past measures do not reflect environmental protection requirements (exception: EC eco-label). The focus is on the free movement of goods; the promotion of specific policy instruments is intended to impose conditions on environmental policy making. There is an announcement of further strategy development by Council.
Industry	Report [13549/1/99]	Sufficient (for a report): very general description of necessary measures and desired instruments, but rather differentiated; tendency towards restricting the scope for environmental policy-making. Community measures are in essence activities already under way..
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report [13054/1/00]	Flawed: Barely more than a discussion of the economic theory of potential instruments and definition of policy approaches. The integration of environmental protection requirements into the multilateral surveillance process (Art. 99 (3) ECT) is likely to be counter-productive, since only three classic, emission-oriented indicators have been included so far.
Fisheries	Report [9386/00]	Sufficient (for a report): Only measures in existing legislation are presented, which are qualified as being ineffective; there is no description of how new measures might be established in the strategy development; the implicit acceptance of marine conservation areas is good. Await the strategy.

4.3.2 Assessing Actions Plans and Allocation of Tasks

The comparative assessment of the strategies shows that the measures, particularly in the transport and energy sectors, correspond in detail to the environmental problems identified and the general objectives set. In the agricultural strategy, the measures are partly consistent with environmental problems and objectives; in particular those adopted as part of Agenda 2000²⁷. In the Cardiff strategy for energy and the report for development policy, reference can be made to programmes, regulations and activities, which identify measures and allocate responsibilities²⁸.

In all other sectors, the measures are either not specific enough or there is no allocation to responsible actors. The reports "Internal Market" and "Ecofin" lay down policy

²⁷ Concerning the measures the Strategy refers mainly to the principles of Agenda 2000 (Council Strategy (Agriculture), 15 November 1999 [13078/99], No. 47-55).

²⁸ See for example Report to the European Council on the Strategy for Integrating Environmental Aspects and Sustainable Development into Energy Policy. - Report from the Council (Energy) to the European Council (Helsinki), 3 December 1999 [13773/99], No. 13; Council Report (Development), 2 December 1999 [13644/99], Chapter 4.

guidelines or measures that are likely to work to the detriment of environmental policy²⁹.

Specific measures for maintaining biological diversity are included only in the Cardiff Strategy on agricultural policy, with the references to agri-environmental measures. No other sector has so far defined objectives in relation to bio-diversity and, as a consequence, there are to date no measures and instruments.

4.4 Development of Indicators for Environmental Policy Integration

Any strategy aiming at a continuous improvement of procedures, goal definition and goal attainment needs indicators for measuring the problem to be solved and the degree to which solutions are successful. Otherwise it would be impossible to verify strategy success or to adapt strategies to changing needs and priorities. It should thus be no surprise that – in the framework of establishing a durable process for implementing Article 6 of the EC Treaty – the European Council has underlined the importance of indicators more than once³⁰, as has the Environment Council³¹.

4.4.1 Table: Comparing Indicator Development in the Sectors

Council Configuration	Stage & Doc.	Relative Assessment
Transport	Strategy [11717/99] TERM Report of the EEA	Good tending towards very good: TERM 2000 report of the European Environmental Agency (EEA) is available (1/2000), with 31 environmental and policy indicators measuring driving forces and policy responses in particular, but also environmental pressures, the state of the environment and socio-economic impacts. Regular reporting is foreseen and the future work programme of TERM is established.
Energy	Strategy [13773/99]	Satisfactory: A first set of indicators is presented in the annex to the strategy (on emissions, energy sources and carriers, energy efficiency). The procedure for further indicator development is sketched in general terms.
Agriculture	Strategy [13078/99] COM(2000)20 26 Jan. 2000	Good: Commission Communication "Indicators for the Integration of Environmental Concerns into the CAP"; basis provided by work in the OECD, among others; includes a gap assessment and a conceptual framework for further development, and the relevant next steps are described in detail.

²⁹ Council Report (Internal Market), 30 November 1999 [13622/99], No. 16-27; Council Report (Ecofin), 28 November 2000 [13054/1/00], No. 2.

³⁰ European Council (Cardiff), 15 and 16 June 1998, Presidency Conclusion [00150/98], No.34; European Council (Wien), 11 and 12 December 1998, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/98 REV], No. 66 and 69; European Council (Helsinki), 10 and 11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/99], No. 46,47 and 49.

³¹ 2207. Council Meeting (Environment), 12 October 1999 [11654/99], No. 4,8 and 9.

Council Configuration	Stage & Doc.	Relative Assessment
Development	Report [13644/99] COM(2000)264 18 May 2000	Good tending towards satisfactory (for a report): The general Commission Communication COM(2000)264 contains an annex with indicators of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) but these are determined primarily by development policy interests. Some ideas for further development are presented but these are narrow in approach (environmental expenditure, environmental assessments).
Internal Market	Report [13622/99]	Flawed (even for a report): Reference is made to indicators from other sectors (transport, energy, agriculture, industry) which are supposed to allow an assessment of internal market policies. No specific development of sectoral indicators but the Commission is invited to report (by end 2000), but work is to be based on methods and procedures determined by internal market policy. Await strategy.
Industry	Report [13549/1/99]	Sufficient (for a report): Rather general discussion in the report but Commission launched a study for indicators on policy and environmental performance (until end 2000); no further procedures are sketched out, await strategy.
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report [13054/1/00] Ecofin Report [13217/00] EPC Report [13170/1/00] COM(2000)576 20 Sept. 2000	Good (for a report) but problematic : The Ecofin report [13217/00] on structural indicators for better structural policies (without environmental indicators) and the report of the Economic Policy Committee (EPC) on the same subject. The possible restrictions on environmental policy that can result from the multilateral surveillance process have not been addressed (risk of "perverse" integration); the Commission Communication COM(2000)576 is more innovative. A procedure for the further development of indicators is described in some detail.
Fisheries	Report [9386/00]	(Flawed) : In the report, there is no discussion of indicators and no procedures for their development. Await strategy.

Reports and strategies need to be distinguished when comparing and assessing the state of indicator development in the various sectors. Whilst problem analyses and a discussion of (general) objectives are necessary at report stage, it would be unrealistic to expect specific targets and precise indicators at the early stage of strategy development. Indicators must not be lacking, however, in a strategy, particularly in view of the repeated emphasis of their necessity in the Cardiff Process. At least a concrete and detailed procedure for further indicator development should be outlined for areas where there are no useful indicators or where data are insufficient for verifying strategy success.

In practice, indicators are often only mentioned in the reports and strategies, which are rather political in nature. Additional documents thus need to be taken into account in this assessment of the results of the Cardiff Process, as identified in the following table.

4.4.2 Assessing Indicator Development in the Individual Sectors

The comparison of the various Council strategies with respect to the treatment of indicators reveals that only the Transport Council has developed specific indicators for the integration of environmental protection requirements. Here the development is so

far advanced that a detailed work programme for the continued improvement of an already relatively good set of indicators has been laid out³². In other sectors, reference is made to existing indicators (mainly OECD or EEA sustainability indicators), and their further development is suggested. A specific problem presents itself in that existing indicators, which often measure sector-specific environmental pressures or the state of the environment, are not very useful for measuring success in tackling the origins of problems (driving forces and pressures). For instance, for the purpose of environmental protection in industry, management systems with elaborate indicator systems measure sector or industry specific progress in environmental performance. The indicators used here are, however, not suitable for assessing changes in production or consumption patterns or the success of industrial policy strategies.

In some sectors, the need for the development of new types of indicators is mentioned (e.g. internal market), and the desired function of future indicators is identified. In agricultural policy, future monitoring will require inter alia quantitative information relating to political measures, improvements in agricultural practices, increase or reduction in desirable and undesirable processes, and goal attainment. On the whole, the development of suitable indicators and the incorporation of existing and future indicator systems into the present Cardiff Strategies is still insufficient.

The development of structural indicators for better structural policies within the multilateral surveillance process by the Ecofin Council plays a rather special role³³. The results obtained so far are nowhere near what one would expect from a Cardiff Strategy for integrating environmental protection requirements into the work of this Council configuration. Nevertheless, it is attractive to think of integrating environmental concerns into the regular monitoring of macro-economic and structural developments in the Member States. In this vein, the European Commission, in a Communication³⁴, has developed a number of concepts for indicator development. These concern the application and effectiveness of economic instruments, policies and measures that cause damage to the environment, the value of the natural environment, and the measurement of environmental industries. At present, however, neither the indicators in the multilateral surveillance nor their weighting in the overall process are likely to ensure the integration of environmental protection requirements into economic policy. The procedure outlined in the Ecofin Council report is in principle a useful way to overcome the present shortcomings, but in view of the overall approach of the multilateral surveillance process, success in environmental policy integration must be in doubt.

³² European Environment Agency (EEA) 2000: *Are We Moving in the Right Direction? Indicators on Transport and Environment Integration in the EU*. Copenhagen: EEA.

³³ Report by the Economic Policy Committee of the Ecofin Council on „Structural Indicators: An Instrument for Better Structural Policies, 26. October 2000 [13170/1/00]; Report by the Council “Ecofin” to the European Council in Nice on “Structural Indicators: An Instrument for Better Structural Policies”, 27 November 2000 [13217/00].

³⁴ Commission of the European Communities 2000: *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Bringing our Needs and Responsibilities together - Integrating Environmental Issues with Economic Policy*. COM(00)576 final, 20 September 2000.

4.5 Timetables, Assessment of Goal Attainment and Strategy Revision

Strategies are the basis of processes that can be planned and controlled, and with which certain goals or objectives are to be reached. The fixing of time frames for measures to be undertaken is a necessary part of any strategy implementation process. Without time frames and deadlines, the adherence to which can be verified, a control of the functioning of a strategy would be just as impossible as its adaptation to changing circumstances. In consequence, it is right that the European Council has requested that not only indicators but also timetables be included in the Cardiff Strategies for (formally) measuring progress and goal attainment.

Overall, this area is underdeveloped in all Cardiff Reports and Strategies. As a rule, measures are identified without connection to a (future) date. Exceptions to this rule can be found mainly in relation to work delegated to the European Commission, which is in some cases linked to a (soft) deadline. Normally, these cases concern intermediate procedural steps in the (further) strategy development, with only indirect environmental effects. As was seen in the previous section, in many cases there are no suitable indicators so that there is currently no sound basis for the evaluation and adaptation of the Cardiff Strategies.

4.5.1 Table: Comparing Timetables and Planned Follow-up in the Sectors

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Transport	Strategy [11717/99]	Good tending towards very good: Many concrete work packages delegated to the Commission (some with deadlines); request to Member States to submit national strategies by the end of 2000; ongoing indicator development with a detailed work programme; self-commitment of the Council to review the strategy by the end of 2001; Further development of the strategy for 2000 to 2004 and regular reviews are announced.
Energy	Strategy [13773/99]	Good tending towards very good: Strategy contains an action programme for 1999 to 2002; references are made to programmes with timetables; request to the Commission to develop before the end of 2000 a programme for the period after 2002; ongoing indicator development; Request to the commission to report on progress every 2 years; evaluation of strategy and indicators by the council every 2 years; link to Kyoto Process. [First evaluation is planned before 6/2000.]
Agriculture	Strategy [13078/99]	Sufficient: Implementation through existing legislation (Agenda 2000 package); ongoing indicator development (even if not detailed in strategy); monitoring, reporting, and evaluation rather general (not dates or deadlines, no clear delegation of work packages, no self-commitment); overall dependency on Agenda 2007.
Development	Report [13644/99]	Satisfactory (for a report): The Cardiff Report is the follow-up to the 1997 environmental performance evaluation. Use of non-binding allocations of work packages in indicator development to the Commission and the OECD. Evaluation of strategy implementation is not yet foreseen, but a timetable is announced for the full strategy (due in 6/2001).

Council Configuration	Stage	Relative Assessment
Internal Market	Report [13622/99]	Sufficient (for a report): Rather specific in relation to indicator development; planned strategy (due in 6/2001) is to include the development of effective control mechanisms; self-commitment to further work by the Council (Internal Market) is rather general; the further development of the strategy is still vague.
Industry	Report [13549/1/99]	Sufficient (for a report): Ongoing indicator development (study report due by end 2000); planned strategy is to contain a timetable; Commission is requested to develop and action plan as a basis for developing a concrete strategy for the period to the end of 2004; general self-commitment of the Council concerning monitoring and adaptation of policies.
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report [13054/1/00]	Sufficient (for a report): Indicators and evaluation are to be integrated into the multilateral surveillance process, and no separate follow-up for the future Cardiff Strategy of the Ecofin Council is planned. There are no dates or deadlines, but these could be provided easily. Await the strategy.
Fisheries	Report [9386/00]	Satisfactory (for a report): Future Strategy (due in 6/2001) is to contain a timetable, but there is no indicator development. Implementation is through existing legislation; first evaluation of the integration process to take place with the first review of the Common fisheries Policy (CFP) in 2002, then an adaptation of the CFP to the Cardiff Strategy would be possible.

In the establishment of timetables and procedures for strategy evaluation and adaptation, a clear distinction must be made between Cardiff Reports and Strategies. Strategies must obviously contain timetables, if not for reaching specific environmental quality or performance targets, then at least for the completion of steps in a work programme or the reaching of interim objectives. In addition, a detailed procedure for evaluating and adapting strategies should be defined, with clear allocations of responsibilities and the appropriate timetables and deadlines. In a report, however, an outline of the procedure for strategy evaluation and adaptation, together with a general self-commitment (of the Council) or a general delegation of the relevant work (to the Commission) would be sufficient.

4.5.2 Assessing the Timetables and Follow-ups

In the comparative assessment of the Cardiff documents, once again the present strategies and in particular those on transport and energy policy stand out as positive examples. In both cases, there are already useful indicator systems³⁵, and there are concrete plans for the further development of the strategies. Specific work packages allocated to the European Commission have deadlines³⁶. Both strategies are currently

³⁵ See for example Council Strategy (Energy), 3 December 1999 [13773/99], Annex.

³⁶ See for example Council Strategy on the Integration of Environment and Sustainable Development into the Transport Policy. Submitted by the Council (Transport) to the European Council (Helsinki), 11 October 1999 [11717/99] No. 23; Council Strategy (Energy), 3 December 1999 [13773/99], No. 14-20.

undergoing a first review and revised strategies should be submitted before the European Council meeting in Göteborg in June 2001. Also, both strategies provide for regular reporting (every two years) on strategy implementation and reviews of the strategy itself. Thus in both sectors, the foundations for effective monitoring of integrating environmental protection requirements into other policies have been laid in substantial and procedural terms.

In the case of the agriculture strategy, the problem arises of linking the Cardiff Process to the reform cycle of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Just as the development of the agricultural strategy was overshadowed by the reform of the CAP through Agenda 2000, the strategy evaluation and adaptation will – from today's perspective – be coupled with the negotiations of Agenda 2007. In between, there are likely to be few opportunities for changing the substance of European agricultural policy.

Similar interdependencies between the Cardiff Process and a sectoral reform cycle can also be seen in the Common Fisheries Policy and development policy. In the latter case, the Cardiff Process can build on a previous reform process and the analyses conducted in that context. In both cases, as in the field of agriculture, the future procedures and rhythms of strategy adaptation are predetermined.

The reports of the other Council configurations (Internal Market, Industry, and Ecofin) can be judged to be sufficient. There is a lack of specific self-commitments and time-tables or deadlines. These might, however, be contained in the strategies expected by June 2001.

4.6 Commitment and Stabilisation of the Strategy Process

4.6.1 Legal and Political Commitment

In view of the differences in the results obtained so far, the question arises how binding the Cardiff Process is; both in respect to the process itself and to the implementation of the measures announced in the reports and strategies. In order to arrive at an answer, the following theses might be considered:

- One important consideration is that the Cardiff Process is based on a rather precise instruction given in Article 6 of the EC Treaty, namely that environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the formulation and implementation of [practically all] Community policies³⁷.
- This instruction extends not only to the specific Council configurations so far covered by the Cardiff Process but also to all Community institutions involved in the formulation of policies and the adoption of legislation ("definition"), and to Member States ("implementation"). Member States are covered because it usually falls to them to implement Community policies.

³⁷ "Environmental Protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities [...] in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development."

- In consequence, environmental protection requirements need to be taken into account in all Community policy³⁸ and law³⁹.
- The requirements of Article 6 of the EC Treaty will be valid also in future and need to be implemented on a continuous basis. Failure to do so or a reversal of the integration requirement of Article 6 of the EC Treaty might be considered a breach of Treaty obligations, although this may be difficult to prove in practice.
- The Luxembourg European Council launched the Cardiff Process and made specific reference to Article 6 ECT.⁴⁰ Its grounding in European primary law was emphasised again by the European Council in Cardiff and Vienna, each time with explicit references to the Amsterdam Treaty⁴¹. Throughout, the Cardiff Process has thus been endowed with a high level of legal and political legitimacy.
- It must be said, however, that the strategies, as they currently stand, are not in themselves legally binding. They have no basis that would be suitable for adopting European legislation⁴². But they have their high political legitimacy.
- The binding character of the Cardiff Process was reinforced repeatedly through relatively specific requirements concerning content (such as the regular exhortations by the European Council to consider – in preparing Cardiff Strategies – the Kyoto Protocol or EU enlargement. In addition, the European Council also stipulated formal requirements, such as the explicit call at its meeting in Helsinki to develop comprehensive strategies with timetables and indicators where possible⁴³.
- Furthermore, in addition to the general request to all Council configurations, nine of them were directly addressed by the European Council in Cardiff, Wien and Köln and explicitly asked to present strategies for the integration of environmental protection requirements. Politically and in terms of administrative routine, such requests are practically binding.

³⁸ E.g.: action programmes, strategies, guidelines, but as well resolutions, conclusions or declarations of the European Council or its presidency.

³⁹ In particular and regardless of the relevant legal basis in directives, regulations and decisions.

⁴⁰ European Council (Luxembourg), 12 and 13 December 1997, Presidency Conclusions [SN400/97], No. 56.

⁴¹ European Council (Cardiff), 15 and 16 June 1998, Presidency Conclusion [00150/98], No. 32; European Council (Vienna), 11 and 12 December 1998, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/98 REV], No. 66.

⁴² In future, some of them may become so, or may fold into thematic strategies within the framework of the 6th Environmental Action Programme, which would be adopted by co-decision on the basis of Article 175 (3) of the EC Treaty.

⁴³ European Council (Helsinki), 10 and 11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/99], No. 46.

- In consequence, not only must the development of strategies conforming to substantial and formal terms of reference be considered a binding obligation, but also their subsequent implementation, evaluation and follow-up (revision)⁴⁴.
- In parallel to the obligations established by the European Council, many Council configurations have made self-committing pledges in their Cardiff reports and strategies. Usually these refer to further deliberations – often on the basis of reports or Communications requested from the Commission – future decisions, evaluations of indicators or strategy implementation, and strategy revision. In political as well as in administrative terms, these self-commitments will provide considerable momentum for carrying the Cardiff Process forward for years to come.
- In future, those to whom they were allocated must implement many of the strategy elements. This applies above all to the work packages delegated to the European Commission. However, there are considerable differences among the Council configurations concerned, and the progress may come to a halt in some configuration unless additional stimuli are given.
- At present, however, some of the strategies already use legally binding instruments or programmes complete with budgets.

Each one of these theses may invite objections. In summary, however, the Cardiff Process can be characterised as binding and committing. Legally, the binding nature is rather weak, but the political commitment is strong. There was a clearly expressed will at the start, which was reinforced at various levels throughout the whole process. Of significant importance are the various self-commitments of the Council configurations to further refine or revise the strategies, and the work packages delegated to the European Commission or specific working groups. Herein, and in the differentiation of the process, which has spawned a number of auxiliary procedures such as indicator work or the development of action plans lies a considerable dynamism. This can and should in future be channelled by way of creating focussed structures and continuous procedures for policy formulation and implementation, for dialogue, evaluation and policy re-orientation.

4.6.2 Continuity and Institutionalisation

Continuity of the underlying processes for information exchange and dialogue is a key condition for the successful implementation of strategies for the integration of environmental protection requirements into other policies. Continuity can be achieved mainly through two means:

⁴⁴ European Council (Helsinki), 10 and 11 December 1999, Presidency Conclusions [00300/1/99] No. 47: „The completion of sectoral strategies should be followed by their immediate implementation. Regular evaluation, follow-up and monitoring must be undertaken so that the strategies can be adjusted and deepened. The commission and the Council are urged to develop adequate instruments and applicable data for these purposes”.

- new administrative procedures for information and consensus-building, or fora and institutions can be created with the primary objective of promoting environmental policy integration;
- Allocating to them new tasks in environmental integration can use existing institutions, procedures, or structures. Such tasks then normally receive a low priority, however.

The institutional strengthening of environmental policy integration is most advanced in the area of transport policy, with the establishment of the Joint Expert Group on Transport and Environment, where representatives of the Member States' ministries of transport and of environment co-operate. A tendency of institutional capacity building can also be observed in the area of energy policy, particularly because of the international obligations for the reduction of greenhouse gases and the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP).

Apart from these examples, there are no reflections about providing institutional continuity in the Cardiff Strategies. In some cases, such as in the development policy, the assumption is that existing structures and procedures are sufficient. There must be doubts, however, when a working group contains no or only a few environmental experts. In the report on development policy, the problem of the lack of capacities (expertise) within the Directorate-General is recognised explicitly.

The proposal of the Ecofin Council, to integrate the monitoring of progress towards environmental policy objectives into the multilateral surveillance of macro-economic and structural development, clearly falls into the second category. In such cases, success can be expected only if the existing institutions and procedures are open enough to accept and integrate new objectives and tasks. In addition, there must be willingness to give environmental concerns the same weight and rank as economic and social objectives and to accept the environmental integration obligation established in Article 6 of the EC Treaty, including the integration requirements established by environmental policies. In the case in question, these preconditions are apparently not fulfilled.

The Cardiff Process itself initiated the building of capacities for environmental integration policy in the Council, primarily within each sectoral Council configuration. This process of institutionalisation was only partly successful. The General Affairs Council has not yet been able to develop its thinking and deliberations into a report or strategy for submission to the European Council. In many cases, Council work is largely driven by the current presidency with little lasting effect in the Council structure. In other cases, environmental integration policy found its institutional basis not in the Council but in the European Commission. The Council configurations effectively rely on the work provided by the Commission services.

No capacities have to date been built that cut across the Council configurations, apart from the repeated attention to the issues in the meetings of the European Council and various general or cross-configurational papers, reports and Communications from the Commission.

5 Synthesis, Overall Assessment and Conclusions

5.1 Synthesis of Results

Before addressing the critical points of the current results of the Cardiff Process for the integration of environmental protection requirements into the definition and implementation of other policies of the EU, it should be acknowledged that starting the process is in itself a great achievement. In spite of all the qualifications that need be made, it should be noted with satisfaction that various Council configurations have begun the process of addressing the environmental consequences of their policies and decisions, and can now address their respective role in the avoidance or solution of environmental problems. Therefore, the Cardiff Process is an important element in giving effect to Article 6 of the EC Treaty.

On the negative side, it has to be said that the Council configurations have not so far been able to develop "comprehensive" strategies in the true sense of the word. In some cases, the task of developing a strategy was begun without first analysing and assessing the environmental impact of the sectoral policy. Thus, an opportunity was missed for questioning the current policy approaches and developing a future-oriented vision for the individual Councils. Instead, some of the reports and strategies provide little more than a description of past policies, extant legislation, and new initiatives already "in the pipeline".

5.1.1 Differences Among the Cardiff Strategies and Reports

There is great variation in the results achieved and the documents submitted. Some Council configurations, above all those for transport and energy, have provided a useful basis for further activities. Others have either produced results that are inadequate (e.g. Internal Market) or none at all (General Affairs). The main differences can be summarised as follows:

- (Complete) coverage and scope of issues in the description of the relevant environmental problems and their causes as well as in the consideration of all environmental consequences and current trends;
- Existence, orientation and ambition of the objectives formulated for improving environmental performance or as interim targets for improving the basis for decision-making in environmental integration;
- Level of detail in the measures and their orientation to solving problems previously identified, including the allocation of responsibilities and the setting of deadlines;
- Degree of strategy development, in the sense of establishing a durable system for the management of issues, policy networks and environmental integration processes, combined with regular evaluation of goal attainment and possibilities for a dynamic adaptation of strategies in response to changing challenges and priorities;
- Providing continuity and institutionalising the Cardiff Process within each policy sector.

To a great extent but not completely, these differences are caused by the fact that the individual Council configurations started the elaboration of Cardiff Reports and Strategies at different points in time. The apparent inability or unwillingness of some Council configurations to recognise the full range of (negative) environmental consequences of their policies and decisions, and the tendency only to address specific problems with obvious solutions, raise concern about the likely success of environmental policy integration in the European Union. The suspicion must be that problems with simple and obvious remedies are highlighted in order to distract from the importance of other issues where a solution might entail a re-orientation of sectoral policies.

The frequent lack of necessary strategy components⁴⁵ in all Cardiff Strategies (including transport) is worrying. In cases where there are no strategies yet, the precursor documents point towards an incomplete treatment of the (informal) terms of reference of the Council.

In the previous table, individual strategy elements contained in the Cardiff Reports and Strategies were evaluated and the assessment justified. These assessments are structured and summarised in the following table. As in the individual tables, the individual grades range from "very good" to "flawed" and in this way the differences among the various Council configurations become transparent.

The overall assessment reveals that the Council configurations, which have developed full strategies, fare significantly better than those, which have so far submitted only reports. This raises the question of the quality of the Strategies which will eventually be produced. The experience with the first group of Council configurations gives hope that the strategies will be a significant improvement over the reports.

⁴⁵ Environmental issues, trends and extant policy approaches; objectives and targets; activities, measures and action plans; timetables, assessment of goal attainment and strategy revision.

5.1.2 Table: Overall Assessment in a Systematic Overview

Council Configuration	Stage	Criterion	Assessment
Transport	Strategy	Overall assessment	Good
	[11717/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Good tending towards satisfactory Good tending towards satisfactory Relatively good Good tending towards very good Good tending towards very good
Energy	Strategy	Overall assessment	Good tending towards satisfactory
	[13773/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Satisfactory tending towards good Good tending towards satisfactory Relatively good Satisfactory Good tending towards very good
Agriculture	Strategy	Overall assessment	Satisfactory
	[13078/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Satisfactory Satisfactory tending towards good Sufficient tending towards satisfactory Good Sufficient
Development	Report	Overall assessment	Good tending towards satisfactory
	[13644/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Satisfactory tending towards good Good Good Good tending towards satisfactory Satisfactory
Internal Market	Report	Overall assessment	Flawed
	[13622/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Flawed Flawed Sufficient Flawed Sufficient
Industry	Report	Overall assessment	Sufficient
	[13549/1/99]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Satisfactory Sufficient Sufficient Sufficient Sufficient
General Affairs	—	<i>To date, there is neither a strategy nor a report.</i>	
Economic & Financial Questions (Ecofin)	Report	Overall assessment	Flawed tending towards sufficient
	[13054/1/00]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Flawed Flawed Flawed Good (but problematical) Sufficient
Fisheries	Report	Overall assessment	Sufficient
	[9386/00]	Environmental awareness Objectives and targets Measures and action plans Indicator development Time-frames & follow-ups	Satisfactory Sufficient Sufficient Flawed Satisfactory

5.2 Analysis of the Process: Summary of Results

The Cardiff Process began originally as a pure Council process, as the Council – the institution as a whole as well as the individual configurations – was asked by the European Council to develop and submit reports and strategies for integrating environmental policy requirements into their respective sectoral policy. Nevertheless, the European Commission was motivated from the beginning to contribute to the process. It provided papers and reports with cross-sectoral or cross-configurational overviews and addressed the overarching issue of indicators. Many of the relevant Directorates-General of the Commission also published Communications on specific sectors or policy areas. In general terms, the Commission appeared to be more open to the concept of environmental integration than the Council. In the whole, but with some exceptions, the Commission led in relation to the substantive development of the individual Strategies, and the Council was more hesitant.

Any leading role of the Council depends to a large extent on the agenda setting and background work of each presidency. It can be seen that some of the presidencies actively supported the Cardiff Process and made important contributions within or through the Council. Often this work took place in the background. At the same time, it needs to be recognised that progress in the Cardiff Process and its visibility in the European Council – and above all in the Presidency Conclusions – suffer if the presidency is not actively engaged in the process. The Council itself does not at this stage have adequate structures and procedures for ensuring that environmental concerns are integrated into all policies.

A number of factors appear to facilitate or accelerate the development of environmental integration strategies, such as ongoing reform processes (agriculture, development); policy crises (fisheries, transport, agriculture); and international negotiations (climate, energy).

At the same time, the dynamism of ongoing reforms can impose paths, trends and rhythms which can accelerate the development of Cardiff Strategies but can also narrow their scope (agriculture with Agenda 2000 and the future Agenda 2007; development policy with the 1997 environmental performance evaluation). The procedures and results of the formal strategy development vary significantly, with the "first group" of Council configurations being ahead with a gap that none of the later groups managed to close.

The development of indicators can benefit from work undertaken in various contexts, such as the OECD (agriculture, development) or the European Environmental Agency (transport). Also in this context, however, the work of other organisations can be a hindrance. One example here is the work of the OECD, which did not and does not aim at environmental integration and has thus resulted in few suitable indicators.

The co-operation between the Directorate-General Environment and the ministries of environment in the Member States on the one hand and the Directorates-General and the sectoral ministries on the other hand was specific for each sector and changed over time. It deteriorated in several areas after the European Council in Wien, without

apparent reason. One contributing factor was probably the destabilisation of internal structures and hierarchies caused by structural changes in the organisations.

Recently, the variety of approaches for developing sectoral and cross-sectoral indicators has increased to the extent that this may lead to inconsistent results. An exchange of information and co-ordination across Council configurations and policy sectors appears to be needed. In principle, the idea of integrating many environmental indicators into the monitoring of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines and the multilateral surveillance process on macro-economic and structural development (Lisbon Process) of the Ecofin Council is attractive. This would be sensible if the weight of environmental indicators were the same as for economic or social indicators, as this would be a first step towards an environmentally sustainable economic and social development. However, separate and dedicated indicator systems would be needed for environmental policy and environmental integration even then.

The future sustainable development strategy of the European Union might give additional impetus and orientation, on condition that it contains or refers to concrete environmental protection requirements and incorporates the obligation established by Article 6 of the EC Treaty to integrate environmental concerns into other policies.

5.3 Conclusions and Future Challenges

From an environmental perspective and in view of the often insufficient results achieved by various Council configurations so far, a significant throwback or even failure of the Cardiff Process cannot be excluded. A judgement on this issue should await the outcome of the European Council in Göteborg in June 2001. However, even if the results are unacceptable so far, the conclusion should not be to stop the Cardiff Process, which would in any case be impossible given the dynamism already developed in the process. Instead, the lessons learned so far should be used to adapt and improve the Cardiff Process. The following should be among the aims:

- The strategy development processes in the individual Council configurations should be improved, accelerated and better oriented towards the actual requirements of environmental protection, nature conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources;
- The less successful Council configurations should be enabled to close the gap to the leaders in the field (primarily transport and energy, but also agriculture and – on condition that a strategy is submitted – development policy);
- At the same time, a slowing down of the work in the advanced Council configurations should be avoided, in order to maintain the role of transport and energy as models for the development of structures and procedures;
- Cross-sectoral and overarching issues and problems should be better addressed. This includes specific areas of environmental policy, where measures must be co-ordinated across Council configurations (e.g. climate protection, resource management), and other issues that cannot be easily integrated into the existing structure of the Council (e.g. enlargement, subsidies);

- The level of precision (detail) and the ease of implementation of the individual Cardiff Strategies as well as the mechanisms for verifying goal attainment should be improved;
- The Strategies themselves, as the informal structure of the Council – even if it were adhered to – is not sufficiently developed to ensure the internal consistency and future adaptability of the Cardiff Strategies;
- In future, the development of the process should be de-coupled from the rotating presidencies, in order to improve its continuity.

In the short term, the Council configurations which were involved in the Cardiff Process should be encouraged to improve primarily the analysis of the environmental consequences of their policies and decisions (see section 6 "Options and Suggestions"). The strategies should be refined and completed with respect to the informal terms of reference of the Council, even if some gaps are unavoidable in some cases.

In the light of the analysis and assessment of the results of the Cardiff Process obtained so far, a number of shortcomings must be noted which will significantly hinder further strategy development:

- There are no concrete and binding "minimum requirements" relating to:
 - The procedures for developing the Cardiff Strategies, ensuring for instance that the relevant requirements of environmental protection, nature conservation and sustainable resource management are taken into account;
 - The definition of specific objectives and targets within the Strategies, linked to the identification of measures and allocation of responsibility and, wherever possible, implementation deadlines;
 - The development of procedures for verifying goal attainment and strategy revision, which would at the same time ensure the firm establishment of the Cardiff Process within the responsible institutions;
- There is currently no analysis of "best practices", which would however be difficult to conduct on the basis of the present Cardiff documents which are, on the whole, still disappointing. ("Best in class" would be the Cardiff Strategy for transport, but even this document does not correspond to the present environmental requirements addressed to the sector and certainly does not reach the standards achieved for instance in environmental management systems in industry.) As a result, no practicable instruction or working guidelines exist which could facilitate the elaboration of Cardiff Strategies;
- Also, criteria and procedures for monitoring the success of strategy implementation, which would need to be included in the strategies themselves, are often not available. (Often the indicators are not suitable for measure progress in relation to the problems identified.) The same applies to indicators for measuring and comparing the degree of environmental policy integration across sectors.

These gaps can probably not be filled within the framework of short-term strategy development and need to be addressed also in the medium and longer term.

6 Options and Suggestions

The Cardiff Process is first and foremost a process within the Council of Ministers at the European level. Consequently, most measures for its improvement must be carried out within that context. The Member States, however, are also involved, as they are the ones co-operating in the Council. They also have to implement many measures of the Cardiff Strategies, either through the application of Community law or by way of political strategies designed to support the Cardiff Strategies and the implementation of Article 6 of the EC Treaty.

6.1 Process Continuity and Improvement of Existing Strategies

As mentioned above, the Council configurations which have been active so far – including the General Affairs Council – should be encouraged to bring their work to an interim conclusion. This would merely be a continuation of the present activities and should not be controversial. Much more important then, is the question of how to provide continuity for and an improvement of the Cardiff Process after the European Council in Göteborg in June 2001.

In order to ensure that current activities are continued, all Council configurations currently engaged should be asked to complete the documents submitted so far. For this, detailed and precise terms of reference should be developed on the basis of the current (informal) structure. The terms of reference should be validated and legitimised by their adoption by the European Council. The main objective of this exercise is to ensure a minimum of internal consistency of the Cardiff Strategies, and the following questions should be addressed in detail:

- Have all environmental protection requirements been considered? A comprehensive analysis of problems and requirements of environmental protection and nature conservation is a fundamental component of any sectoral strategy development. All these can only be achieved in co-operation with those responsible for environmental policy.
- Which effects impacting on a sector are caused by other sectors? And what are the effects on other sectors? In addition to the environmental analysis, the effects of any relevant sector or policy area on other policy areas must be investigated, in order to identify cases where one area acts as an "external" factor or "driving force" on another⁴⁶.
- Have all significant environmental pressures been considered? A problem analysis can be regarded as completed (for the time being) when all pressures raised from

⁴⁶ The Cardiff strategy on transport can serve as an example in this context. In this strategy a number of external factors are identified (taxes, charges and subsidies; organisation of industrial production and services; tourism, general consumption and lifestyle patterns and land use planning). Most of these factors cannot be influenced directly by transport policy. Therefore, it seems important to create links to other policy areas and to formulate more extensive requirements.

the environmental perspective have been included. Can the links between internal and external factors on the one hand and the environmental pressures and effects on the present or expected state of the environment on the other hand be explained?

- Have the social and economic costs of environmental pressures, degradations, and the level and character of risks caused by the sector been estimated with some certainty, at least qualitatively?
- Have all relevant policy approaches been taken into account, including those aimed at environmental protection and those motivated by other (sectoral) interests, which may also have side effects on the environment?
- Have all the problems identified been addressed consistently in the strategy and with a view to implementing solutions? For all problems or issues, adequate objectives and realistic targets (including interim targets) should be formulated, measures proposed and combined with deadlines and allocations of responsibilities for action. This should include monitoring, follow-up, and strategy revision where necessary.
- Which indicators and criteria are available for addressing the problems and measuring goal attainment, and – if still lacking – how can suitable indicators be developed?

In principle, the foundations for an external evaluation of the Cardiff Strategies and their implementation should be laid. For the assessment of strategy results on the basis of indicators, the existing structures of the European Environment Agency can be used. Its work in the field of transport and environment for instance, can provide a model for other policy fields. Other organisations, such as the OECD or Eurostat may also be suitable. For the verification of operational functioning and political effectiveness, a formalised system of peer reviews by experts from the Member States is an option.⁴⁷ This would require the establishment of a central unit – in the sense of a secretariat or focal point – for co-ordinating the necessary work and logistical support.

6.2 Improving Dialogue Among Sectors and Council Configurations

Direct dialogue among those responsible for environmental protection, nature conservation and the management of natural resources in the "environmental policy community" and those in other policy sectors must be part of the Cardiff Process. Judging from the results obtained so far, this dialogue has not been effective in the past. This shortcoming appears to be caused both by the lack of will with regards to co-operation and a lack of resources, specifically on the environmental side. Such dialogue can be organised through joint committees, Joint Council meetings etc., as was seen in the case of the Cardiff Strategy on transport.

⁴⁷ Structures and procedures can partly be borrowed from the Environmental Performance Reviews of the OECD.

In general, the individual Council configurations are evidently not able to understand, and include in their deliberations, the environmental protection requirements even if these are established in international agreements or are contained in Commission Communications. Given this diagnosis, the relevant requirements must be formally laid down by those responsible for environmental policy. In practice, this would mean that the Directorate-General of the European Commission and the ministries and authorities in the Member States formulate their expectations and submit them – directly or via the European Council – to the other Council configurations for incorporation into their strategies and policies. The Council conclusions "Sustainable Development and Integration of Environmental Concerns" of October 1999 are a step in the right direction but are still rather general⁴⁸.

6.3 Horizontal Strategies for Cross-Configurational Issues

The measures for the further development and improvement of the Cardiff Process described so far are designed to provide more continuity and depth to the process as it was originally conceived. However, because of the sectoral approach taken, a number of salient environmental issues could not be dealt with so far, or at least not sufficiently. In the field of environmental policy in its traditional sense, the following examples provide an illustration:

- Climate protection, which requires co-ordinated measures in areas such as energy, transport, construction and housing, urban development and regional planning, agriculture and forestry, and soil protection. All Council configurations were asked to pay attention specifically to the needs of climate protection and the obligations of the Kyoto Protocol. However, an overarching co-ordination of the relevant integration measures has not yet been attempted.
- Biological diversity, needing measures in areas such as commercial and trade policy, development policy, agriculture and forestry, fisheries, energy policy and resource management, transport, urban development and regional planning as well as health policy. The European Biodiversity Strategy contains explicit demands and requirements, which ought to be taken into account in the Cardiff Process.
- Resource management and consumption, which is closely linked to water management and policy and – through the need to make use of product-related measures – to internal market and trade policies. In addition, measures are required in the fields of energy, industry, construction and housing, and transport.

Apart from such "classic" areas of environmental policy, there are other cross-cutting issues with high relevance for environmental protection which cannot be addressed in the current sectoral structure of the Council (and thus the Cardiff Process so far). They require problem-oriented approaches involving several Council configurations in the development of "cross-configurational" strategies and policies for integrating environmental protection requirements. Examples are:

⁴⁸ 2207. Council Meeting (Environment), 12 October 1999 [11654/99].

- Enlargement of the European Union by the accession of countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. This will have effects on the environmental policies of the current and future Member States in addition to its impact on the ability of the European Union as a whole to pursue effective environmental policies. Enlargement results in specific challenges for the environmental integration policies of the Community and the individual countries which should be addressed by the Council as a whole.
- Subsidies for the Community, Member States or other countries with negative environmental effects. This issue has been addressed in the Commission Communication on "Bringing our needs and responsibilities together - Integrating environmental issues with economic policy"⁴⁹, which can be seen as a result of the Cardiff Process in the Ecofin Council. It now needs to be taken forward across Council configurations with the participation of those responsible for environmental policy.

Horizontal Cardiff Strategies should be developed for these and other possible problem areas, each with the involvement of the most relevant Council configurations and Directorates-General of the European Commission. Another option would be the elaboration of "Thematic Strategies" within the framework of the future Sixth EC Environmental Action Programme.

6.4 Implementing Environmental Integration in the Member States

Within the Framework of the Cardiff Process, an initiative should furthermore be taken to promote the implementation of the various sectoral Cardiff Strategies in the Member States, and for the development of national processes for environmental integration. There is already some experience of this in various Member States, which could provide a foundation for future activities. Such a process is in principle necessary in order to respond to the obligation of Article 6 of the EC Treaty, which requires that environmental protection requirements be integrated not only in the definition of Community policies but also in their implementation. Normally, Community policies are not implemented directly by European authorities but rather through the legislation and administration of the Member States. The following would be among the objectives of a process for implementing environmental integration in the Member States:

- To encourage and support the establishment of national processes mirroring the Cardiff Process;
- To help build a harmonised reporting mechanism and other instruments for information exchange responding to mutual needs, and thus
- facilitate comparative assessments (peer reviews) and on that basis

⁴⁹ Commission of the European Communities 2000: *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Bringing our Needs and Responsibilities together - Integrating Environmental Issues with Economic Policy*. COM(00)576 final, 20 September 2000.

- promote a process of trans-national policy learning and the development of networks of experts;
- To create a continuous and stable process at the European level and thereby
- stabilise environmental integration policies in the Member States and other countries.

For this part of the Cardiff Process alone, a co-ordination network should be created consisting of the Directorate-General Environment of the European Commission, the European Environment Agency, the environment ministries of the Member States and the relevant advisory bodies (Environment Forum, European Network of Advisory Councils). This could build upon existing structures and networks, primarily on the Environmental Policy Review Group (EPRG) and the co-operation among the EU Co-ordinators of the Member States' ministries of environment. This network should also establish or strengthen the necessary links between the European and the national levels (see previous section).

This part of the Cardiff Process should be open to participation by future Member States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. Essentially, it needs to be established at the European level but with the purpose of supporting the Member States in their activities.

In order to generally improve the ability of the Member States to implement the Cardiff Strategies for integrating environmental protection requirements into other policies, the environment ministries and authorities need to develop the capacity to analyse and evaluate the environmental consequences of policies and measures in other sectors. For this, they should be able to obtain the necessary data and information, collect the empirical evidence and conduct prospective assessments. Even Member States with advanced environmental policies often do not have the capacities required.

6.5 Institutional Capacity and Co-ordination: "Article 6 Committee"

The future development of the Cardiff Process presents yet further challenges for the close co-operation among representatives of the European institutions and the Member States across sectors and frontiers. It should be a primary objective for the future to develop working structures for environmental integration at the European level, primarily in the Council but also in the Commission.

The individual Cardiff Strategies – whether they are sectoral or cross-configurational – and other relevant processes for the development of strategies and policy objectives in the European Union need to be made consistent with one another, and with the underlying environmental protection requirements. In particular:

- The Cardiff Strategies need to be consistent with multilateral environmental agreements and Community programmes and strategies for the protection of the environment, nature conservation and resource management, etc.;
- The sectoral Cardiff Strategies need to be consistent with one another; as must
- The sectoral Strategies and any cross-configurational strategies (described above);

In order to realise this co-ordination and to guarantee the comprehensive treatment of environmental requirements in the individual strategies, a suitable form of institutional support is necessary.

In a nutshell, a new committee should be created within the Council, supported by the General Secretariat of the Council (Focal Point), which brings together representatives from the heads of state and government, and representatives from the environment ministries of the Member States. This composition is designed to ensure that competence in the inter-departmental or inter-ministerial co-ordination in government is coupled with the essential knowledge of environmental concerns. Representatives from the European Commission (General Secretariat and Directorate-General Environment) and the European Environment Agency should be involved. The task of the Committee should be to:

- ensure the fulfilment of the obligations established by Article 6 of the EC Treaty (hence "Article 6 Committee");
- observe and assess all relevant measures and activities of the Community and the Member States, and to report and give advice where appropriate;
- establish best practice, give guidance and eventually lay down minimum requirements for integration processes and policies, reports and strategies etc.;
- initiate evaluations and studies in that context, receive reports and invite statements from interested parties;
- report regularly to the European Council, possible via a Council – the General Affairs Council with its responsibility for horizontal and institutional issues or the Environmental Council⁵⁰;
- promote the exchange of information and experience among the Member States and other countries, as well as among Council configurations;
- document experience and publish (or publicise) reports on environmental policy integration;
- serve as a forum for general or strategic questions of environmental protection and nature conservation as well as the integration of environmental protection requirements into other policies.

In addition, the Article 6 Committee would provide continuity for further activities relating to individual Cardiff Strategies and the Cardiff Process as a whole. It should provide some independence from short-term changes in political priorities and the agenda-setting of individual presidencies. For this reason, separating the presidency of the Article 6 Committee from the Council Presidency and rotating the chair of the Committee every two years or so should be considered.

⁵⁰ Such a report to the European Council could provide a political assessment, in order to make it possible for the Council (General Affairs or Environment) to react on reports published by third parties. In this context summary indicator reports delivered by the EEA or the Ecofin Council in the context of the multilateral surveillance of macroeconomic and structural policies (Lisbon-Process) may be relevant, for instance.