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### **Coalition 2030 Calls on Irish Government to Make Sustainable Development the Overarching Priority of the EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024**

The **EU Strategic Agenda 2019-2024** will be finalised by EU leaders Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron, Theresa May, Alexis Tsipris, Viktor Orban, Mark Rutte, Donald Rutte, Donald Tusk (presiding) and Jean-Claude Juncker in Brussels at the **20<sup>th</sup> – 21st June European Council Summit** and sets out the overarching priorities guiding the work of the EU over the next five years. Given the economic and environmental challenges that Ireland faces, the delivery and implementation of robust policies that accelerate sustainable development through the framework of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) are essential.

**Coalition 2030** is an alliance of over 60 civil society organisations (CSOs) - a dynamic collaboration between a consortium of experts and advocacy groups working at every level of society and with Government to ensure that Ireland delivers on its SDGs commitments and achieves its SDGs targets by 2030.

Governments and organisations around the world have signed up to the UN's **Agenda 2030**, the landmark multi-lateral agreement that sets the course for sustainable development across the world leading up to 2030 and recognise **the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** as the overarching framework to uphold a universal agenda based on human rights, environmental and economic sustainability and the radical mitigation of climate change.

Urgent action is needed to address escalating inequalities and tackle the climate crisis, stop the rapid loss of biodiversity, ensure sustainable consumption and production and quality employment for all, and manage a just transition towards an economic system founded on wellbeing and quality of life.

Given that Ireland co-facilitated negotiations for the development of the SDGs in collaboration with Kenya, it is a matter of the most **urgent priority** for the Irish Government to set a strong example in implementing each one of the SDGs, in line with the guiding principle to **'leave no-one behind'**.

**Coalition 2030** and its 60+ member organisations (numbering over two million people by affiliation), has joined with 30 private, public and civil society platforms representing millions of EU residents in support of a European-wide **call for sustainable development to become the EU's and Ireland's number one political priority**, to ensure the effective implementation of the SDGs and to support the Irish Government's compliance with its responsibilities as a signatory to the SDGs Agenda 2030.

To bring about real and lasting change, sustainable development **must be the at the heart of all EU and Irish policy**. Coalition 2030 calls upon the Irish Government to take the lead in making sustainable development the **overarching objective of the European Union’s priorities, both inside and outside Europe, and to deliver the commitments outlined in Ireland’s National Implementation Plan**.

We must begin to realise the enormous opportunities for our economy as a mechanism that promotes inclusive, sustainable, just and prosperous societies that meet the needs of all, within the boundaries of our planet’s precious resources and the limits of its life-giving ecosystems. To do this, we must change our current way of thinking that treats natural and human capital merely as the means to create a continuous cycle of never-ending economic growth and competitiveness.

Ireland’s **SDGs National Implementation Plan (NIP) 2018-2020** was written in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implementing the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. The Plan provides an **'SDG Matrix'** whereby an SDG representative has been assigned within each of the 17 government departments responsible for each of the 169 targets. The Plan also includes an **'SDG Policy Map'** indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets and sets out 19 specific actions to implement over the duration of the Plan. The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation:

1. **Awareness:** raise public awareness of the SDGs
2. **Participation:** provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals
3. **Support:** encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation
4. **Policy alignment:** develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence

As confirmed by poll after poll in the most recent elections, Irish citizens have sent a message loud and clear to the governments across Europe and in Ireland to deliver social and environmental justice. Scientists, business leaders, students, academia, schoolchildren and civil society in cities, towns and villages in rural areas have all made the case for a new direction for Ireland.

The will for action among citizens and stakeholders is strong and political will is necessary to drive this agenda forward. As European, national, regional and international organisations working on very diverse social, environmental, economic, governance and international issues, together representing tens of millions of people in Europe, **Coalition 2030** calls upon all political leaders to **“Make sustainable development the overarching priority of the Strategic Agenda 2019-2024”** and lead the way towards a stronger future for Ireland that prioritises the wellbeing of people and planet.

