



## Sustainable development in finland

**Kaustubh Jindal, Dr. Piyanka Raheja, Anuradha Pant**

Student Researcher, Department of Economics, GD Goenka Public School, New Delhi, India

### Abstract

The research paper provides an overview of the sustainable development system in Finland. It gives a brief introduction about the history of the Finnish model and what changes were brought into it over the past years. The technicalities and division of work involved in this system are also specified in a detailed manner. The individual and joint contribution of the Finnish government and the UN has also been analysed, on the basis of which, segregation between the positive and negative part of the model has been made. The paper also focusses on specific Sustainable Development Goals which have not been achieved and graphically represents the contribution of the country in solving the same. Further, a comparison is made between the Finnish Model and the Indian Model of sustainable development, which reveals various similarities and differences. On the basis of this comparison, each of these countries is advised to take inspiration from each other and bring positive changes in their model.

**Keywords:** sustainable development, sustainable development goals (SDG), nature, sustainability, sustainable development model

### Introduction

Humans are seen as the most advanced species in existence. Ironically, this title was bestowed on them by themselves. They boast that their evolution from homo sapiens was a result of their own efforts. However, they overlook the role that nature played in this evolutionary cycle. Nature has been assisting humans for an indefinite period of time and will continue to do so. The "smartest species" will cease to develop without the existence of nature. But they have the decency to ignore the central role of nature and to continue to undermine it while over-exploiting its resources in order to satisfy their eternal greed.

This scenario calls for the need for Sustainable development. It has been regarded as the best way of human resource development, while simultaneously focusing on nature's plight and saving for future generations. Understanding what sustainable development is by itself will not help bring about global change, but its implementation and execution would. The UN General Assembly, composed of 193 countries worldwide, has decided to reach 17 sustainable development goals by 2030. As of now, Finland- world's happiest country, excels at this task and occupies the first rank in terms of performance.

### Literature Review

Mari Hjelt, Sanna Ahvenharju, Mikko Halonen and Mikki Syrjaen (28 Nov 2005)

In the research paper, the respective authors describe the Finnish system of sustainable development in a detailed manner. They have precisely mentioned how the system was divided into 2 stages, what all steps were followed under these stages and how policies were implemented in different sectors. Further, they mention the challenges that the country can face and advice whether it is necessary to give importance to some of these issues. They have specified the fields where the country lacks in, like design and innovation. The research paper is written with the perspective of the current scenario as well as in terms of future growth.

### Ulla Rosentrom, Simo Kyllonen (August 2007)

The research paper provides an insight into Finland's Sustainable development model during 1998-2002, judging it with a criteria which measures fairness, competence and social learning. The authors also talk about participation of specific interest groups in spreading sustainable development and adjustments required in various fields, all of this while looking at it through the lens of democracy.

### Matias Laine (December 2005)

The research paper explains the definition of sustainable development as provided by various Finnish Corporate companies in their public disclosures. Through this paper, the author also provides advice related to sustainable development to several of these Finnish Companies

### Objectives

- To understand and get an insight into the Finnish system of Sustainable Development
- To understand about the factors that led Finland to become the top country in terms of Sustainable development
- To analyse the positive and beneficial part as well as the negative and controversial part of the system in achieving and promoting sustainable development
- To suggest changes in the existing system and predict performance in future
- To analyse similarities and differences with respect to the sustainable development model in India

### Research Methodology

- **Data:** The data collected is secondary data as the paper is based on pre-collected data from various sources like internet websites, official reports and other published research papers.
- **Time Period:** The data was collected within the time period of 2004-2022.

- **Research Tools:** The data was analysed and measured using tools like mean, median and mode.
- **Type of Analysis:** Descriptive and Predictive analysis has been followed throughout the paper.

**History of sustainable development in Finland**

Throughout the 1990s, the world was going through a number of difficult situations. An economic recession prevailed over the western world. India too faced the problem of Balance of Payment Crisis. Gulf war was in the limelight, known for creating both economical as well as ecological problems. While the world was in turmoil, few countries like Finland, decided to take efficient and effective actions. The country decided to use the means of sustainable development in order to correct the errors of the world and safeguard its future.

In December 2013, 6 years after the global recession, Finland adopted a programme entitled- The Finland we want by 2050. On 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Agenda 2030 was introduced by the UN in New York. In order to keep up with their promise of following this initiative, some changes were made in the Finnish programme in April 2016.

**The Finnish system of sustainable development**

The 1992 Rio de Janeiro heavily focused on three elements that contribute towards sustainable development- economic well-being, social equality and environment in it’s best state. Finland took notice of these crucial elements and has made them the base of its programme.

The country has also made division of work at different levels of the government in order to work the things out efficiently and effectively. The responsibility of designing the plan and implementing it has been assigned to The Prime Minister’s Office. The members from The Prime Minister’s Office, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The National Commission On Sustainable Development contribute to a body known as the Secretariat General, whose main focus is on operating and executing functions. These organisations are further supervised and assisted by other committees, and draw inspiration and ideas from the Finnish population,

The country had a clear and precise plan that would coincide with the Agenda 2030. The first step was to recognize the pre-existing Finnish programmes and policies that covered the 17 goals and 169 targets of sustainable development. This task was fulfilled by the Government Ministries on the order of The Prime Minister’s Office and it revealed all the fields where the country was lacking in. The results obtained showed that problem of carbon dioxide emission, gender related violence and biasness in salary were the eminent problems.

This system also includes the programme of Society’s Commitment to Sustainable Development known as The Finland we want by 2050 which had over 240 members from private and public institutions by April 2016.

In 2016, a task force was also formed with the intention of speeding up the process of reaching the Agenda 2030 by using various tools and institutions. This task force comprise members of the Society’s Commitment To Sustainable Development as well as The Finnish Development Policy Committee.

**Review of the finish system of sustainable development**

**The Positive**

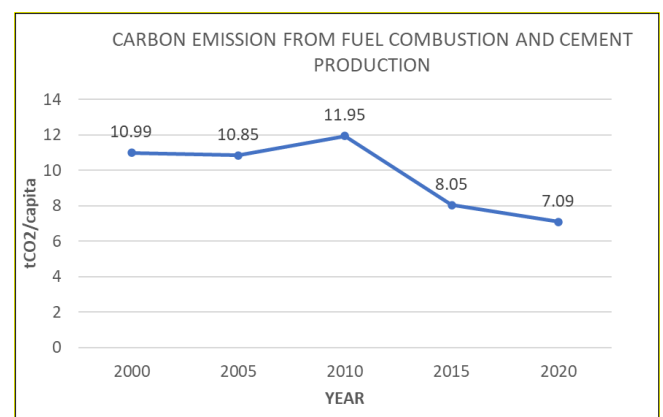
- The system developed by Finland has proved to be very effective and efficient. In the last 4 years, the system has already resolved various problems and has helped the country achieve many sustainable development goals.
- Various changes have been brought in fields like social security and education which have promoted a sense of unity amongst the population.
- The different mechanisms and authorities formed by the government have speed up the process of implementation of innovative policies
- The country has seen an increase in the participation of youth, private sector and cities in spreading the idea of sustainability

**The Negative**

- Despite showing huge success in solving various other problems, the country is still inflicted with few problems like Obesity and Gender Inequality. The country aims to eliminate these problems in the near future
- There has been no substantial growth in the ODA levels, which measure the amount of funds provided by the government for various public schemes
- While the majority of people are enjoying a sense of belongingness and unity, people with disabilities and others hailing from minority communities are still facing discrimination.
- Trade Offs, which are caused due to imbalance between two incompatible ideas and schemes, pose a threat to the country. Further meetings on this issue are required.

**Statistical analysis**

The only SDG goal in which Finland lacks behind is Climate change. This score for this goal has been constantly decreasing, forcing the authorities to take stringent action on this issue. In this paper, we will analyse this goal in detail.



**Fig 1**

**Table 1**

Year	Tco2/capita
2000	10.99
2005	10.85
2010	11.95
2015	8.05
2020	7.09

**Objective:** Carbon emissions to reach a score of 0

**Observation:** From 2000-2010, there had been a rise in carbon emissions. From 2010-2020, carbon levels have plummeted.

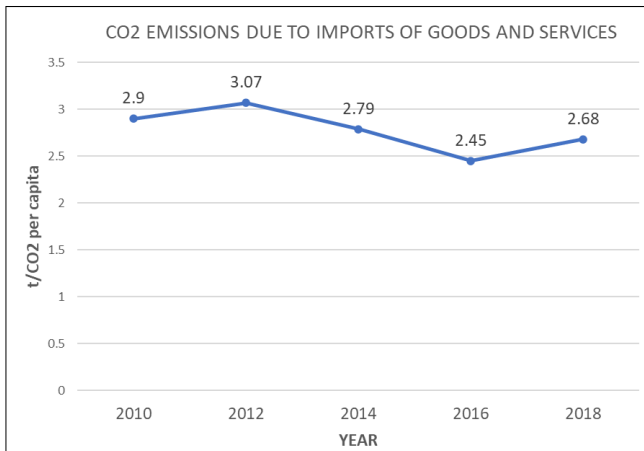


Fig 2

Table 2

Year	tCO2/capita
2010	2.9
2012	3.07
2014	2.79
2016	2.45
2018	2.68

**Objective:** Carbon emissions to reach a score of 0

**Observation:** From 2010-2012, there had been a rise in carbon emissions. From 2012-2016, carbon levels were on steady decrease, but from 2016-2018 carbon levels started increasing which is a matter of great concern.

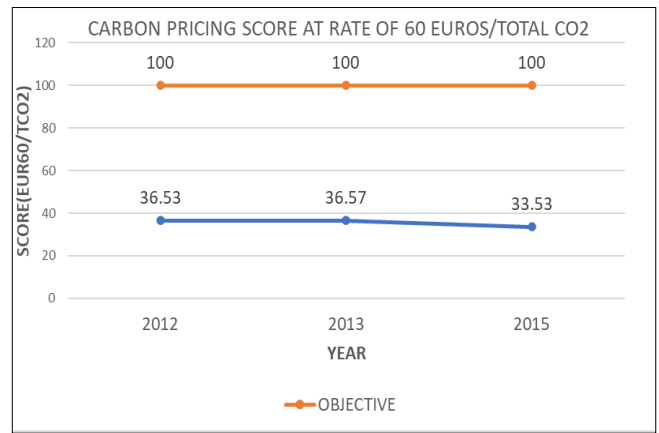


Fig 3

Table 3

Year	Score (EUR60/tCO2)
2012	36.53
2013	36.57
2015	33.53

**Description**

Carbon Pricing Score or CPS measures the success of a country in pricing the energy sources which emit carbon at a pre-defined and specified value. The CPS score increases as the government puts more and more efforts in reaching the specified value.

**Objective:** CPS score to reach 100%

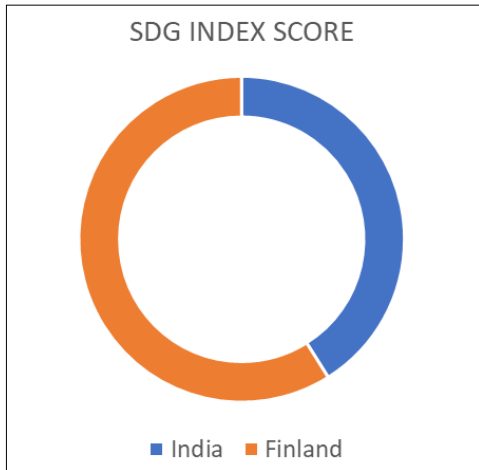
**Observation:** From 2012-2015, there had been a little growth in the CPS value. From 2015-2018, CPS level has decreased, but no drastic change took place.



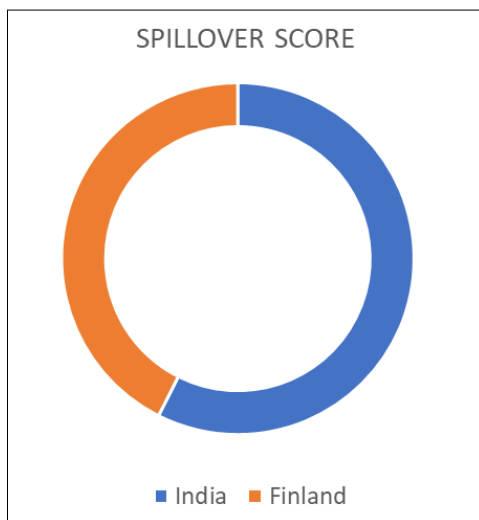
Fig 4

**Comparison with the indian sustainable development model**

India is 120 countries behind Finland in terms of sustainable development. Finland has a SDG index score of 86.5 while India has a score of 60.3. The SDG score measures the progress of country in achieving the 17 sustainable development goal. But from the perspective of Spillover score, which measures the positive effect of a country’s action, India with a score of 99.3 is way ahead of Finland which has a score of 73.6.



**Fig 5**



**Fig 6**

Finland has successfully achieved 3 SDG goals- No Poverty, Education Qualification and Affordable Clean Energy. On the contrary India has achieved 2 SDG goals- Climate Action and Responsible Consumption and Production. While sufficient data is available for Finland’s progress in each goal, no data is available for India’s growth in Reducing Inequality.

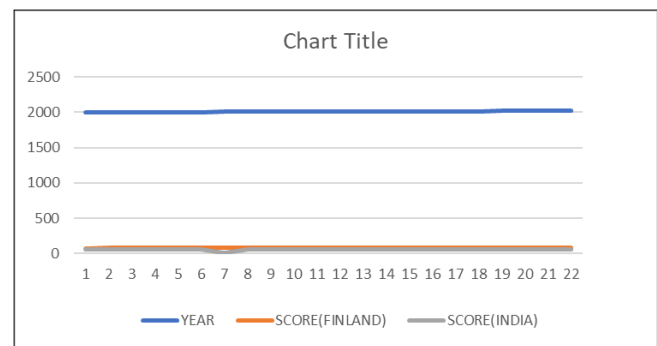
An analysis of overall comparison of SDG achievement goal has been made in this section on the basis of data given

**Comparison of Finland and India on the basis of overall score measuring the SDG achievement**

An analysis of overall comparison of SDG achievement goal has been made in this section on the basis of data given below :

**Table 4**

Year	Score (Finland)	Score (India)
2000	82.04	51.6
2001	82.46	51.71
2002	82.82	51.8
2003	82.64	52.18
2004	83.03	52.14
2005	83.79	52.23
2006	83.63	57.75
2007	83.81	53.06
2008	84.2	53.15
2009	85.13	53.03
2010	85.18	53.63
2011	85.56	54.16
2012	85.85	54.4
2013	86	55.14
2014	86.06	55.88
2015	86.41	56.41
2016	85.6	57.23
2017	86.34	59.07
2018	85.89	59.71
2019	86.18	60.39
2020	86.4	60.12
2021	86.48	59.98



**Fig 7**

Null hypothesis: There is no statistical difference in the overall score measuring the SDG achievement between Finland and India

Alternative hypothesis: There is a significant difference in the overall score measuring the SDG achievement between Finland and India

T test value is 0.000 which is less than critical value of 0.5. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the overall score measuring the SDG achievement between Finland and India

**Advice for India**

- The Finnish System of Sustainable Development is very well organised and divided between different ministries and levels of government, while the Indian one lacks division of work. India should adopt such changes in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness
- The Finnish government has also made provisions for regulatory bodies which review and judge the working of all the sectors and organisations involved. India too, should create such regulatory associations to measure its progress at each level.

- In Finland, general public and business enterprises have active participation in this matter. But due to its huge and diverse population, India has seen less participation from its citizens. Though the number of citizens and enterprises who have shown interest in this issue is increasing a bit, the country should pay more attention to this issue

### Advice For Finland

- India, despite being heavily populated and sharing huge diversity, has caused drastic positive change in terms of sustainable development. Finland too should focus on the effectiveness of their actions and not on efficiency
- The programs and schemes introduced by the government have played a vital role in promoting sustainable development. The Finnish government should also integrate this idea of schemes and programmes as they have proved to be more effective

### Conclusion

In modern times, sustainable development has become the need of the hour as the world rushes into the crisis of shortage of resources. If the government takes the initiative to implement the ideas of sustainable development seriously, then the respective country and its citizens can lead a life full of economic and social prosperity. While working upon this idea, one should also emphasise on the idea of 'quality over quantity' as the outcome of the decisions taken is more important than just aiming to fulfil the goal.

### References

1. <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/rankings>
2. [http://www.earthedintl.org/CourseMats/IEIG/Readings/2b.Characterizing\\_Measuring\\_SustDev.pdf](http://www.earthedintl.org/CourseMats/IEIG/Readings/2b.Characterizing_Measuring_SustDev.pdf)
3. <https://sdgtoolkit.org/region/finland/>
4. [https://books.google.co.in/books?hl=en&lr=&id=1eziFJLQn5sC&oi=fnd&pg=PA191&dq=sustainable+development+finland&ots=TWP8RGeOZh&sig=EgfyMQehurbY8CdOlvGOsYHreLQ&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.in/books?hl=en&lr=&id=1eziFJLQn5sC&oi=fnd&pg=PA191&dq=sustainable+development+finland&ots=TWP8RGeOZh&sig=EgfyMQehurbY8CdOlvGOsYHreLQ&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)
5. [https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/40458/FE\\_645.pdf?sequence=1](https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/40458/FE_645.pdf?sequence=1)
6. <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/finland>
7. [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0155998205000311?casa\\_token=jAa2VUz89ZIAAAAA:TnvT9iKIWaSSuMp\\_1j7X7gNggUaLpVqVdkwgxG8HrxMYyUSOVRqoHuMVbRdz0Rg5lpTjulaONew](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0155998205000311?casa_token=jAa2VUz89ZIAAAAA:TnvT9iKIWaSSuMp_1j7X7gNggUaLpVqVdkwgxG8HrxMYyUSOVRqoHuMVbRdz0Rg5lpTjulaONew)
8. [https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479706001617?casa\\_token=V1jJL2XTpU0AAAAA:W92mgYuPN9UVjB8Mqc9lo83jF\\_yXnfgTslMvxJZqdUMUP9\\_g\\_ZQaldf8VPL3VWmLLAyLLyer\\_iU](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479706001617?casa_token=V1jJL2XTpU0AAAAA:W92mgYuPN9UVjB8Mqc9lo83jF_yXnfgTslMvxJZqdUMUP9_g_ZQaldf8VPL3VWmLLAyLLyer_iU)