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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) (30 May-5 June 2017)
- Information from the Austrian, Finnish, French and German delegations,
supported by the Czech and Italian delegations

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Austrian, Finnish, French and German delegations, supported by the Czech and Italian delegations on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 19 December 2016.

European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) (30 May-5 June 2017)

**- Information from the Austrian, Finnish, French and German delegations,
supported by the Czech and Italian delegations -**

Following an initiative of Germany, France and Austria, the European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) took place for the first time in 2015 within the framework of the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN). National sustainable development days and weeks have been held since 2003 in France, since 2012 in Germany, since 2013 in Austria and since 2015 in Finland. The now annual European Sustainable Development Week has increased momentum at European level and, this year, we teamed up with the EU Green Week, which included holding a Joint Conference in June 2016 in Vienna.

In accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all countries and stakeholders, working together in a spirit of collaborative partnership, will implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. This spirit of collaboration prevailed during the ESDW 2016, which saw a record number of more than 4 000 activities in 38 countries organised. Altogether, these activities involved at least 300 000 European citizens. The ESDW is a bottom-up approach, based on the contributions of civil society, Non-Governmental Organisations, cities, regions and many more players that are active and enthusiastic about the SDGs and their implementation.

The personal involvement of Ministers and the European Commission is key to the success of both, the ESDW and the implementation of the SDGs. Some very active Member States have already reported to the HLPF, others will do so in the course of 2017. We, therefore, invite all Member States and the European Commission to actively participate in the ESDW and to nominate National Focal Points if they have not yet done so.

The initiative for the ESDW was developed within the framework of the European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN), which was founded in 2002 and involves sustainability experts from the competent Ministries of all 28 EU Member States as well as third countries.