

# SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



## 2022 GLOBAL REVIEW

Part I. Current state of sustainable procurement and progress in national governments

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# Foreword

Procurement processes that consider social, economic and environmental factors play a strategic role in transforming markets for more sustainable products and services; the 'sustainable procurement' approach can address not only the triple planetary crisis, but also salient socio-economic issues such as human and labor rights, diversity, inclusion and gender equality. Public procurement, which amounts to over US\$13 trillion annually at global level, can prove to be a game changer in this regard. This was acknowledged by the international community when it included Target 12.7 on sustainable public procurement in the Sustainable Development Goals. More recently, private organizations have joined the global sustainable procurement movement thereby adding further to the transformation of demand signals towards sustainability.

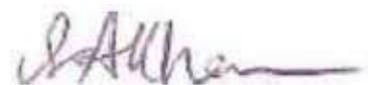
The *2022 SPP Global Review* is the first assessment providing important insights into the status and emerging trends of sustainable procurement (SP) across both public and private sectors. It documents efforts of national governments, private enterprise and intergovernmental organizations in the development, implementation and monitoring of SP policies and legal frameworks, while also assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these advances. This third edition also reports on the various activities and initiatives of the international development community and academia that are shaping and driving the sustainable procurement agenda.

Data collected for this publication confirm that sustainable procurement is becoming a mainstream practice across all organizational types. Most national governments, international organizations and development banks have developed, or are in the process of developing, policy frameworks conducive to sustainable procurement and/or have integrated SP in their circular, green economy or sustainable development agendas, while the diffusion of SP to private organizations is rapidly accelerating. Topics such as capacity building and digitalization of procurement processes have become particularly prominent in recent years. Furthermore, the integration of SP in standard procurement processes, with SP purchasing criteria becoming increasingly mandatory, notably in high-income countries, is another important trend.

Despite these advances, sustainability considerations in procurement processes, continue to be largely focused on the earlier stages of the procurement cycle, missing out on key opportunities further along in the cycle, such as at the contract award and management stages. In addition, the full extent of SP implementation and its impacts are still unclear, with only 24% of the national governments measuring SP outcomes. In response to these challenges, UNEP has led the development of a methodology and reporting tool to monitor progress in SDG Indicator 12.7.1 (the number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans). For many countries, participation in the biennial data collection exercises related to SDG 12.7.1 represents a unique opportunity for measuring progress in SP implementation and identifying areas for improvement.

Since 2013, UNEP has also provided direct assistance to over 20 countries, relying on the *SPP Implementation Guidelines*, which sets-out a robust and adaptable methodology. We intend to pursue and amplify our support for SPP implementation, putting a special focus on the high impact sectors prioritized by UNEP (i.e. electronics, textiles, buildings and construction, and mobility). We also wish to contribute to the scaling up and enhancement of the performance of collaborative platforms, such as the One Planet Network, the Green Growth Knowledge Programme and the UN Global Marketplace, which should help all countries accelerate their transition to sustainable procurement.

We hope that the *2022 SPP Global Review* will help raise awareness about the enormous potential of the trillion-dollar giant in addressing the triple planetary crisis and will motivate organizations and countries across the world to swiftly engage in sustainable procurement or step up their efforts in this area.



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## National Government Questionnaire Participants

Staff of the 45 national governments that provided information for the research and reviewed the SPP Factsheets that are part of this work. Without their effort, it would not have been possible to provide such detailed information on their policies, programmes and activities to implement sustainable procurement. Their names and organizations can be found in the SPP Factsheets.

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## Respondents to the SP Stakeholder Survey

A total of 322 individuals responded to the SP Stakeholder Survey. A list of the organizations where these individuals work is provided in Annex 1. Thanks are extended to all of them for their time and for sharing their opinions on sustainable procurement.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

<b>AIIB</b>	Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank
<b>CDB</b>	Caribbean Development Bank
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate social responsibility
<b>EBRD</b>	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
<b>ECPAR</b>	Quebec Space for Consultation on Responsible Sourcing Practises
<b>ENCPE</b>	Estratégia Nacional para as Compras Públicas Ecológicas
<b>ESG</b>	Environmental, social and governance
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic product
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse gases
<b>GPP</b>	Green public procurement
<b>IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IT</b>	Information technology
<b>KEITI</b>	Korea Environmental, Industry and Technology Institute
<b>KPI</b>	Key performance indicators
<b>MDBs</b>	Multilateral Development Banks
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organizations
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PSS</b>	Product-service systems
<b>SCP</b>	Sustainable consumption and production
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and medium-sized enterprises
<b>SP</b>	Sustainable procurement
<b>SPLC</b>	Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council
<b>SPP</b>	Sustainable public procurement
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>10YFP</b>	10-Year Framework of Programmes

# Executive summary

**P**ublic and private sector procurement is a strategic lever for reaching the world's sustainability goals. Accounting for roughly 20-30% of global GDP each year, the tremendous purchasing power of governments is capable of shifting demand towards new products and services with a lighter footprint and can be part of the solution in addressing what the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has called the "triple planetary crisis" of climate instability, nature loss and rising pollution. Public procurement can also be an avenue for addressing critical socio-economic issues, such as human and labour rights, gender inequality, and local economic development, delivering relatively quick and cost-effective wins. Large corporations, as well as intergovernmental organizations, with annual procurement volumes in the billions, are also well-positioned to influence and encourage sustainability across their supply chains.

But how much do we know about this potentially powerful tool known as 'sustainable procurement'?

The *2022 Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Global Review* provides important insight into the current state of sustainable procurement (SP) worldwide. Building on the two earlier *SPP Global Review* publications from 2013 and 2017, this edition explores progress in sustainable procurement over the last five years, highlighting important developments and emerging trends. Findings are based on a cross-cutting analysis of data collected in 2021 on 314 organizations across 92 countries via a Stakeholder Survey.<sup>1</sup> In addition, data were gathered on SP activities of 45 countries in a National Government Questionnaire. Results from these two exercises were supplemented with insights from 26 sustainable procurement experts who were interviewed by UNEP. Finally, existing literature, as well as other recent studies on SP, were analysed to provide broader context.

The following is a summary of the main findings of the *2022 SPP Global Review*:

## 1. Sustainable procurement is building momentum

The explicit inclusion of SPP in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, as well as the ratification of the Paris Agreement in 2016, were important milestones that helped promulgate and accelerate the shift to sustainable procurement among national governments.

**Since 2015, there has been a considerable increase in the development of policies and legal instruments supporting SP worldwide.** All 45 national governments participating in this study reported having SP provisions in their overarching or thematic policies and strategies, while the vast ma-

majority include them in their procurement regulations (82%) and/or have policies specifically dedicated to the promotion of SP (76%). Thirty-one out of the 45 national governments reported having a legal framework encompassing all three types of policies and instruments supporting SP. This assessment is in line with earlier editions of the *SPP Global Review* that point to a natural evolution in the development of legal frameworks supporting SP, beginning with the inclusion of SP provisions in overarching and thematic national policies, such as sustainable development strategies and various environmental and socio-economic policies, followed by the devel-

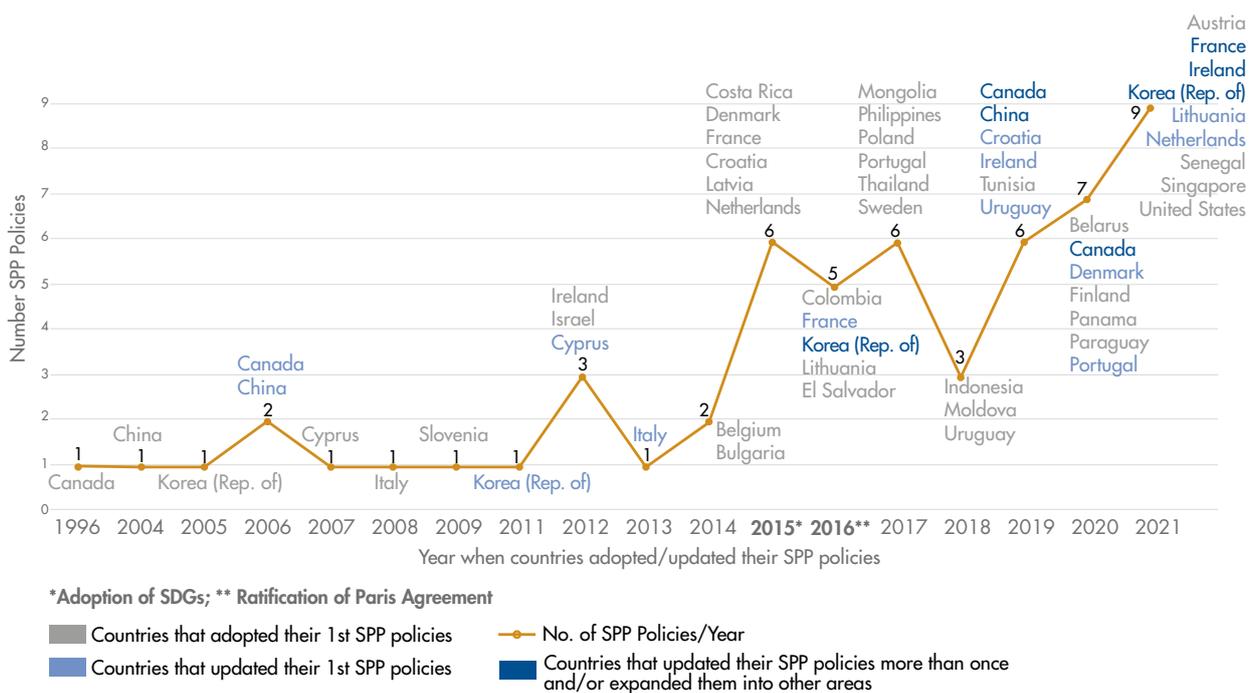
<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders were defined as individuals who were responsible for the development or implementation of SP policies in their organization, as well as researchers, academics and experts who contribute to the advancement of SP.

opment of dedicated SP policies and culminating in the inclusion of SP provisions in procurement laws and regulations.

**In total, 57 dedicated SP policies were reported across 45 national governments, the majority of which were first-time policies that had been approved following the adoption of the SDGs; one-quarter were policies that had been updated**

once, with the remainder having been updated more than once or expanded into other areas (see Figure i). In addition, almost half of the countries that did not have a dedicated SP policy reported having other types of documents that would allow for the inclusion of sustainability considerations in procurement and/or were in the process of developing such policies.

**Figure i. Adoption of SP policies among participating national governments**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

**Sustainable procurement is also rapidly diffusing to the private sector as a result of increased stakeholder pressure from governments, consumers, and investors.** Government regulations, demanding transparency and reporting of private organizations' supply chains, are becoming more common, while consumers under 40 seem more informed about supply chain issues and are more likely to pay a premium for sustainable products and services. There is also growing concern among investors in the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) performance of their investees. While specific data were not collected on the adoption of SP policies among private sector organizations, according to study findings, most of the participants representing the private sector believe that SP has become more or much more important in their organization since 2017. This is a very similar

proportion to those representing the public sector. Other studies also point to the assessment that SP is gaining traction in the private sector, with even small companies adopting SP practices.

**Momentum is building among intergovernmental organizations, which in recent years have included sustainability principles in their corporate as well as project procurement policies and guidelines.** Since 2017, the United Nations has adopted a number of landmark SP strategies and resolutions that are now reflected in the increased number of UN organizations with dedicated SP policies. In parallel, the World Bank has introduced sustainability in procurement processes through the integration of SP in their corporate procurement policy. Other Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) are also working toward introducing SP in their corporate procurement framework, these include the

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), and most recently the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). Given the enormous potential

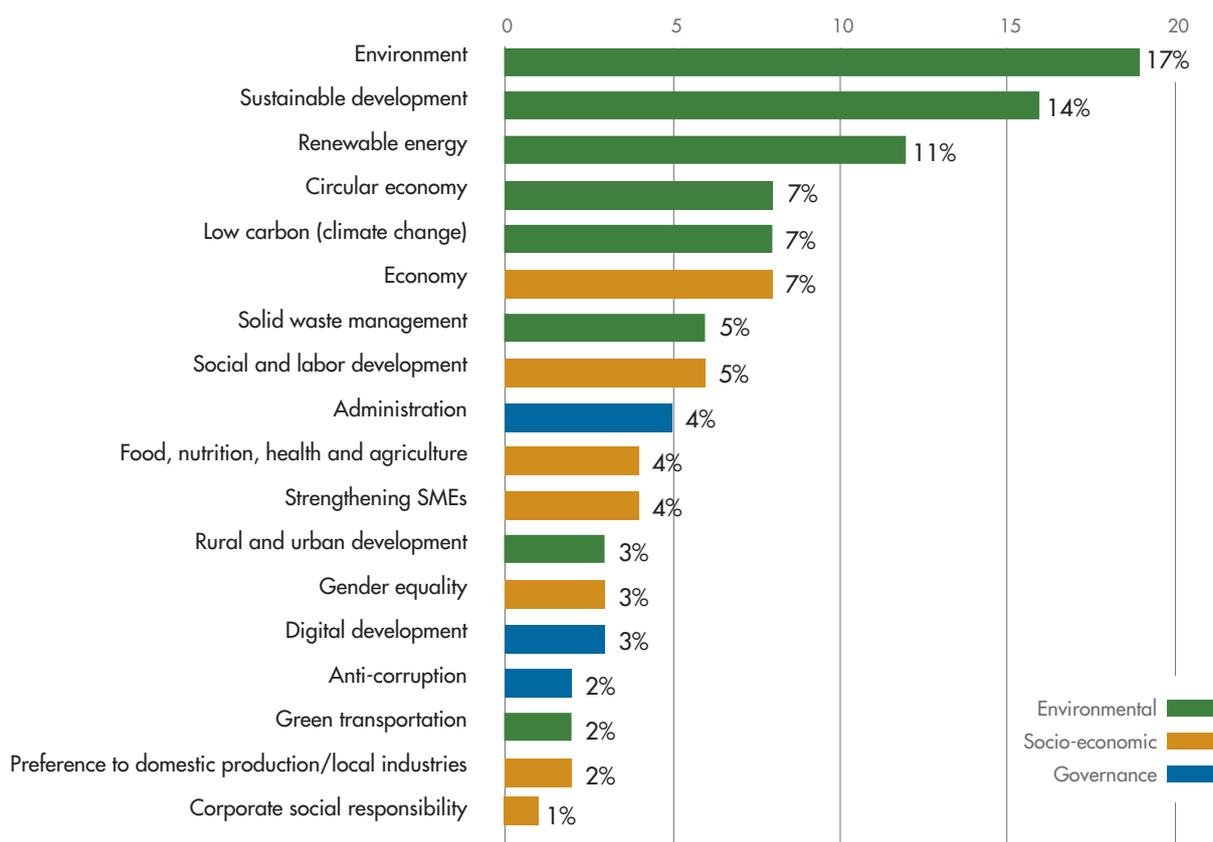
to deliver social and environmental impact through project procurement, many MDBs have also revised, or are in the process of revising, their project or operational procurement guidelines to include sustainability considerations.

## 2. Sustainable procurement can hit multiple targets

**The growing importance and versatility of public procurement as a key tool for achieving sustainable development objectives is reflected in the vast array of national overarching and thematic policies that include SP provisions.** Of the 112 policies that were reported by national governments, a total of 18 thematic areas were identified (see Figure ii). Policies and strategies that relate

to sustainable development and the environment were most frequent, followed by social and labour policies as well as policies for strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). All national governments reported having at least one overarching and/or thematic policy supporting SP, with a third reporting two or more.

**Figure ii. Percentage of national policies supporting SP by thematic area**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

**Resource efficiency, energy conservation and climate change mitigation were the environmental issues most frequently addressed in dedicated SP policies.** About half (47%) of the national governments (typically those countries with first-time

policies) focused their policies solely on the environmental dimension, while the other half (47%) focused on both the environmental and social dimensions. The emphasis on environmental issues among national governments is probably tied to the

*...when compared to the previous edition of the SPP Global Review, where in almost all instances environmental issues were prioritized over socio-economic concerns, in this edition certain socio-economic issues, such as the promotion of SMEs and the protection and promotion of groups at risk, were almost on par with the top environmental issues.*

global call to action on climate change, which places the onus on governments, as the single largest consumers, to change their consumption patterns to protect the environment and exercise leadership through government purchasing.

**Evidence suggests that the socio-economic dimension is gaining prominence, with a focus on the promotion of SMEs, groups at risk and technology development.** Two national governments (Tunisia and Indonesia) reported having SP policies solely dedicated to the socio-economic dimension, whereas in 2017 no such policies were reported. In addition, when compared to the previous edition of the *SPP Global Review*, where in almost all instances environmental issues were prioritized over socio-economic concerns, in this edition certain socio-economic issues, such as the promotion of SMEs and the protection and promotion of groups at risk, were almost on par with the top environmental issues. Variations were observed in socio-economic priorities across regions. Stakeholders in Asia Pacific, West Asia and Africa, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, reported the promotion of SMEs as their top priority, while stakeholders in Northern America prioritized human rights in global supply chains. For stakeholders in Europe, technology development and innovation was indicated as a priority issue.

**The growing prominence of the socio-economic dimension is reflected in changes in the distribution of authorities developing and implementing SP policies.** While public authorities associated with environmental affairs and/or those with financial responsibility are still taking the lead, ministries and agencies responsible for economic development and social affairs are playing a supportive role in the design of SP policies. It is now also common to see collaboration between various government authori-

ties in the development of such policies, sometimes in the form of an interministerial or inter-agency committee on SP. This is a trend that is likely to continue, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as governments seek to leverage public procurement in support of local businesses and/or marginalized groups, such as women, that have been adversely impacted, while also promoting fair labour practices and human rights in supply chains.

**Private organizations are generally focusing their SP efforts on socio-economic issues, such as the protection of human and labour rights, fostering local economies and, more recently, the emerging issue areas of equity, diversity and inclusion.** The focus on social issues could be attributed to the development of mandatory SP regulations focusing on human and labour rights in supply chains, however private organizations are expected to increasingly include environmental considerations in their SP activities as a response to growing global awareness and public expectations on climate change (and also in anticipation of relevant future legislation). Intergovernmental organizations have also traditionally focused their SP efforts on the social dimension with an emphasis on wages and benefits and health and safety. More recently, some organizations have expanded their policies to encompass environmental issues, such as preference for durable, reusable, energy-efficient and low-pollution products, as well as certain salient social issues (ie. diversity, inclusion and accessibility).

**All stakeholders, both public and private, indicated that the achievement of the SDGs was a key consideration in their SP policies.** SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production and SDG 13 on climate action were most frequently reported, although recent policies also consider responsible business conduct (SDG 8 on decent work and eco-

conomic growth) and innovation and competitiveness (SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure). While fewer stakeholders used SP to address issues related to social inequality and injustices, region-

al differences were noted with stakeholders from West Asia and Africa, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, more frequently pointing to SDG 5 (on gender equality).

### 3. Sustainable procurement practices are now more deeply embedded

**Product prioritization and the development of tools, such as sustainability criteria or guidelines, continue to be critical activities and have been highlighted by national governments as key drivers for SP implementation.** Prioritized product and service categories for SP are beginning to extend beyond the 'low-hanging fruit' of common-use categories. While office IT continues to be the most frequently prioritized category, product groups relevant to climate mitigation and circularity (ie. energy supply, vehicles, building construction, and infrastructure) have displaced other categories such as paper or cleaning products/services. These shifts suggest not only progress in SP implementation within national governments, but also the prevalence of eco-labels and the maturity of markets.

**Most national governments (62%) reported having developed criteria or guidelines for at least one or more prioritized products/service categories, however only half indicated mandatory application of the said criteria/guidelines.** Europe stands out as the region with the greatest number of SP criteria/guidelines, however, fewer than half (47%) have mandatory application. This contrasts with other regions, such as the Asia Pacific, where the majority (83%) of participating national governments reported mandatory application of their criteria/guidelines. Only a small increase was noted

in the use of ecolabels as a reference tool for developing technical specifications or as a means of verification, with few national governments (18%) reporting ecolabel mandates. Intergovernmental organizations have also been supporting SP implementation with the development of general guidance documents, outlining how sustainability considerations can be integrated into existing procurement processes, as well as defining social and environmental sustainability standards or criteria. Private sector organizations have focused mostly on formalizing their SP principles and defining supplier codes of conduct and self-assessment tools.

**The importance of education and training has been highlighted by all organizations as a key driver in unleashing the full potential of SP.** With an increased focus on training, procurement practitioners are expected to acquire the skills and knowledge to integrate sustainability considerations in public contracting. Alongside these advances, all organizations are benefiting from transformations already occurring in how procurement is conducted – with improved professionalization and digitization of procurement practices leading to more strategic and transparent processes.

*Prioritized product and service categories for SP are beginning to extend beyond the 'low-hanging fruit' of common-use categories.*

## 4. Measuring the impact of sustainable procurement remains a challenge

**Despite advances in formalizing and implementing SP, only a small increase (5%) was observed in the proportion of national governments monitoring SP from 2017 to 2021.** The most monitored aspect continues to be SP outputs, such as the number or value of contracts that include sustainability criteria, with 90% of the national governments that reported SP monitoring measuring this aspect. However, a greater proportion of national governments reported monitoring SP institutionalization in 2021 (70%) when compared to 2017 (37%), pointing to a stronger commitment to SP policies and their actual deployment. Outcomes continue to remain difficult to measure - with only 33% of monitoring national governments measuring this aspect - and are rarely communicated with supporting quantitative data.

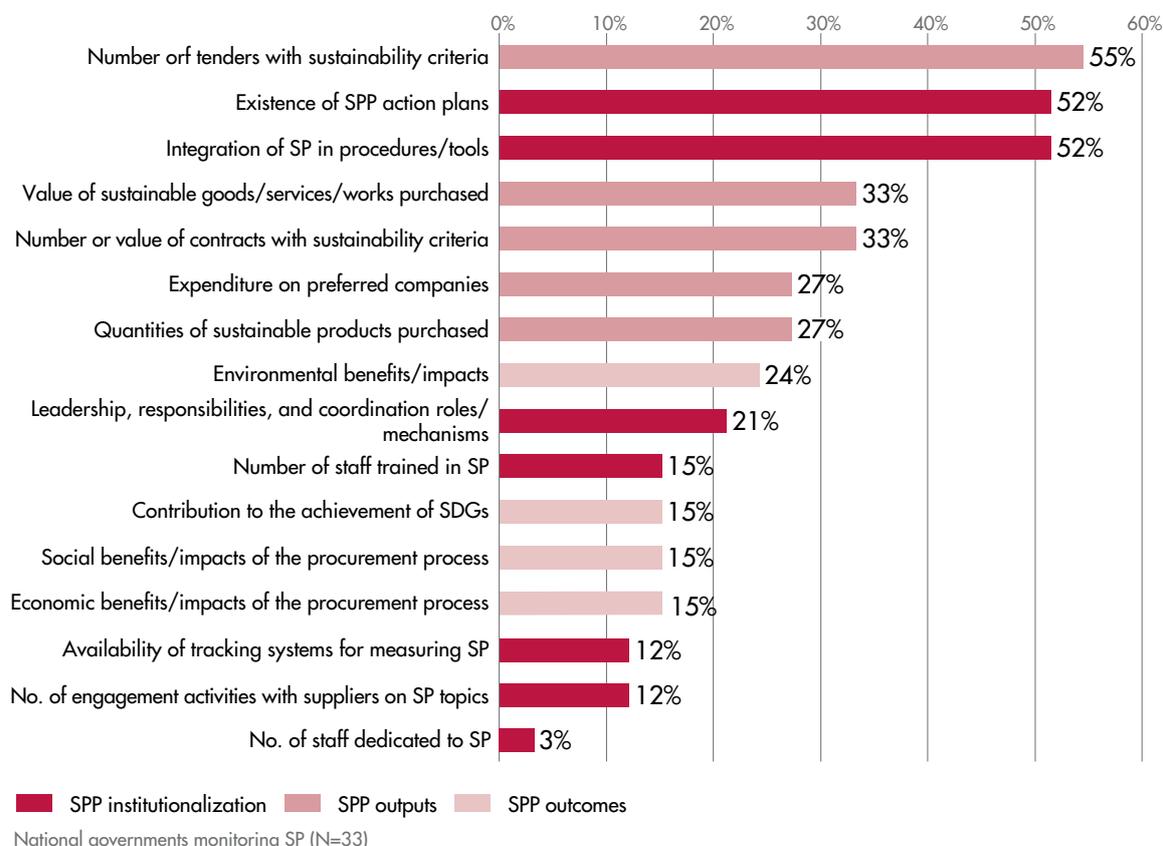
**Most monitoring national governments (64%) measure two or more aspects of SP (outputs, institutionalization and outcomes) through a wide range of indicators.** The most frequently employed

indicator for monitoring SP outputs is the 'number of tenders with sustainability criteria', followed by the 'number or value of contracts with such criteria' (see Figure iii on next page). The degree of SP institutionalization is most often tracked through the 'existence of SPP action plans' and the 'integration of SP in procurement procedures and tools', while SP outcomes are generally measured by environmental impacts, such as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Most national governments reported gathering this data via a standard online or paper questionnaire (45%) or e-procurement platform (42%), with 58% publishing the results of their exercises.

Interestingly, only 28% of the national governments monitoring SP were able to provide data on the value of contracts that include sustainability criteria. Most respondents providing this type of information were from the Asia Pacific, with likely more advanced e-procurement platforms that facilitated such data processing.

*...a greater proportion of national governments reported monitoring SP institutionalization in 2021 (70%) when compared to 2017 (37%), pointing to a stronger commitment to SP policies and their actual deployment*

**Figure iii. Percentage of monitoring national governments tracking key SP indicators**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

**While specific data on SP monitoring in private organizations were not gathered, evidence suggests that SP efforts have largely focused on formalizing and implementing SP rather than on tracking progress and results.** Like the public sector, private organizations generally focus SP evaluation on the success of internal implementation or institutionalization, rather than on outcomes. While many private organizations claim to embrace SP practices, the depth of adoption may be overstated, as in some studies organizations were unable to

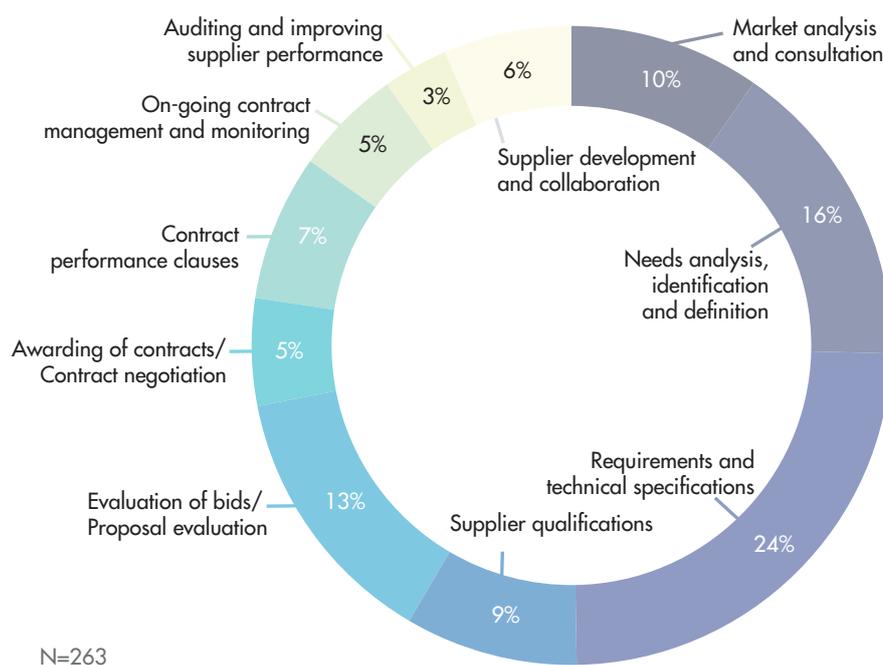
provide evidence of the SP practices they claimed to have adopted. Among the intergovernmental organizations covered under this study, only the United Nations and the World Bank have set SP targets for corporate procurement and are monitoring and reporting on progress in delivering SP outputs and institutionalization. Currently, only the Inter-American Development Bank is monitoring the inclusion of sustainability considerations under project procurement.

## 5. Other challenges remain

The perception that SP products are more expensive than conventional ones remains a key barrier to SP implementation across all organizations. A lack of government legislation and political support were also raised frequently as strong barriers by public officials. Insufficient leadership, regulations, expertise and sustainable procurement tools were identified as significant challenges to SP implementation by stakeholders representing private sector organizations. In addition, private sector stakeholders identified lack of resources and competing priorities as significant challenges, which together could lead to a compliance-oriented approach to SP, rather than true engagement in SP.

Another key challenge is the integration of sustainability considerations across the procurement cycle. Most stakeholders (44%), both public and private, indicated that SP criteria were 'slightly integrated' into their organization's procurement activities, with a focus on the earlier stage of the procurement cycle. This leaves out important opportunities further along, such as contract clauses and management, which would enhance the sustainability outcomes of purchasing decisions (see Figure iv). Private sector studies have shown that buyers are seldom in charge of assessing the conformity of SP criteria in post-awarded contracts, which raises questions about the enforcement of SP criteria after contracts have been signed.

**Figure iv. Most effective stages of the procurement cycle to introduce SP considerations according to SP stakeholders**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

Both private and intergovernmental organizations also pointed to the difficulty in reaching beyond their first-tier suppliers. With only a minority of organizations addressing second-tier suppliers and only about 5% engaging third-tier. This challenge is

critical one to address, as recent studies show that environmental impacts are 11 times higher in the supply chains of organizations than in their own operations.

## 6. International organizations and networks are stepping up their support for sustainable procurement

**Clearly, there is still a long way to go before organizations engage fully in sustainable procurement and require the same from their suppliers.**

The most frequently called-for interventions from both public and private sector stakeholders include coordinating and providing tools for SP implementation and monitoring, leading the harmonization and standardization of SP, and coordinating and engaging markets to encourage suppliers to provide more sustainable products and services. This stands in contrast to earlier editions of the *SPP Global Review* when building the case of SP and communicating its benefits were identified as top priorities and suggests that there is now widespread recognition of the importance and benefits of SP.

**Various international organizations have stepped up their support for sustainable procurement, with the focus of their work largely centered on providing practical guidance and tools for SP implementation and monitoring.** The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), for example, developed guiding principles on the strategic and holistic use of public procurement in 2015 and more recently released an [SPP supplementary module](#) (2021) as part of its Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems (MAPS). UNEP led the development of a specific and adaptable methodology for SP implementation, publishing the second edition of its [SPP Implementation Guidelines](#) in 2021. It has also developed a methodology and [self-assessment tool](#) for measuring a country's level of SPP implementation and is leading global SPP monitoring efforts through biennial

data collection exercises on SDG indicator 12.7.1. Various handbooks on SP, including [Buying Social](#) (second edition, 2021), [Buying Green](#) (2016) and [Public Procurement for a Circular Economy](#) (2017), have been released by the European Commission, as well as [sustainability criteria](#) for more than 20 prioritized product groups.

**International networks are playing an essential role in the exchange of SP knowledge and experience across cities, countries and local and international businesses.** These include: Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN), the Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (IGPN), the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council, and the One Planet Network SPP Programme.

**A number of universities are contributing to the professionalization of sustainable procurement, now offering courses and degrees in SP, as well as leading research in various disciplines relevant to the topic.** For example, Sydney University, Australia; Universidad Externado de Colombia; University of Copenhagen, Denmark; Tor Vergata University, Italy; University of Belgrade, Serbia; Nottingham University and King's College, United Kingdom; and Arizona State University in the United States.

MDBs, working with member countries to modernize and reform their national and regional public procurement frameworks, are now including sustainability considerations in within new or revised public procurement laws and regulations, creating the foundation for SP implementation. For exam-

*The most frequently called-for interventions from both public and private sector stakeholders include coordinating and providing tools for SP implementation and monitoring, leading the harmonization and standardization of SP, and coordinating and engaging markets to encourage suppliers to provide more sustainable products and services.*

ple, CDB is currently working with most Eastern Caribbean countries to prepare new public procurement laws and regulations inclusive of sustainability principles and objectives. Likewise, IDB is assisting a number of South American countries in procure-

ment reform at the national level (Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) and subnational level (Brazil and Argentina), with the drafting and implementation of public procurement-related laws and regulations inclusive of SP.

## 7. Sustainable procurement is part of our solutions pathway

**As a dynamic and cross-cutting topic, sustainable procurement has evolved into new growth areas, such as professionalization and circularity.** While topics such as eco-labels and climate change policy remained important for national governments, training and capacity-building in particular have become more prominent across all regions – suggesting more organizational investment in SP implementation and a greater focus on SP professionalization. Circular procurement and the need to develop solutions that preserve the value of materials through repair, reuse, remanufacture and recycling, as well as innovative alternatives such as Product-Service Systems, were also highlighted by stakeholders as relevant and emerging topics.

**In the private sector social issues such as equity, diversity and inclusion have come to the fore, with social movements, such as Black Lives Matter and #MeToo attracting more attention to these topics.** Maintaining good relationships with indigenous communities also appeared several times in documents and was raised by stakeholders from Northern America in interviews. Regarding the environment, stakeholder interviewees indicated the growing prominence of biodiversity and water management. The emphasis on biodiversity is

likely due to increased pressure from investors and national regulations to protect lands and forests, while growing expectations for private organizations to be accountable for the use of water in the life cycle of products such as cotton, as well as to secure water access for communities located near their operation sites, could explain the emphasis on water management.

**The global COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated how some organizations are using SP to enhance their purchasing resilience while fuelling economic development.** Investors increasingly see good SP performance as a proxy for supply chain resilience. This view is supported by recent research results that are becoming available on the impact of COVID-19 in supply chains. For the public sector, the COVID-19 pandemic gave new importance to the socio-economic dimension of SP, as several governments sought to leverage the public procurement function in support of local businesses and/or marginalized groups adversely affected by the pandemic.

**E-procurement has also emerged as a relevant topic, probably in response to the emphasis on emergency procurement, social distancing and supply chain security during the pandemic.** In

*While topics such as eco-labels and climate change policy remained important for national governments, training and capacity-building in particular have become more prominent across all regions – suggesting more organizational investment in SP implementation and a greater focus on SP professionalization.*

addition to e-procurement platforms, other professional tools for managing SP are emerging. These include heatmaps, risk assessment tools for suppliers or benchmarking tools, as well as the creation of relatively high-tech tools (such as those designed to monitor SP among suppliers in real-time).

**Another category of innovative SP practice is the development of collaborative relationships with suppliers.** Leading private organizations maintain close collaborative relationships with their suppliers, providing them with resources to develop sustainable alternatives to their products, services or manufacturing processes. Stakeholder interviewees underscored the importance of new technologies to facilitate collaboration between buyers and suppliers around SP. A number of private organizations are taking SP to the next level, extending their SP practices beyond their first-tier suppliers. Other private organizations are upscaling the sustainable impact of their SP practices. For instance, large multinationals such as Apple and Novartis have

committed to be carbon neutral for their entire supply chain in the next ten years. Other initiatives focus on moving from merely reducing private organizations' environmental impact to replenishing resources.

In the coming years, as the field matures, it is expected that more tools and standardized approaches to sustainable procurement implementation will become available, in addition to improved measurement and reporting practices. Organizations new to SP will be able to benefit from innovative SP approaches advanced by those more experienced and further along in SP implementation, as well as the cross-sector fertilization of ideas and approaches.

## Key recommendations for policy and decision-makers

Sustainable procurement is now broadly accepted as a strategic tool for achieving socio-economic and environmental objectives. While progress has been made in SP adoption, implementation and monitoring, there is a long way to go before SP becomes common practice across organizations. The following recommendations are offered for policy and decision-makers that are designed to address many of the common challenges uncovered in this study:

1. **Maximize positive impacts of purchasing decisions:** Sustainable procurement is a critical yet still underutilized tool for achieving national and organizational sustainability objectives, as well as the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Organizations should extend beyond the traditional approach to procurement, which looks at quality/cost considerations at the point of purchase and seek to maximize all positive impacts and multipliers through 'value for money procurement'. This strategic procurement approach considers total cost of ownership or whole life costs of products, as well as externalities such as economic, environmental and social impacts, delivering maximum benefits to society for each purchasing decision taken.
2. **Make sustainable procurement compulsory:** Sustainable procurement is still largely implemented on a voluntary basis. Governments should enact legislation making sustainable procurement mandatory. This will send a strong signal to both procurers and suppliers, mitigating risks and mobilizing efforts.
3. **Advance all aspects of sustainability:** Sustainable procurement can support all aspects of sustainability, from the environmental to socio-economic, however most organizations leverage procurement in support a limited number of issue areas. Organizations should broaden the focus of sustainable procurement, to advance all aspects, and extend beyond the traditional issue areas, such as wages and benefits, to new ones such as equity, diversity and inclusion, as well as circularity.
4. **Invest in human resources:** The importance of human resources should not be underestimated, as lack of knowledge and skills has shown to be limiting factor in effective SP implementation. If meaningful results are desired from policies, organizations should provide training and capacity building to not only procurers, but also management and suppliers. Incentives can also be used to increase employee investment in SP.
5. **Engage the market:** The perception that green products and services are more expensive than conventional ones remains a key barrier to sustainable procurement. Organizations should engage with the market to better understand the context and tailor sustainability demands accordingly. For private sector organizations, suppliers should be seen as partners in facilitating SP success. Efforts should also be stepped-up to drive sustainability beyond first-tier suppliers.
6. **Exploit all opportunities along the procurement cycle:** The integration of sustainability considerations is still focused on the earlier stages of the procurement cycle. The sustainability impact of procurement should be maximised through an increased focus on the introduction of quantifiable monitoring indicators, such as Key Sustainability Performance Indicators (KPIs), in the implementation of contract clauses, as well as enforcement of SP criteria and KPIs after a contract has been signed.
7. **Integrate sustainability in e-procurement platforms:** E-procurement can effectively integrate sustainability considerations into purchasing and radically reduce the costs of seeking sustainable goods and services for procurers. By integrating SP into e-procurement, organizations can raise the profile of sustainable products and services so that they become the default decision during purchasing. Organizations should also explore other innovative tools for SP, such as heatmaps, risk assessment tools, etc.
8. **Measure the benefits:** Most organizations track sustainable procurement implementation through outputs and the integration of SP in procurement processes. More emphasis should be placed on the ability to reliably report actual social, economic and environmental benefits, (for instance, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction versus training provided), ensuring that SP delivers the desired benefits.
9. **Leverage sustainable procurement to build resilience in the face of crisis:** The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how some private sector organizations are using sustainable procurement to enhance their purchasing resilience, while governments are leveraging SP in support of SMEs and disadvantaged groups. Sustainable procurement can be utilized as a tool for building resilience in times of crisis, as well as mitigating its effects.
10. **Share experiences and learn from others:** There is an opportunity to learn from others. For instance, professional networks are sharing information about how organizations can use different tools to make SP part of their organizational routines and culture, enhance innovative solutions around SP and build stronger relationships with vendors to reduce the complexity associated with SP. By participating in networks, organizations can learn additional ways to introduce, strengthen and expand SP across their operations.

# 1. Introduction



## 1.1 Purpose and scope

Governments around the world collectively spend over US\$13 trillion per annum (15% of global GDP) on the purchase, or 'procurement', of goods, services and works to provide citizens with education, public health, security and infrastructure (World Bank 2021). Given the significance of this spending, the decision-making processes governing how public entities purchase have immense implications for the environment, the economy and society. According to a recent Boston Consulting Group report, public procurement produces approximately 7.5 billion tons of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions, about 15% of the world's total (2022). Shifting government spending towards more sustainable products and services can therefore have a significant impact on the fight against climate change, as well as a transformative effect on markets by driving them towards greener and more innovative products. Public procurement can also promote local industries, small and medium-sized enterprises and disadvantaged groups, such as women and minorities.

This strategic approach to spending, commonly known as 'sustainable procurement' or 'SP' (see Box 1.1), is also practised by private sector organizations committed to reducing their environmental footprint, complying with social standards and/or encouraging sustainability across their supply chains. Large multinational corporations, in particular, can channel their economic power through SP to create a positive impact in their sphere of influence beyond national borders (Dumas 2013).

Indeed institutional purchasers, both public and private, are uniquely positioned to demand transparency about the upstream and downstream impacts of goods and services. They can also join forces to send consistent purchasing signals to the market at a scale that can be transformative.

After two decades of progress, sustainable procurement is regarded by many organizations as

an important instrument in helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>1</sup> More specifically, Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by all Member States of the United Nations (UN), identifies 17 SDGs that are at the heart of achieving sustainable development globally. Target 12.7 focuses specifically on the number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement (SPP) policies and action plans.

In an effort to contribute to the global monitoring of SP implementation, UNEP published its first *SPP Global Review* in 2013. Four years later, a second edition was published in the framework of the SPP Monitoring Interest Group of the One Planet Network SPP Programme.

### Box 1.1

#### Defining sustainable procurement

'Sustainable procurement' (SP) refers to the integration of social and environmental considerations into the purchasing processes of public and private organizations alike. When reference is made exclusively to public sector purchasing, the term '**sustainable public procurement**' (SPP) is used.

Sustainable procurement is grounded in the concept of value for money. In the context of procurement, value for money is the result of a cost-benefit analysis that takes into account total cost of ownership or the whole life cost of products. These costs are important, as the initial capital outlay often does not reflect the total costs associated with a product's use, maintenance and disposal. Value for money also considers the social, economic and environmental implications of a purchase for society as a whole. In fact, SP is usually discussed in the context of the three dimensions or pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental.

Typically, SP is leveraged in support of a government's sustainable development objectives across these three dimensions, or, in the case of private organizations, their environmental and/or labour policies (social dimension).

<sup>1</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals are a 'comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative goals and targets' that aim to end poverty, hunger and inequality, take action on climate change and the environment, improve access to health and education, build strong institutions and partnerships and more. Over 150 world leaders adopted the SDGs in September 2015 and committed to implementing them by 2030 (United Nations. 2015. 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals>)

The Interest Group continues to oversee the development of the *Global Review* publication as part of its work plan. The *2022 SPP Global Review* extends the work of the earlier two reports, while also adding to existing literature by:

- ◆ Providing a global overview of the current state of SP in national governments, highlighting progress in areas such as SP policy development, implementation and monitoring.
- ◆ Assessing progress towards meeting UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.7.
- ◆ Creating a broader view of SP practice by identi-

fying how private sector actors and intergovernmental organizations engage in SP.

- ◆ Expanding understanding about the drivers, barriers, needs and expectations for SP around the globe by reflecting stakeholder opinions across an array of countries, organizations and professions.
- ◆ Assessing how the COVID-19 global pandemic has affected SP across all types of organizations.
- ◆ Illustrating how international organizations and networks support SP policy development, implementation and research.

## 1.2 Research methods and limitations

The *2022 SPP Global Review* is informed by primary and secondary research including:

- ◆ A **literature review** and analysis of over 200 sources published between 2016 and 2021 on the topic of SP (and related concepts).
- ◆ An online **Stakeholder Survey** of 322 sustainable purchasing stakeholders and leaders. The survey targeted a broad range of stakeholders from international organizations to local public authorities, companies, non-profits and consultants involved in SP.
- ◆ A **National Government Questionnaire** that assessed SPP activities being advanced by 45 national governments.
- ◆ **SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise** data for 40 national governments to track progress towards meeting SDG Target 12.7.
- ◆ Twenty-six in-depth, semi-structured **interviews with SP experts** representing the public and private sectors and different world regions. These offer reflections, anecdotes and observations about how the analytical results connect with existing literature.
- ◆ **Recommendations** that draw on the Stakeholder Survey and National Government Questionnaire findings, interview results, and information contained in the literature.
- ◆ **Submissions** from international organizations and networks highlighting their recent activities and initiatives on SP.



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Many of the Chapters combine data analysis with existing literature, as well as reflections, anecdotes and observations from expert stakeholder interviews. As shown in Figure 1.1, this edition of the *SPP Global Review* is more comprehensive than

the earlier ones. Not only did more participants take part in the Stakeholder Survey and National Government Questionnaire, but also the report was expanded to include the private sector and international organizations and networks.

**Figure 1.1. Comparison of Global Review Characteristics, 2013, 2017 and 2022**

Global Review Characteristic	Report Year		
	2013	2017	2022
<b>RESEARCH APPROACH</b>			
<b>National Government Questionnaire</b>			
Number of government respondents	–	41	93
Number of countries represented	–	41	45
Survey languages	–	English, Spanish	English, Spanish
<b>Stakeholder survey</b>			
Number of stakeholder respondents	163	201	322
Number of countries represented	92	62	92
Survey languages	English	English, Spanish	English, Spanish, French
<b>Literature review</b>			
Number of articles, reports and other sources	174	70	208
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b>			
Number of experts interviewed	20	6	26
<b>REPORT CONTENT</b>			
National government SPP Factsheets	–	√	√
Assessment of global trends	√	√	√
Analysis of progress towards SDGs	–	–	√
Comparison of regional SP activity	–	√	√
Private sector SP analysis	–	–	√
Intergovernmental organization SP analysis	–	–	√
Overview of international support organizations and networks' SP activities	√	–	√
Recommendations on SP	Limited	√	√

The results presented in the *2022 SPP Global Review*, however, are limited by some important research constraints. One such limitation is language – the data collection exercises were conducted in a few main languages (English and Spanish for the National Government Questionnaire and English, Spanish and French for the Stakeholder Survey), while the literature review covered mostly publications in English. In addition, it is unclear how disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic might have affected participation in the surveys.

Despite these challenges, the Stakeholder Survey generated over 300 responses from a wide range of countries. However, survey participants were still predominantly public authority stakeholders,

as in earlier *SPP Global Review* editions, with fewer stakeholders responding from private and non-profit sectors. Given that the survey was distributed by invitation to practitioners in communities already working on SP and related topics, the survey results are probably influenced by a 'self-selection bias' (individuals selecting themselves into a group, causing the sample to be biased). Moreover, given the open nature of the survey invitation, it was impossible to determine the total number of potential participants and therefore conclusions cannot be drawn on as to whether the survey participants are representative of all possible participants. The survey results should therefore be treated as indicative and not representative.

Another limitation was that the National Government Questionnaire was completed by a set of 45 national governments, therefore the findings do not reflect all SPP activity by national governments worldwide. For instance, the United Kingdom, which runs an active SPP programme, did not participate in the study. Nevertheless, according to UNEP's assessment, this sample represents the vast majority of countries leading SPP around the globe (accounting for approximately 70% of global GDP) and is therefore robust enough to allow conclusions to be drawn.

Lastly, data for the 2013, 2017 and 2022 SPP Global Reviews were gathered in 2012, 2016 and 2021, respectively. Findings are not always directly comparable because, in some cases, different questions were asked or similar questions provided a slightly different set of responses. In addition, a different set of stakeholders completed the Stakeholder Survey and National Government Questionnaire across each reporting year. Even so, most topics allowed for comparison and, where possible, high-level trends and shifts are highlighted.

For further information on the research methods employed to support this publication please see Annex 1.

## 1.3 Report structure

The *SPP Global Review* is organized into two Parts. Part I focuses on the current state of sustainable procurement and progress in national governments and is composed of four Chapters, including the Introduction. Chapter 2 provides a general overview of the current state of SP and emerging trends, drawing upon Stakeholder Survey findings, while Chapter 3 takes a closer look at SP implementation among national governments, using National Government Questionnaire and the SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise aggregate data. Part I concludes with a set of recommendations for institutional purchasers based on findings from the earlier Chapters.

Part II of the *SPP Global Review*, explores the diffusion of SP to the private sector, international organizations and role of supporting entities. It consists of three Chapters. Chapters 5 and 6 take a closer look at SP implementation among private enterprise and intergovernmental organizations, while Chapter 7 examines how international organizations and

networks are supporting SP mainstreaming through their activities and initiatives.

There are three Annexes. Annex 1 describes the research methods for this publication, Annex 2 provides an overview of the international organizations and networks supporting SP described in Chapters 6 and 7 and Annex 3 is a study on sustainable procurement in local governments.

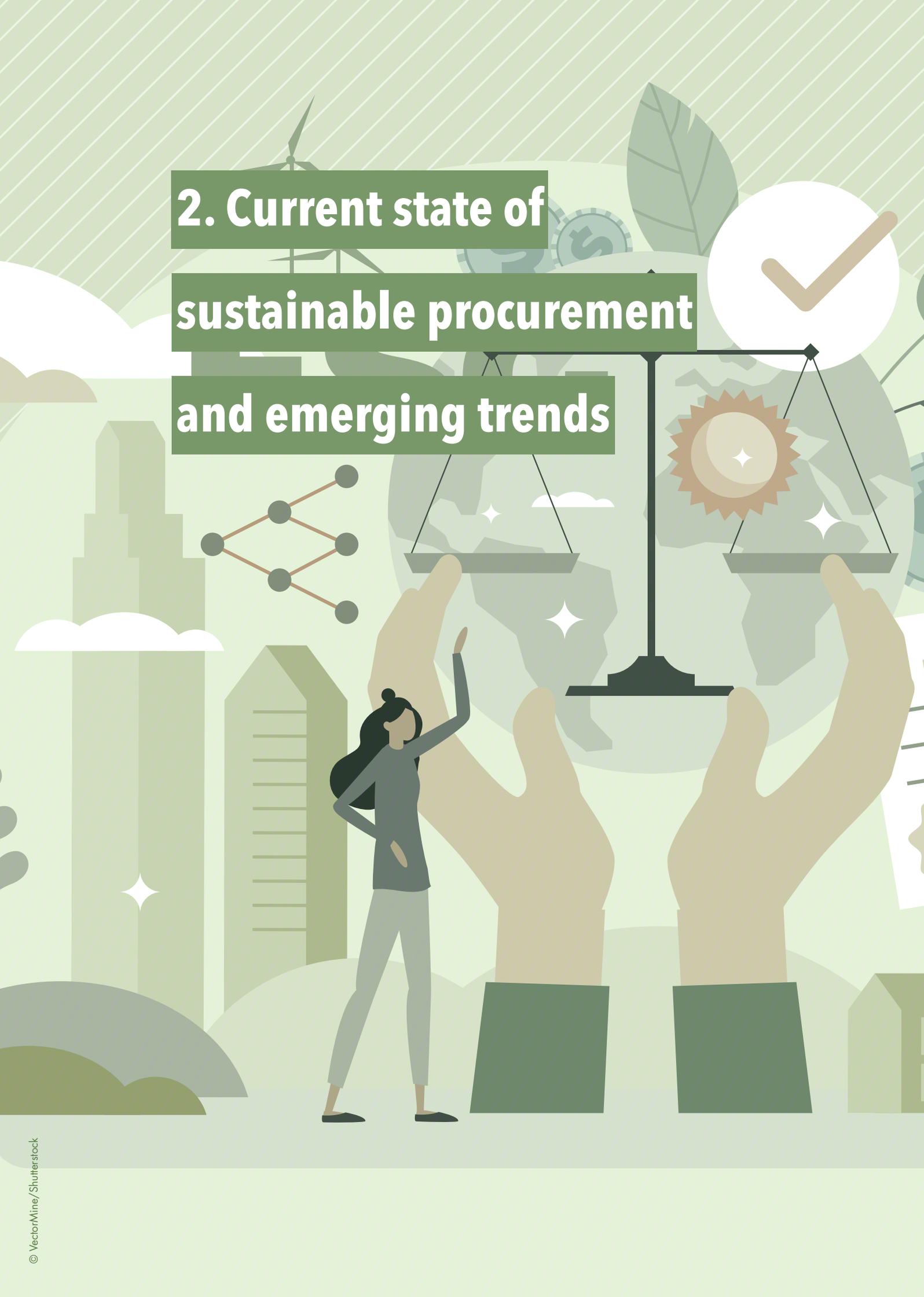
In addition, the *2022 SPP Global Review* is supplemented by [Factsheets<sup>2</sup>](#) on the progress of SPP implementation across 45 countries that participated in the National Government Questionnaire. The Factsheets contain detailed information about the policies, activities, and monitoring systems that national governments have in place to promote and implement sustainable public procurement within their organizations and countries.

*After two decades of progress, sustainable procurement is regarded by many organizations as an important instrument in helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.*

<sup>2</sup> [www.unep.org/factsheets-spp-national-governments-2022](http://www.unep.org/factsheets-spp-national-governments-2022)



## 2. Current state of sustainable procurement and emerging trends



Governments, private enterprise and the international development community have long been active in promoting sustainability in their procurement processes. Sustainable procurement (SP) has also drawn attention from other actors, such as researchers and academic institutions, who seek to develop theoretical and scientific understanding of the sustainable procurement process. To better understand how different organizations are approaching the issues of SP, a survey of relevant stakeholders was conducted from May to June 2021. These stakeholders were individuals responsible for the development or implementation of SP policies in their organization, in addition to researchers, academics and experts who contribute to the advancement of SP.

Survey questions were designed to be broadly applicable across all sectors and engage all stakehold-

ers, regardless of whether they worked on SP policy-making or more directly in procurement processes. While many of the questions were derived from the *2017 SPP Global Review*, in some instances different questions were asked or similar questions provided a slightly different set of responses. The aim was to elicit respondents' perceptions of SP drivers and barriers, their organization's priorities and future opportunities to advance SP. This Chapter presents the results of the Stakeholder Survey. Where possible, comparisons between 2017 and 2021 survey results were drawn, although it should be noted that a different set of stakeholders completed the survey across each reporting year. Details on survey development and implementation, as well as a list of all survey questions and participating organizations, are available in Annex 1.1.

## 2.1 Survey participants

A total of 322 individual stakeholders responded to the survey, all of whom are included in the analysis. Of these, 240 stakeholders completed the survey in its entirety. The remaining 82 stakeholders only completed portions of it.

Survey participants represent a diverse array of countries, organizations and professions, reflecting both the breadth and multidisciplinary nature

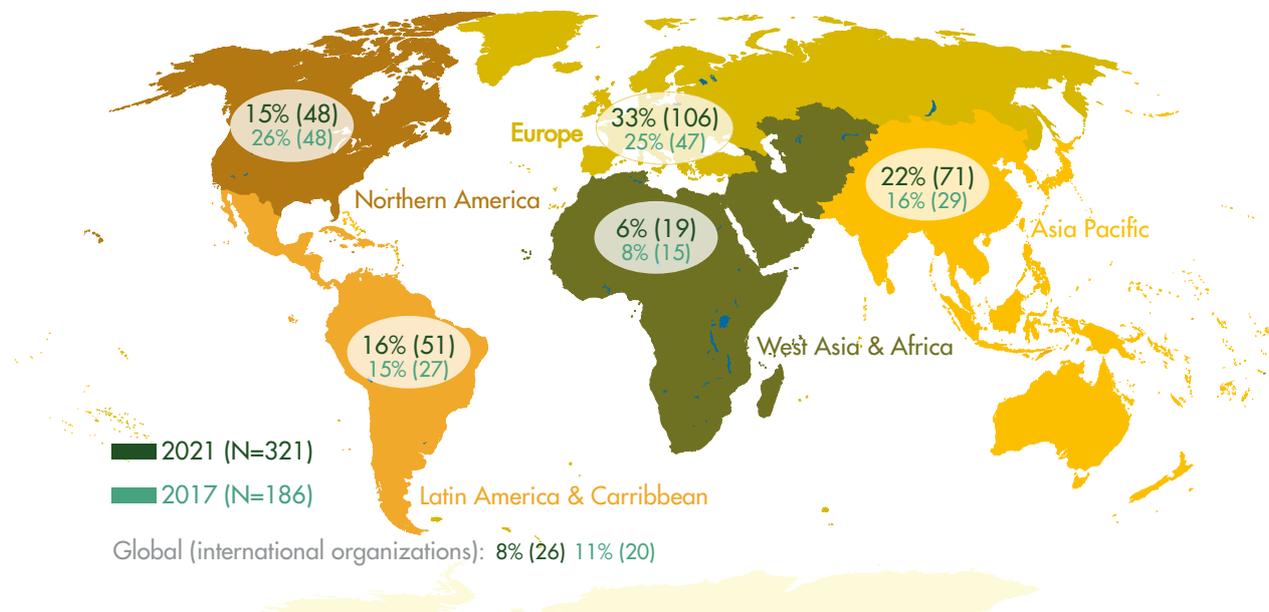
of SP. Responses were received from participants in 92 countries across 314 organizations. Most respondents reported working either in procurement (52%) or the environment (38%), while the remainder worked in areas such as social affairs, finance, facilities or public works. On average, participants reported working on SP topics for nine years and that their organizations had ten years of SP experience.



As shown in Figure 2.1, nearly 33% of participants came from organizations operating in Europe, whereas only 6% represented organizations operating exclusively in West Asia and Africa. About 8% of the stakeholders worked for global organizations whose focus spans multiple regions. Compared to

the 2017 SPP Global Review, the survey results reported in this publication are based on a considerable increase (55%) in the number of survey participants and in the number of countries represented (48%). These increases are particularly apparent in Europe and the Asia Pacific region.

**Figure 2.1. Stakeholder Survey participants by world region, 2017 and 2021<sup>1</sup>**

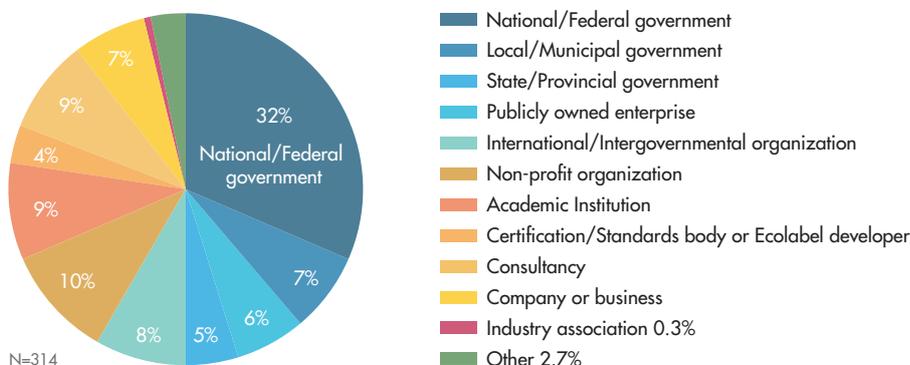


Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

Survey participants worked in a wide array of organizations, as reflected in Figure 2.2. Public authorities (national, state, local and publicly owned enterprise) still account for the largest group of SP stakeholders (50%). However, greater participation was recorded among non-profit organizations (from 3% in 2017 to

10% in 2021), international/intergovernmental organizations (from 4% in 2017 to 8% in 2021) and academic institutions (from 3% in 2017 to 9% in 2021). Private sector participation (consultancy and company or business) remained about the same in relative terms across both the 2017 and 2021 surveys (17% versus 16%).

**Figure 2.2. Stakeholder Survey participation by organization type**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

<sup>1</sup> Country groupings are based on the geographic regions defined under the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use of the United Nations Statistics Division. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups>

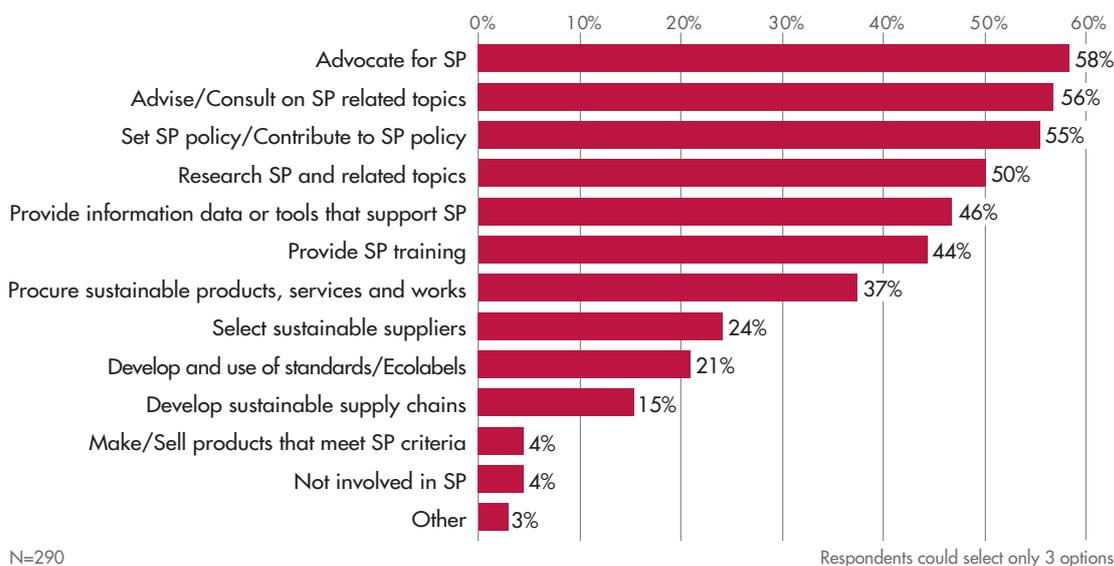
Related to organization size, over half (58%) of participants reported that their organizations have more than 300 employees and more than a third (37%) reported that their organizations have over 500. These results are similar to findings from the 2017 SPP Global Review and probably reflect the high level of participation from public authorities across reporting years.

The majority (70%) of stakeholders also reported that their organization had a formal policy in place requiring SP (either a dedicated SP policy, part of the general procurement guidelines or a formal part of the organization’s overall sustainability policy). In contrast, 28% of respondents said their organization had no formal SP policy. Such data were not collected in 2017.

Survey participants engaged in a broad range of activities to advance SP in their respective organizations, as shown in Figure 2.3. The data indicate

that participating stakeholders tend to be involved in higher-level policy and training initiatives. For example, more than half (58% and 56%) of participants indicated that they ‘advocate for SP’ and ‘advise/consult on SP related topics’ (respectively), 55% said that they ‘set SP policy/contribute to SP policy’ and half said that they ‘research SP related topics’. In contrast, fewer stakeholders reported direct involvement in implementing procurement activities such as ‘procuring sustainable products, services and works’ (37%) and ‘selecting sustainable suppliers’ (24%). With respect to developing supply chains, only 15% reported engaging in this activity. While these findings are generally in line with 2017 SPP Global Review data, a significant increase was noted in the activities of setting SP policies (from 42% in 2017 to 55% in 2021) and providing SP training (from 35% in 2017 to 44% in 2021), pointing to possibly a stronger institutional commitment to SP across stakeholder organizations.

**Figure 2.3. Stakeholders’ work activities to advance SP**



## 2.2 Sustainable procurement trends

As in the 2017 SPP Global Review, there was some variation in the language used to discuss SP. While some organizations might refer to 'green' or 'environmental' procurement, others take a broader approach by also including social and economic

factors. Given the professional and geographic variation, expert interviewees and survey participants were asked to report on how they and their organizations view sustainable procurement.

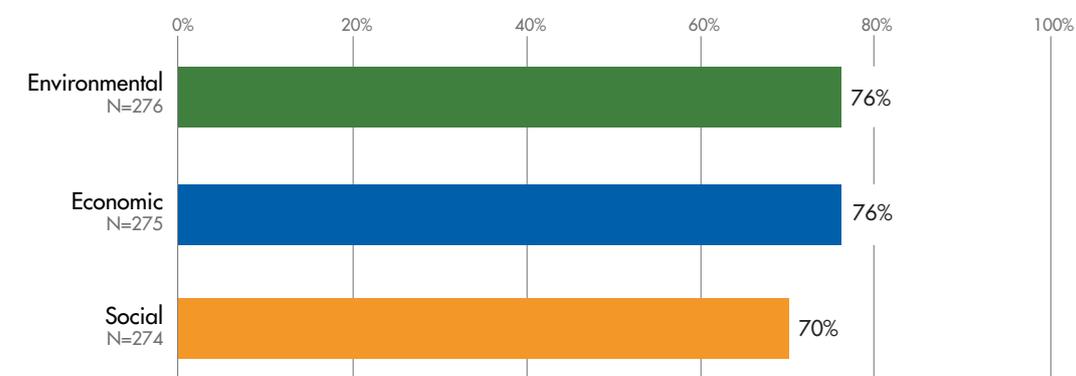
### What is considered SP?

According to expert interviews, SP is "a supporting framework for organizations to achieve their broader sustainability objectives" and "an opportunity to leverage immense spending power to advance environmental, social, and economic objectives". To better understand what SP encompasses, stakeholders were asked about the importance of environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainability in their organization. The results are shown in Figure 2.4.

More than three-quarters of survey participants (76%) indicated that environmental aspects (such as natural resources preservation, pollution reduction and biodiversity) were either very or extremely

important in their organization's work. About the same number indicated economic aspects (such as local suppliers, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), innovation, fair dealings, corruption and dumping), while slightly fewer (70%) indicated social ones (such as diversity, equality, human and labour rights and health and safety). These findings are supported by prior research, which indicates that the environmental dimension of SP dominates purchasing decisions (Ferri and Pedrini 2017). However, the scope of SP has gradually expanded to incorporate social or economic factors (Cravero 2017; Inanova 2020).

**Figure 2.4.** Proportion of organizations who consider environmental, social and economic aspects as 'very important' or 'extremely important'



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

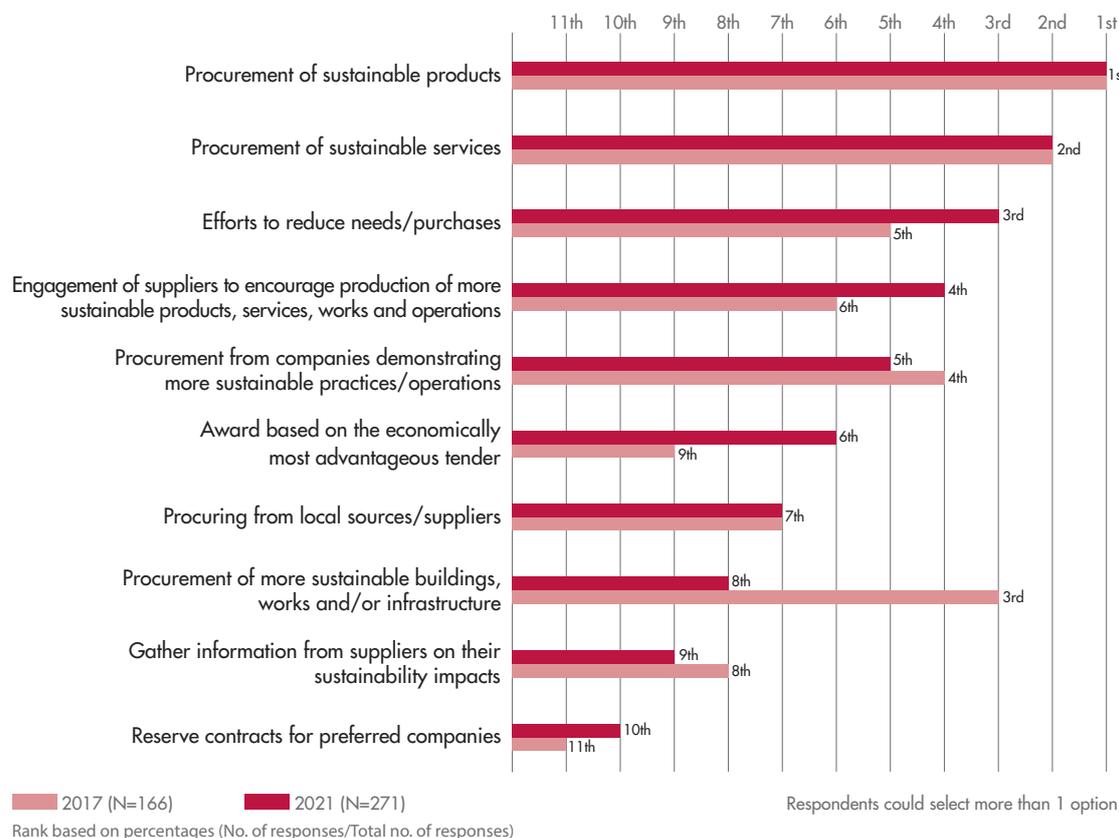
*SP is "a supporting framework for organizations to achieve their broader sustainability objectives" and "an opportunity to leverage immense spending power to advance environmental, social and economic objectives".*

*SP expert interviewee*

Survey participants also identified the types of activities that are considered part of SP within their organizations, as shown in Figure 2.5. Except for the purchase of sustainable products and services, which were already highly selected in the 2017 SPP

*Global Review*, almost all options in this edition have increased by more than 5% – showing a broader understanding of SP and the different strategies that can be applied.

**Figure 2.5. Actions defining SP according to survey participants ranking, 2017 and 2021<sup>2</sup>**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

One remarkable development is the increased emphasis on ‘awards based on the economically most advantageous tender’, moving from ninth to sixth place in the rankings. This points to more organizations taking into account non-price factors (such as quality, environmental and/or socio-economic considerations) in their purchasing decisions. In parallel, organizations also seem to be striving to reduce needs/purchases, as this SP activity moved into third place in 2021 from fifth in 2017. The growing importance of circular procurement and the need to develop solutions that preserve the value of materials through repair, reuse, remanufacture and recycling, as well as innovative alternatives such as Product-Service Systems, might explain this shift (see Box 2.1).

Market engagement activities also registered an increase – moving from sixth place in 2017 to fourth in 2021 – probably pointing to an increased effort on the part of organizations to address critical social and environmental challenges in their supply chains. In fact, recent research suggests that challenges, such as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, can be significantly more pronounced in the supply chain than in an organization’s own operations (Carbon Disclosure Project [CDP] 2021). In this context, as highlighted in academic literature and studies, the more an organization engages with its supply chain stakeholders, the more successful its sustainable procurement initiatives will be (Espace québécois de concertation sur les pratiques d’approvisionnement responsable [ECPAR] 2021).

<sup>2</sup> This figure reflects only those indicators in the 2021 survey and compares the data with findings from the 2017 SPP Global Review.

## Circular procurement

Circular procurement can be defined as ‘the process by which public authorities purchase works, goods or services that seek to contribute to closed energy and material loops within supply chains, whilst minimising, and in the best case avoiding, negative environmental impacts and waste creation across their whole life-cycle’ (European Commission [EC] 2017). To ‘close the loop’ in procurement, the idea of circularity is based on three principles:

- ✦ Design out waste and pollution
- ✦ Keep products and materials in use
- ✦ Regenerate natural systems

One example of how circularity can be implemented into public procurement is through Product-Service Systems (PSS). These are an innovative business approach that shifts the traditional business focus from only selling physical products to selling a mix of products and services that are jointly capable of meeting specific client demand, for instance through product leasing or selling products with take-back guarantees. The key idea behind PSS is that consumers do not demand products but are seeking the utility provided by products and services. One value-added of PSS lies in their potential to decouple consumption from economic growth, as they offer the possibility of meeting more needs with lower material and energy requirements.

The European Union’s Action Plan for the Circular Economy (EC 2015) has established a concrete and ambitious programme of action to keep resources in the economy and retain the value of these resources, which will contribute towards delivery of a sustainable low-carbon, resource-efficient and competitive economy. This plan recognizes public procurement as a key driver in the transition towards the circular economy and it sets out several actions that the European Commission will take to facilitate the integration of circular economy principles in green public procurement (GPP), which include emphasizing circular economy aspects in new or updated sets of EU GPP Criteria, supporting a higher uptake of GPP among European public bodies and leading by example in its own procurement and in EU funding (Usha Iyer-Raniga 2021).

The only practice that SP stakeholders selected less in this edition is the ‘procurement of more sustainable buildings, works and/or infrastructures’, dropping from third place in 2017 to eighth in 2021. This will need to be researched further, considering the critical recommendations of COP26,<sup>3</sup> including the need for an increased uptake of solar energy – as well as green buildings.

A regional analysis of 2021 findings reveals some notable differences in SP activities. Apart from the purchase of sustainable products and services, which were frequently selected by all regions, ‘procuring from local sources/suppliers’ is more popular among stakeholders from organizations operating in West Asia and Africa and the Asia Pacific regions. Moreover, stakeholders representing organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe more frequently considered ‘awards based on the economically most advantageous tender,’ while ‘procurement from companies demonstrating more sustainable practices/operations’ was commonly selected by stakeholders in Northern America as a part of their organization’s SP activities.



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<sup>3</sup> COP26 was the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in November 2021.

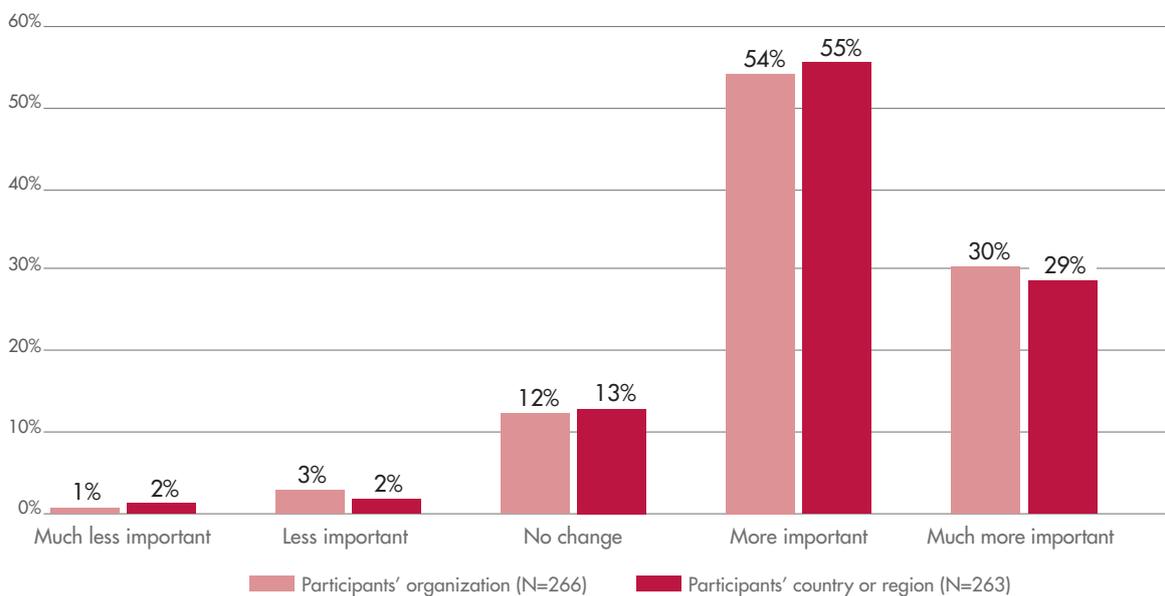
## Perceived importance of SP

Survey participants reported that both organizationally and at a national/regional level SP has become increasingly important since 2017 (see Figure 2.6). These findings are also consistent across a regional analysis of stakeholder responses. In fact, a constant positive assessment in the perceived importance of SP can be observed in each edition of the *SPP Global Review*. In 2017, 63% of respondents assessed that SP had become more important in their organizations and 68% indicated that it had become more important in their countries, while in

this edition 84% replied that SP had become more or much more important in both.

Recent research also indicates that the importance of SP continues to grow (World Bank 2021). No longer seen as a nice-to-have discipline, SP has evolved into an integral business function responsible for reducing costs, mitigating business risk, protecting and improving brand reputation, driving revenue and supporting innovation and growth (Bruel et al. 2017).

**Figure 2.6.** Perceived change in importance of SP in participants' organizations and/or countries since 2017



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

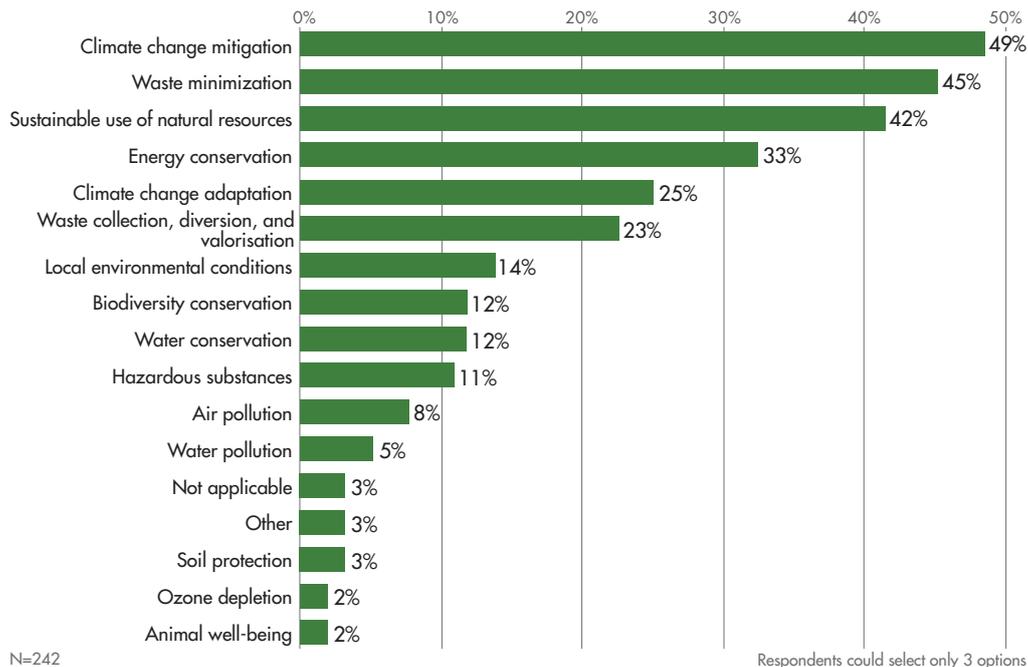
*...a constant positive assessment in the perceived importance of SP can be observed in each edition of the Global Review.*

## What priority issues should be addressed through SP?

Sustainability consists of a wide range of environmental and socio-economic issues, such as climate change mitigation, technology development and innovation, and diversity and inclusion. Organizations often prioritize these issues to focus on those that are most important to them. Stakeholders reported on the top three environmental and socio-economic

issues that they believed should be a priority for their organizations over the next five years. As shown in Figure 2.7, 'climate change mitigation' (49%), 'waste minimization' (45%) and 'sustainable use of natural resources' (42%) are the environmental issues most frequently identified as priorities.

**Figure 2.7. Priority environmental issues identified by survey participants for their organizations to address through SP**

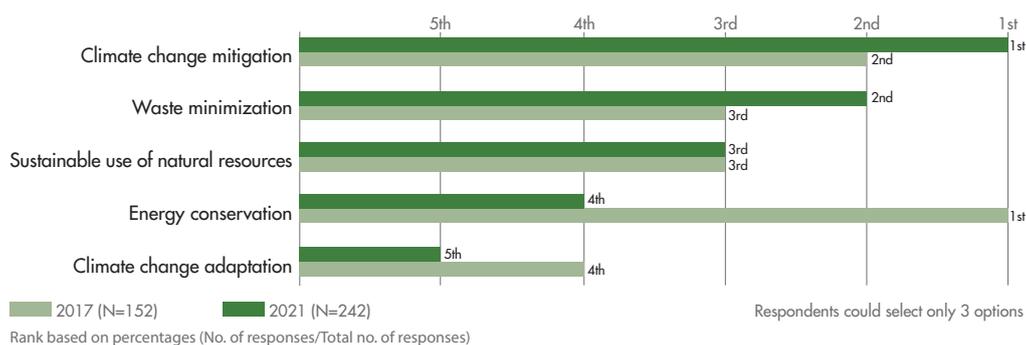


Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

In fact, all three categories have remained in the top priorities since 2017 (see Figure 2.8), with 'climate change mitigation' moving up in the rankings from second to first place, while 'waste minimization' is now second (from third) and 'sustainable use of natural resources' holding steady in third. 'Energy conservation' dropped from first place to fourth, probably because respond-

ents factored this issue into the climate change mitigation category. These shifts undoubtedly reflect the global consensus on climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2015), as well as an increased emphasis on circular procurement (European Commission [EC] 2017).

**Figure 2.8. Environmental issues ranking, 2017 and 2021**



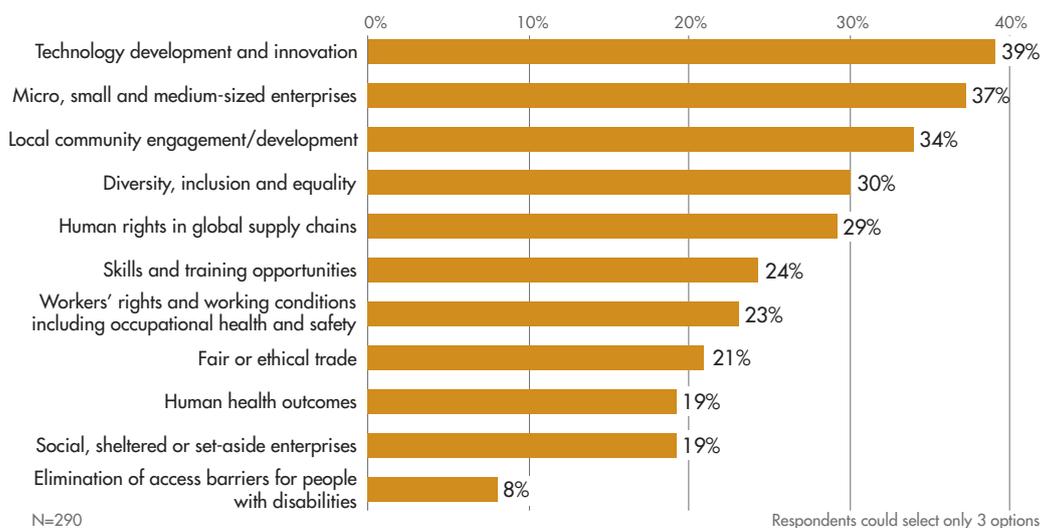
Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

A regional comparison of these environmental issues reveals that 'climate change mitigation' is the top priority among stakeholder organizations in West Asia and Africa, Europe, Northern America and Asia Pacific, while stakeholders from Latin America and the Caribbean reported 'waste minimization' to be the most important issue.

Stakeholders also identified the top three socio-economic issues that they expect to be a priority

for their organization over the next five years. As shown in Figure 2.9, 'technology development and innovation' (39%), 'micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' (37%) and 'local community engagement/development' (34%) were the issues identified most frequently. 'Diversity, inclusion and equality' and 'human rights in global supply chains' also registered strong results (30% and 29%, respectively).

**Figure 2.9. Priority socio-economic issues identified by survey participants for their organizations to address through SP**

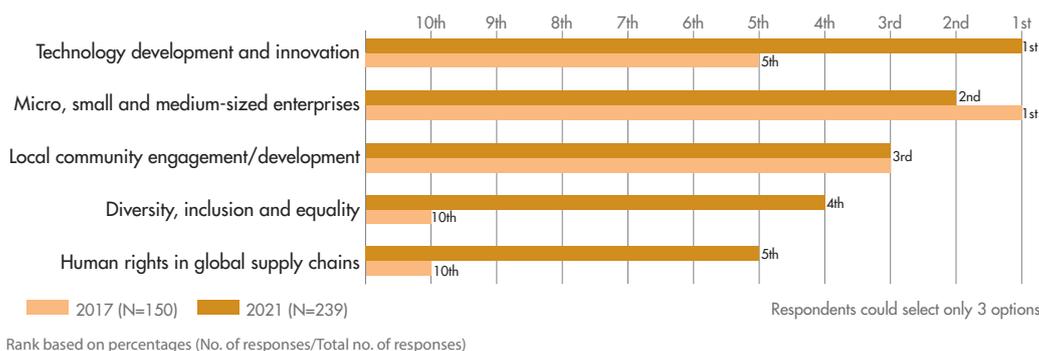


Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

When compared against results from the 2017 SPP Global Review, the findings point to significant changes. While 'micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' and 'Local community engagement/development' remain among the top three priorities, the other priorities, including 'technology development and innovation', 'diversity, inclusion and equality' and 'human rights in global supply chains', have become more

prominent – as shown in Figure 2.10. 'Technology innovation' has gone from fifth place to first and 'diversity' and 'human rights' have gone from tenth to fourth and fifth, respectively. These shifts are probably attributable to a growing acceptance of the government's role in driving markets toward green products and service innovation (EC 2016; EC 2021), as well as an increased focus on the social dimension of SP.

**Figure 2.10. Socio-economic issues ranking, 2017 and 2021**

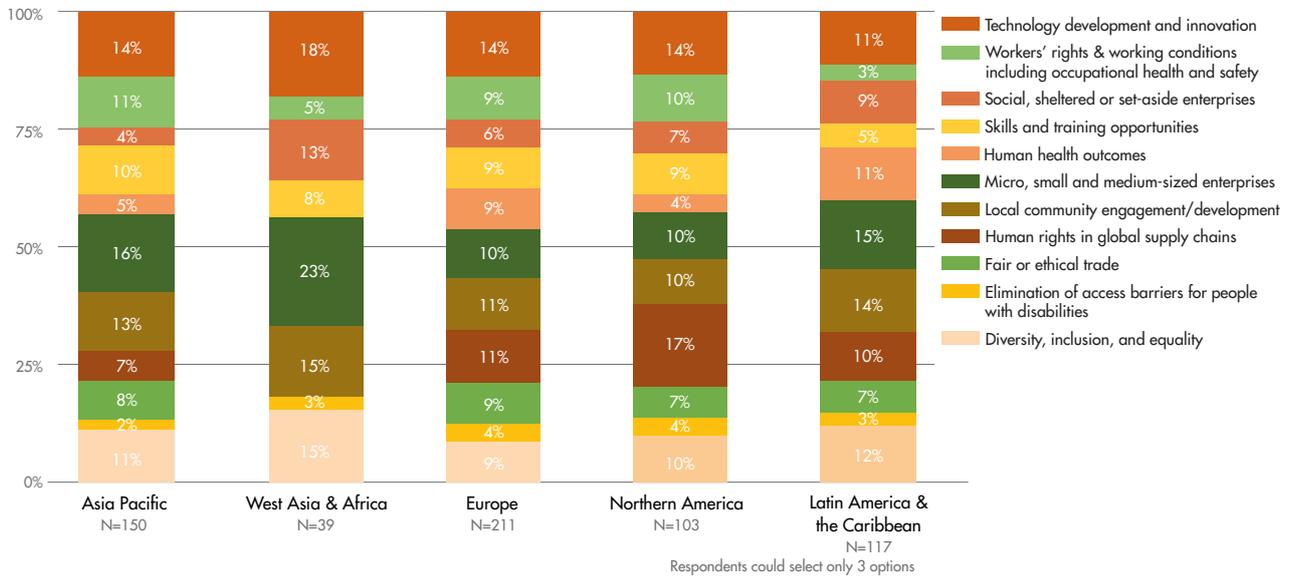


Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

Stakeholders reported variations in socio-economic priorities across different regions (See Figure 2.11). Stakeholders in the Asia Pacific, West Asia and Africa, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, reported the promotion of 'micro, small

and medium-sized enterprises' as their top priority, while stakeholders in Northern America prioritized 'human rights in global supply chains'. For stakeholders in Europe, 'technology development and innovation' was indicated as a priority issue.

**Figure 2.11. Regional distribution of socio-economic issues**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.



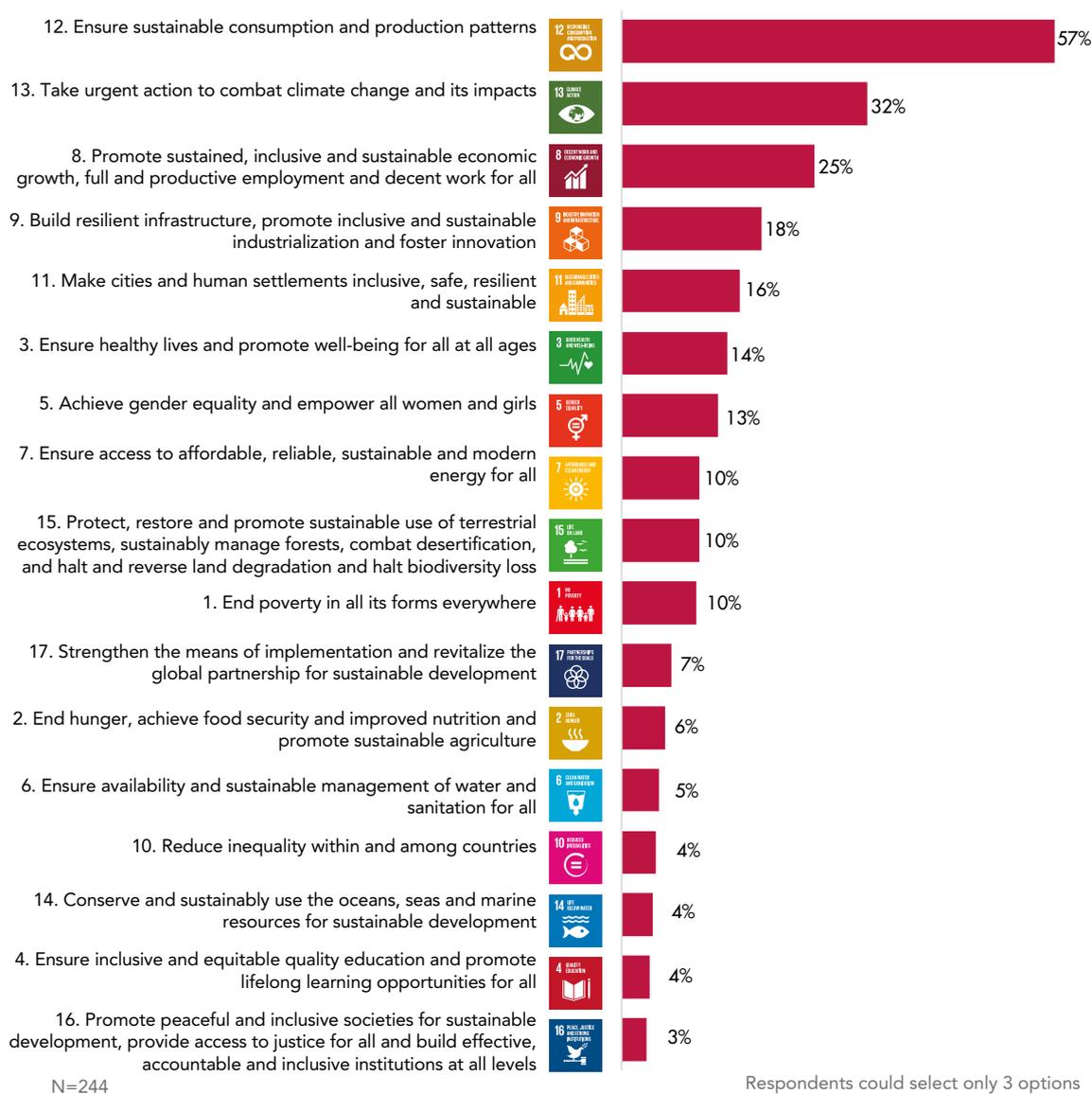
## What are the links between SP and SDGs?

In addition to identifying priority issues, stakeholders reported on whether their organization's SP activities addressed the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](https://sdgs.un.org/goals) (SDGs)<sup>4</sup>. These are 17 objectives designed to address the key challenges that society currently faces, including poverty, inequality, climate change and environmental degradation. Sustainable procurement can contribute to their achievement and, as indicated by one expert interviewee, "allow us to humanize the (procurement) process".

Figure 2.12 shows that stakeholders identified multiple SDGs that are addressed by their organization's SP activities. Most respondents (57%) indicated that

their organizations used SP to address SDG 12: 'Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns'. Following that, 32% of respondents described the use of SP to support SDG 13: 'Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts' and 25% used SP to address SDG 8: 'Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.' These findings are consistent with results from the 2021 National Government Questionnaire (see Chapter 3). Of the 17 SDGs, participating national governments indicated SDGs 12, 13 and 8 as having the most direct link to the objectives in their SPP policies.

**Figure 2.12. SDGs reportedly addressed by SP activities within participants' organization**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

<sup>4</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Far fewer SP stakeholder organizations used SP to address goals related to social inequality or injustice, such as ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’ (13%). Similarly, only 4% used SP to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ and only 3% used SP to ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels’. One potential explanation for this may be that, apart from gender equality, the specific objectives put forward in these SDGs are less directly related to SP.

The perceived link between SP and the SDGs also shows some regional variation. Aside from SDG 12 (‘Ensure sustainable consumption and production

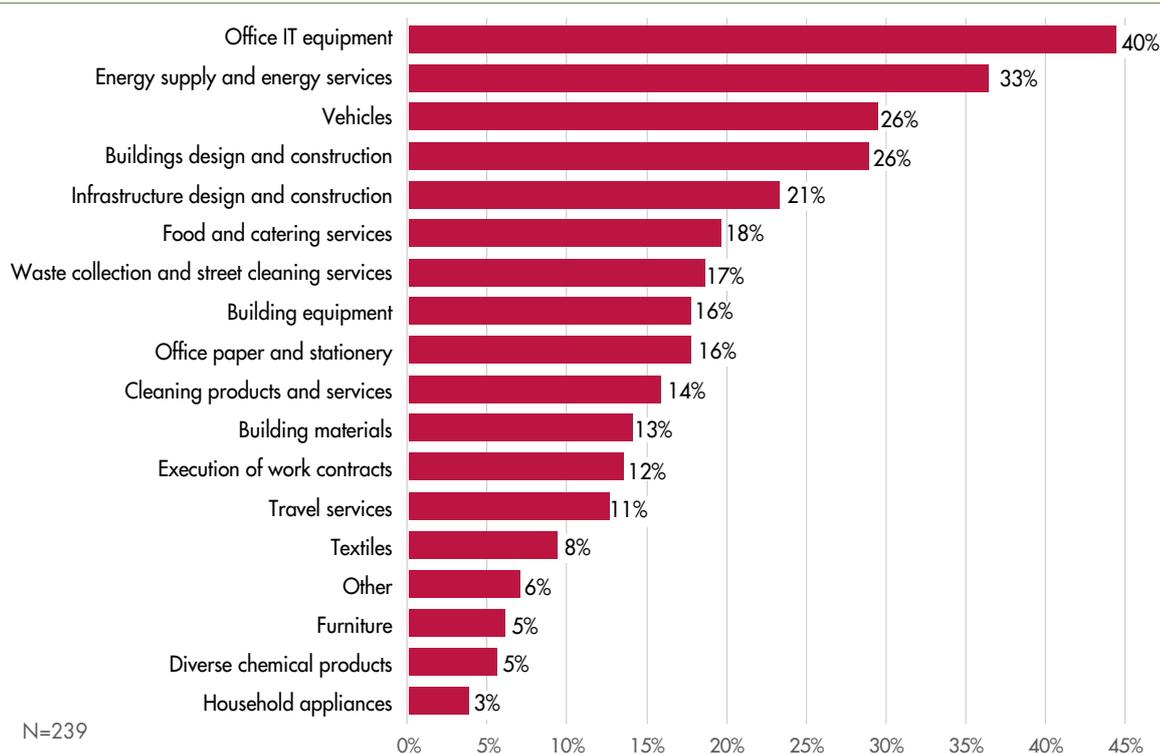
patterns’) and SDG 13 (‘Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts’), which were both highlighted by many stakeholders across all regions, stakeholders from Northern America, Europe and Asia Pacific more frequently selected SDG 9 (‘Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation’), while those representing organizations in West Asia and Africa, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, selected SDG 5 (‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’) with greater frequency. This is consistent with some expert interviews. One participant stated that, “Tanzania, India and South Africa have public contracts focused on women-owned businesses. We have to advance the importance of women-owned businesses in procurement frameworks”.

## What are the priority product and service categories?

Just as specific issues are prioritized by organizations, certain categories of products and services are also targeted for sustainable procurement. As shown in Figure 2.13, the most common categories that stakeholders believe should be prioritized in their organization’s SP activities include ‘office IT equipment’ (40%), followed by ‘energy supply and energy services’

(33%), ‘vehicles’ (26%) and ‘buildings design and construction’ (26%). These same four product and service categories were among the top ten categories reported by participating national governments in the 2021 National Government Questionnaire (see Chapter 3), although only ‘office IT equipment’ was featured in the top four.

**Figure 2.13. Priority product and service categories for applying SP practices according to survey participants**



N=239

Respondents could select only 3 options

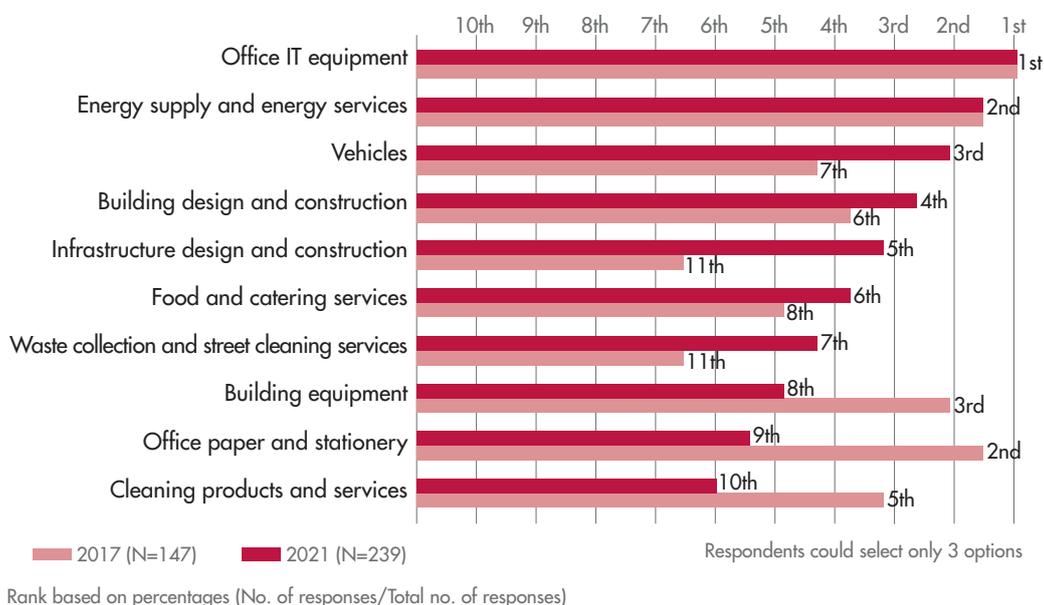
Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

'Office IT equipment' was reported as the most popular product category among stakeholder organizations across all regions except Northern America, which indicated 'vehicles'. Stakeholders representing organizations in Asia Pacific frequently indicated 'energy supply and energy services'.

Priority product and service categories in which to apply SP practices have shifted in the past five years (see Figure 2.14). While 'office IT equipment' continues to be the first priority, relevant categories for climate mitigation and circularity – such as energy supply, vehicles and buildings and infrastructure construction – have displaced other cat-

egories such as office paper or cleaning products and services when compared to the previous edition. Possible explanations include the progress in SP implementation within organizations, increased prevalence and acceptance of eco-labels and/or the policy priorities to mitigate climate change and promote a more circular economy. This third hypothesis is in line with the priority environmental issues highlighted by respondents in Figure 2.9. Food and catering services also registered an increase. The likely explanation for this shift is the rise of sustainable food policies (such as EU Farm to Fork policies)<sup>5</sup> and their effective backing with sustainable procurement of food services.

**Figure 2.14. Priority product and service categories for applying SP practices according to survey participants ranking, 2017 and 2021**



*Priority product and service categories in which to apply SP practices have shifted in the past five years. While office IT equipment continues to be the first priority, relevant categories for climate mitigation and circularity have displaced other categories such as office paper or cleaning products and services.*

<sup>5</sup> The EU Farm to Fork Strategy, which was published in May 2020, is a 10-year plan that supports the European Green Deal by aiming to make the food system fairer, healthier and more sustainable across the supply chain. The strategy sets out both regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives, with the common agricultural and fisheries policies as key tools. See: [https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en)

## Use of eco-labels

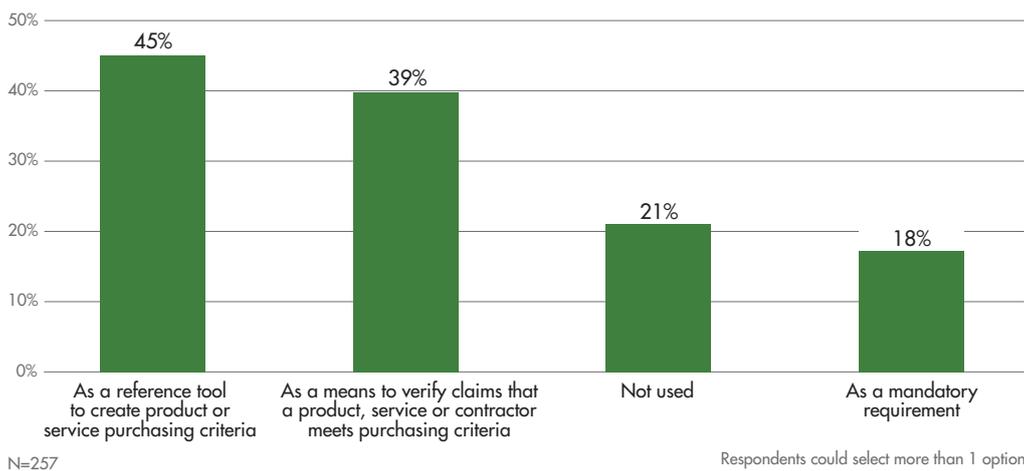
Identifying products and services that meet sustainability criteria can be challenging for individuals on the frontline of SP implementation. Eco-labels are one tool that purchasers can use to quickly identify products that meet their organization’s sustainability criteria. However, the extent to which organizations use eco-labels remains unclear.

Survey stakeholders were asked to indicate how product eco-labels are used by procurement entities in their organizations. The results are shown in Figure 2.15. Although some countries do not allow for eco-label mandates, 18% of stakeholders reported that their organizations required eco-labels as a ‘mandatory’ criterion for product purchases – a marginal increase from findings in the 2017 SPP

*Global Review*. Approximately 45% reported using eco-labels as a ‘reference tool to create product or service purchasing criteria.’ Moreover, 39% used eco-labels as ‘a means to verify claims that a product, service or contractor meets purchasing criteria.’ Only a small increase was noted in the use of eco-labels as a reference tool or means of verification between 2017 and 2021.

A regional analysis reveals that stakeholders with organizations in Northern America (40%) and Europe (35%) more commonly use eco-labels as a verification means, while stakeholders in West Asia and Africa (43%), Asia Pacific (37%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (35%) more often use them as a reference tool to create product or purchasing criteria.

**Figure 2.15. Use of eco-labels**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

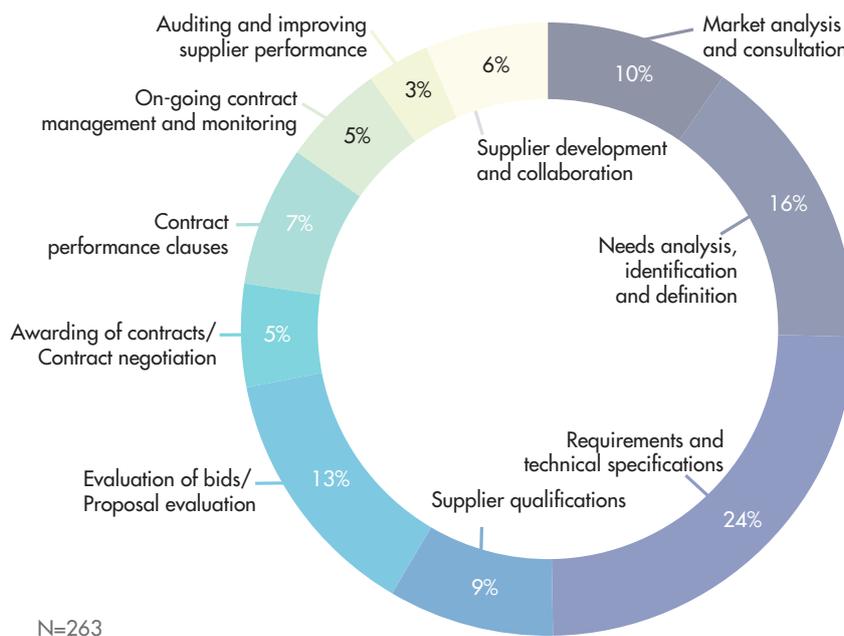


## Where are sustainability considerations applied in the procurement cycle?

Sustainable procurement can relate to all stages of the purchasing process or procurement cycle, from needs identification all the way to managing contracts. While the requirements or specification stage has traditionally been the most widely used for introducing SP criteria, there are opportuni-

ties at other stages that are often overlooked. Figure 2.16 shows that 24% of respondents reported that the development of 'requirements and technical specifications' continues to be the main stage of the procurement cycle for bringing in sustainability considerations.

**Figure 2.16. Most effective stages of the procurement cycle to introduce SP considerations**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

When asked about developing technical specifications, one expert said that “We fail to exploit opportunities that lie beyond the tendering specification-stage to enhance the sustainability outcome of the procurement decisions. Professionalization is needed to empower procurers with the right kind of knowledge, tools and information so that they can use the whole procurement cycle to deliver sustainability benefits”.

The second most widely identified stage is ‘needs analysis, identification and definition,’ which 16% of stakeholders identified as one of the top stages for

effective SP implementation. These findings suggest that there is more consensus on the ability to effectively implement SP around the earlier stages of the procurement cycle. Interestingly, there was limited regional variation across survey respondents for this question. Participants from almost all regions selected ‘development of requirements and technical specifications’ as one of the most important stages of SP implementation. The results are consistent with previous editions of the *SPP Global Review*, with technical specifications as the most important stage, followed by definition of needs.

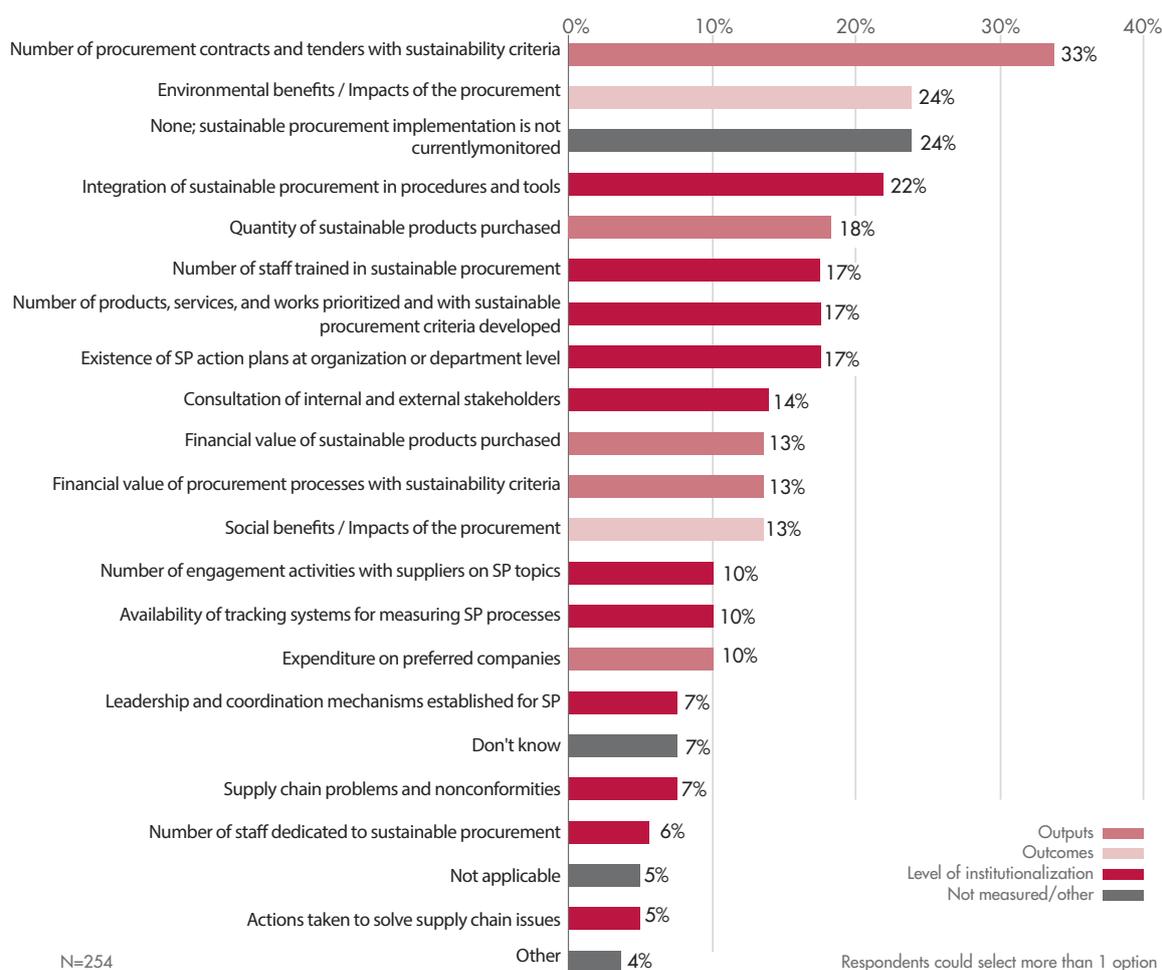
## 2.3 Measuring and monitoring SP implementation

Organizations with an SP policy often want to know whether the policy is meeting its intended goal. This is relevant because policy implementation can be time and resource intensive. Previous research highlights the importance of a comprehensive measurement, monitoring and evaluation system to ensure SP accountability and implementation success. For instance, Hansen (2020) suggests that effective monitoring can help to avoid SPP policy and practices being applied at the procurement practitioner's discretion, while the oversight functions should also align with the stated SP objectives.

However, almost one-third (31%) of respondents either reported that their organization's SP was not currently being monitored or they were not sure how their organization monitored SP activities. Among the remaining respondents (175), findings revealed

that each organization measured around an average of four sustainable procurement aspects/indicators in their monitoring and measurement system. As seen in Figure 2.17, the most common indicator monitored is the 'number of procurement contracts and tenders with sustainability criteria', with 33% of respondents indicating this applied to their organization. Participating national governments in the 2021 National Government Questionnaire also reported this as the most commonly monitored aspect of SPP, although the definition was broadened to include not just the number of contracts or tenders with sustainability criteria but also the value of such contracts (see Chapter 3). These aspects, often categorized as SP 'outputs' are the direct results of procurement activities and are often the easiest to quantify and monitor.

**Figure 2.17. Aspects of SP monitored or measured in survey participants' organizations**

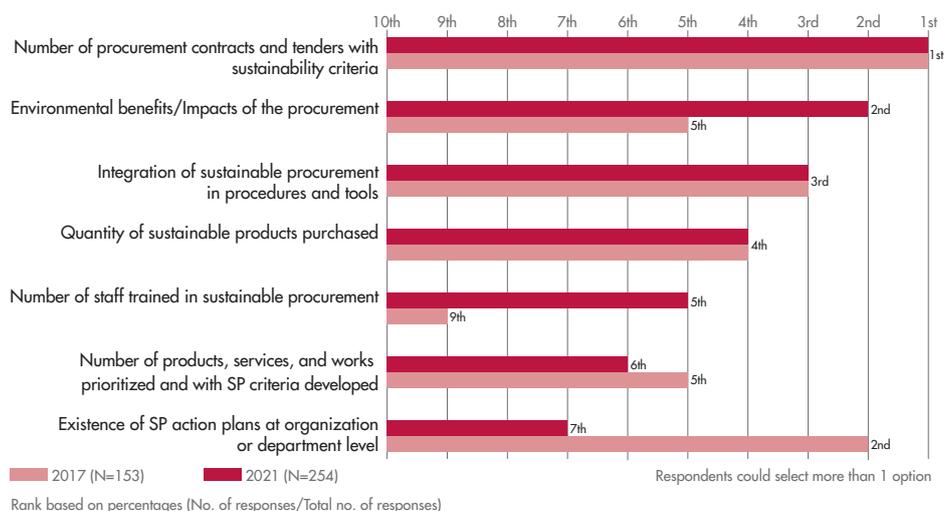


Stakeholders in Europe, Northern America and Latin America and the Caribbean selected ‘Number of procurement contracts and tenders with sustainability criteria’ as the aspect most frequently monitored by their organization. In contrast, most participants based in West Asia and Africa and Asia Pacific indicated ‘the integration of SP in procedures and tools’.

No significant increases were observed in the proportion of organizations monitoring SP from 2017 to 2021, and the most monitored aspect remains the number of procurement contracts and tenders with sustainability criteria, or SP outputs (see Figure 2.18). Besides this, the estimation of environmental benefits, or SP outcomes was reported as the second most common monitoring practice in the Stakeholder Survey, whereas in 2017 it was the fifth. This probably reflects a growing awareness of the importance of measuring not just SP

outputs, but also SP outcomes such as reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (versus actual measurement). In fact, in recent years a number of tools have become available to help measure SP outputs, such as environmental impact calculators (including the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool, Green Calculators and so on). Interestingly, SP action plans – a measure of SP institutionalization – dropped from second to seventh place, while the number of staff trained in SP increased from ninth to fifth in the rankings. One possible explanation is that many organizations have already adopted SP policies and action plans and are in the process of providing training and capacity-building to support SP implementation. This assessment is in line with results from the 2021 National Government Questionnaire, which revealed that most participating national governments (76%) have an SP policy and/or action plan in place (see Chapter 3).

**Figure 2.18. Aspects of SP monitored or measured in survey participants’ organizations ranking, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

*No significant increases were observed in the proportion of organizations monitoring SP from 2017 to 2021, and the most monitored aspect remains the number of procurement contracts and tenders with sustainability criteria, or SP outputs.*

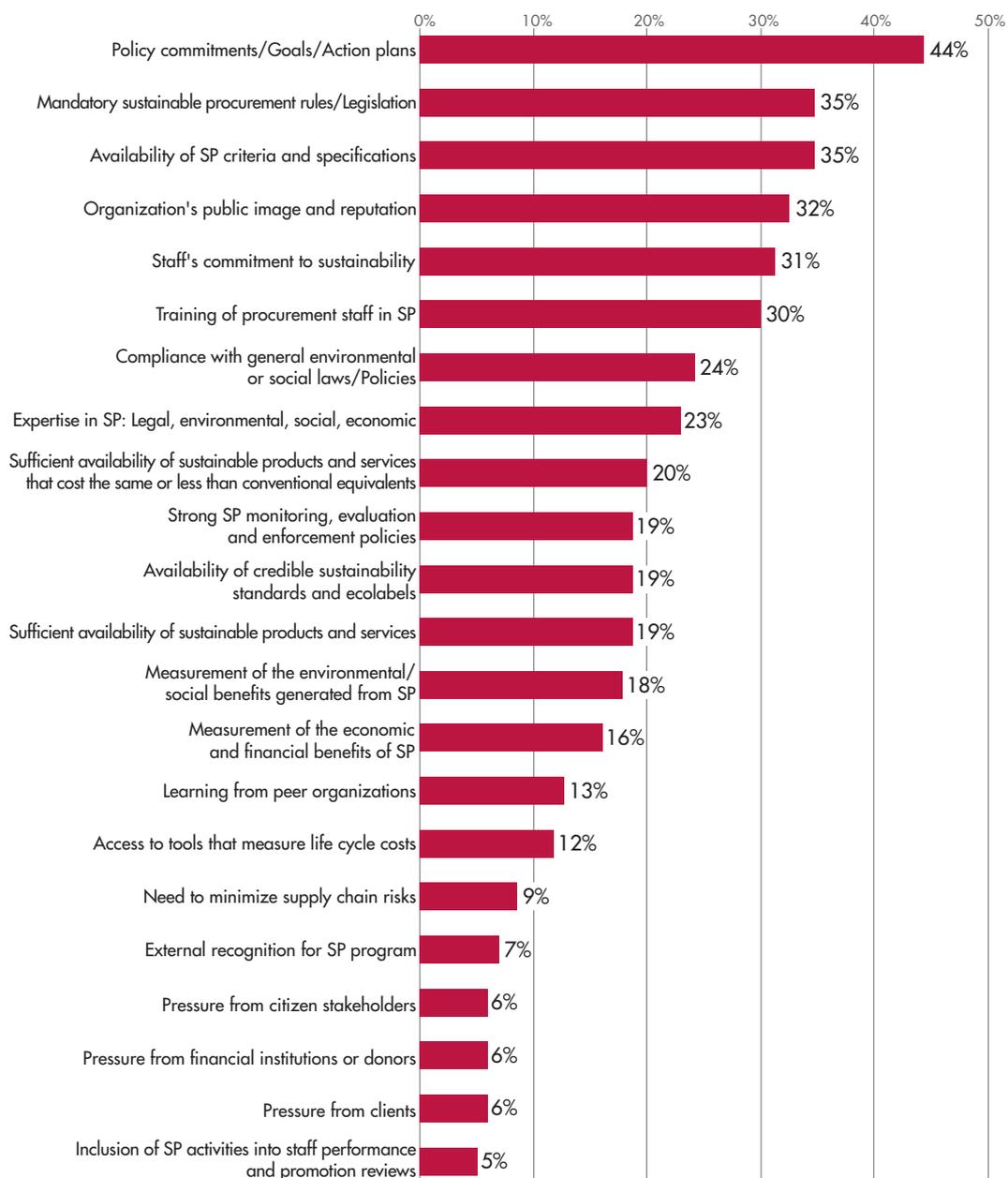
## 2.4 Drivers for implementation

Understanding the drivers of SP implementation is critical for learning how SP might be further promoted. Organizations are nested within complex systems and face pressures from governmental laws and regulations, as well as competitive pressures from similar organizations. Many organizations, regardless of sector, also learn from each other through communities of practice.

As shown in Figures 2.19 and 2.20, a wide range of factors can drive SP implementation. While 'policy

commitments/goals/action plans' and 'mandatory sustainable procurement rules/legislation' still rank as the top two drivers (44% and 35%, respectively), the 'availability of SP criteria and specifications' has moved from seventh place in 2017 to third in 2021. A regional analysis of stakeholder responses also points to 'policy commitments/goals/action plans' as the principal driver, except in Latin America and the Caribbean, where respondents more commonly selected 'expertise in SP'.

**Figure 2.19. Strongest drivers for the implementation of SP in survey participants' organizations**



N=243

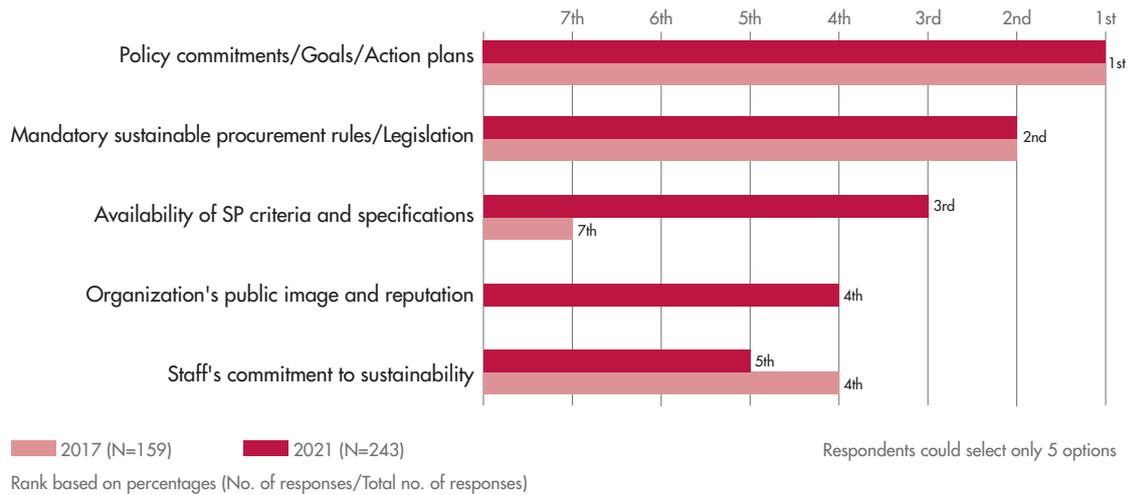
Respondents could select only 5 options

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

Although 'organization's public image' was not included as a category in 2017 and therefore a comparison cannot be drawn across years, it is clear that social pressure is an important driver as nearly one-third of stakeholders (32%) referred to this factor. This finding is consistent with prior research, which shows that organizations are motivated to implement SP programmes for a variety of reasons – with

brand reputation being chief among them (Bruel et al. 2017). The expert interviews also confirm this finding, with one participant suggesting that, "Millennials are having an impact due to consumer sentiment in the private sector, they won't buy unethical products which forces companies to reposition, brand and promote their SP agendas. This spills over into the public sector as well".

**Figure 2.20. Strongest drivers for the implementation of SP in survey participants' organizations ranking, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

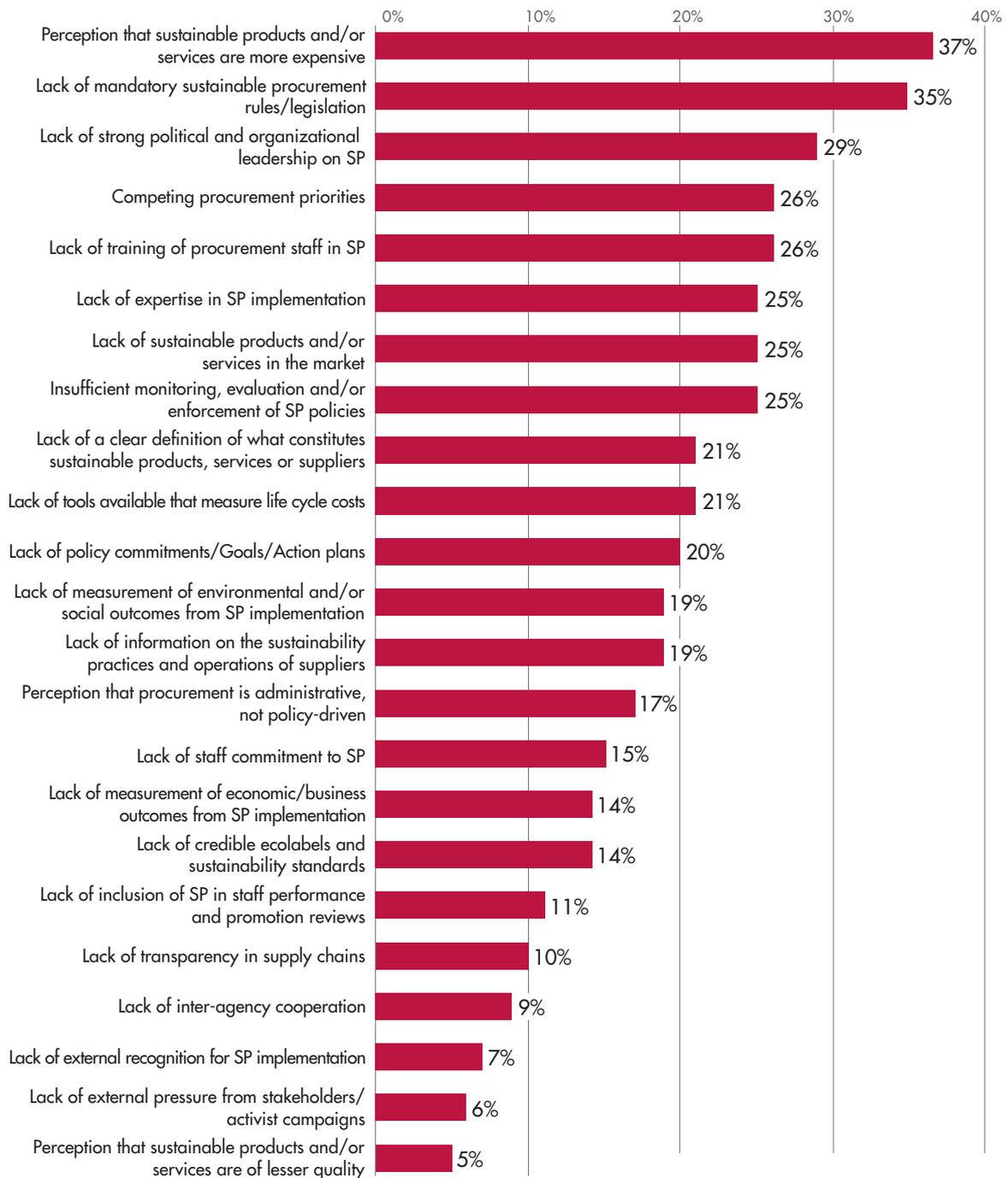


## 2.5 Barriers to implementation

Just as aspects of an organization's internal and external environment may support SP implementation, other factors may prove to be barriers, as seen in Figures 2.21 and 2.22. The most frequently

cited barrier among survey participants (37%) is still the 'perception that sustainable products and/or services are more expensive'.

**Figure 2.21. Strongest barriers to the implementation of SP in survey participants' organizations**

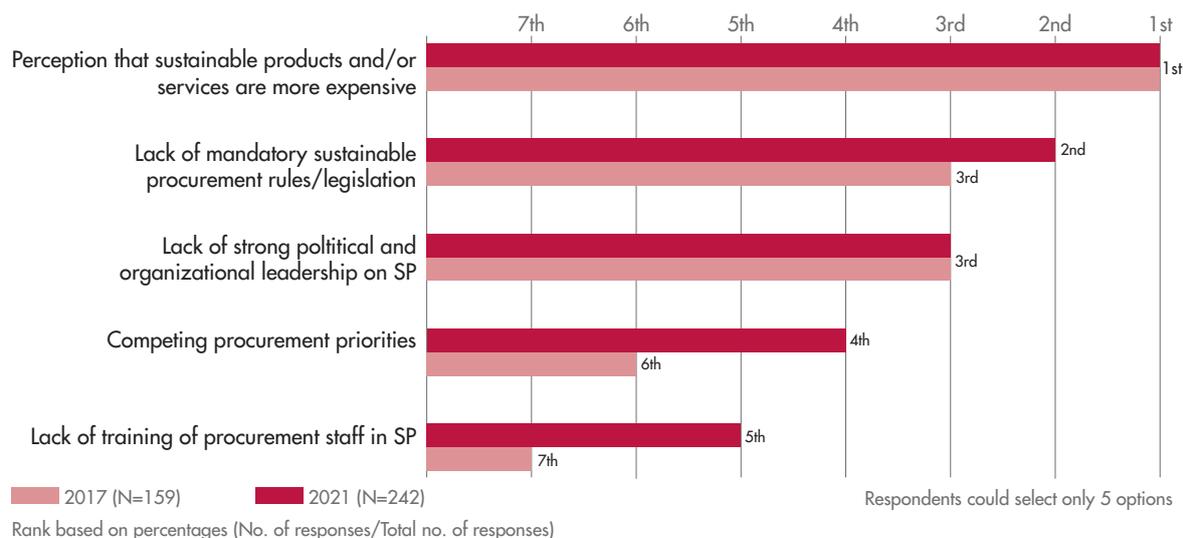


N=242

Respondents could select only 5 options

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

**Figure 2.22. Strongest barriers to the implementation of SP in survey participants' organizations ranking, 2017 and 2021**



This finding echoes one expert interviewee, who stated that, “We need to be upfront that the cost of sustainable products, works and services while communicating benefits of SPP. We need to be upfront that the cost of conventional products appears cheaper because other associated social and environmental costs [externalities] are borne not by procuring organizations and vendors but by society”.

In addition, more than one-third of respondents indicated a ‘lack of mandatory sustainable procurement rules/legislation’ as a significant barrier affecting SP implementation – a slight increase from 2017 (moving from third to second place in the rankings). However, a ‘lack of policy commitments/goals/SP action plans’ is no longer considered a significant barrier, dropping in the rankings from second in 2017 to eleventh place in 2021. A possible explanation for this disparity between ‘lack of mandatory SP rules/

legislation’ (second place) and ‘lack of policy commitments’ (eleventh place) is the natural evolution of policy frameworks supporting SP, as detailed in Chapter 3. Typically, SP provisions are first included in overarching policies, followed by the development of dedicated SP policies and action plans, culminating in sustainability requirements in procurement regulations. Given that many organizations are further along in SP implementation than five years ago, the absence of SP policies is less relevant, while other factors such as ‘competing procurement priorities’ and the ‘lack of training of procurement staff’ are more prominent in 2021. Those examples moved from sixth to fourth and seventh to fifth place, respectively. In this context, mandatory sustainable procurement rules/legislation become particularly important, as SP policies are often implemented on a voluntary basis.

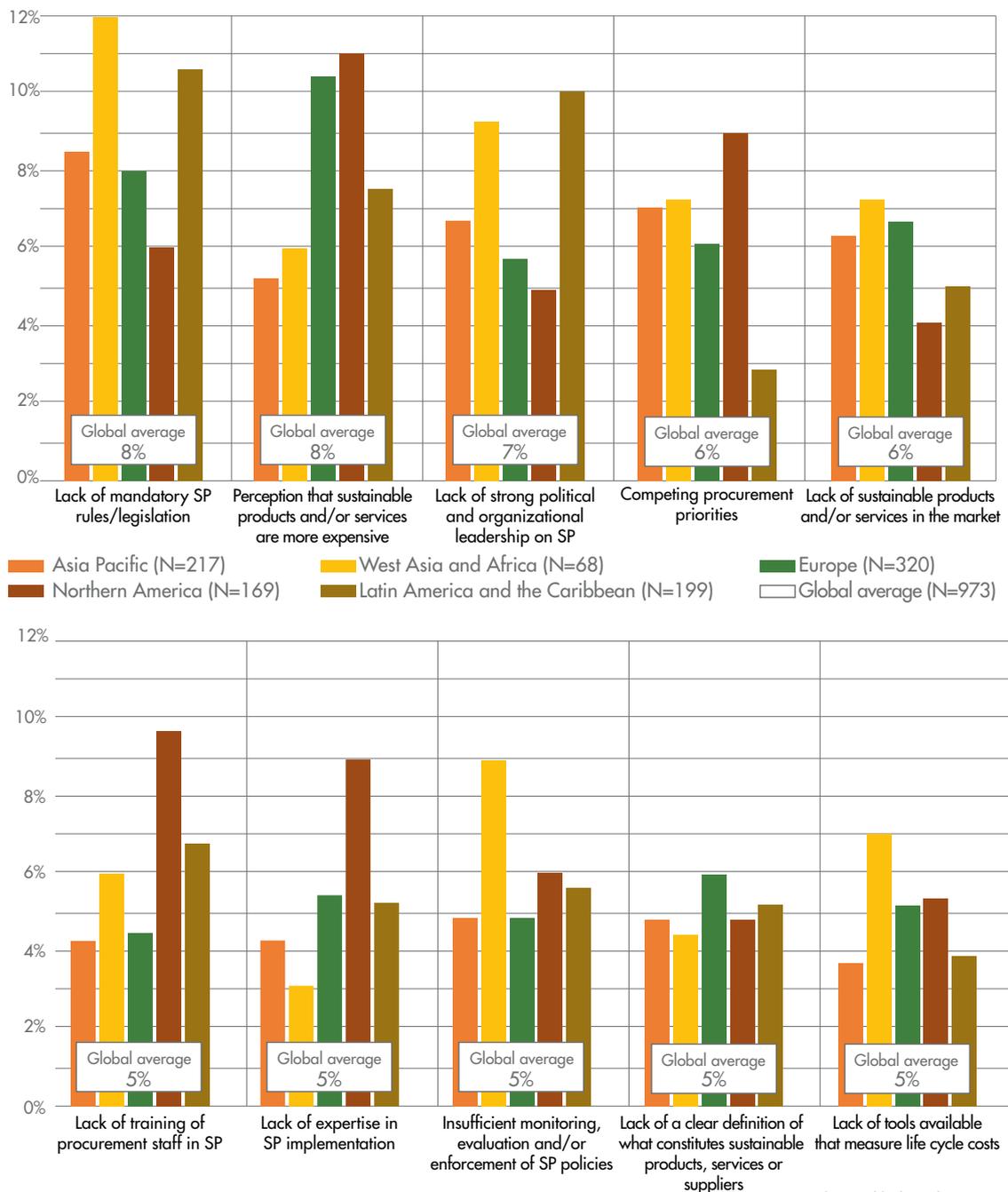
*“We need to be upfront that the cost of conventional products appears cheaper because other associated social and environmental costs [externalities] are borne not by procuring organizations and vendors but by society”.*

*SP expert interviewee*

Participants from various regions indicated different barriers to SP implementation in their organizations (see Figure 2.23). The strongest barriers identified in organizations in West Asia and Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean are 'lack of mandatory SP rules/legislation', while those in Northern America and Europe referred to the 'perception that sustainable products and/or services are more expensive'.

Other research has found similar results. In 2020, ECPAR (a Canadian network of sustainable procurement leaders) surveyed the country's public sector organizations, companies and non-governmental organizations on sustainable procurement on SDG adoption and published findings on the barriers to implementation. According to its findings, 83% of organizations indicated that a focus on the lowest purchase price (rather than value purchasing incorporating sustainable development factors) remained a significant obstacle for most (ECPAR 2021).

**Figure 2.23. Regional comparison of strongest barriers to SP implementation**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey

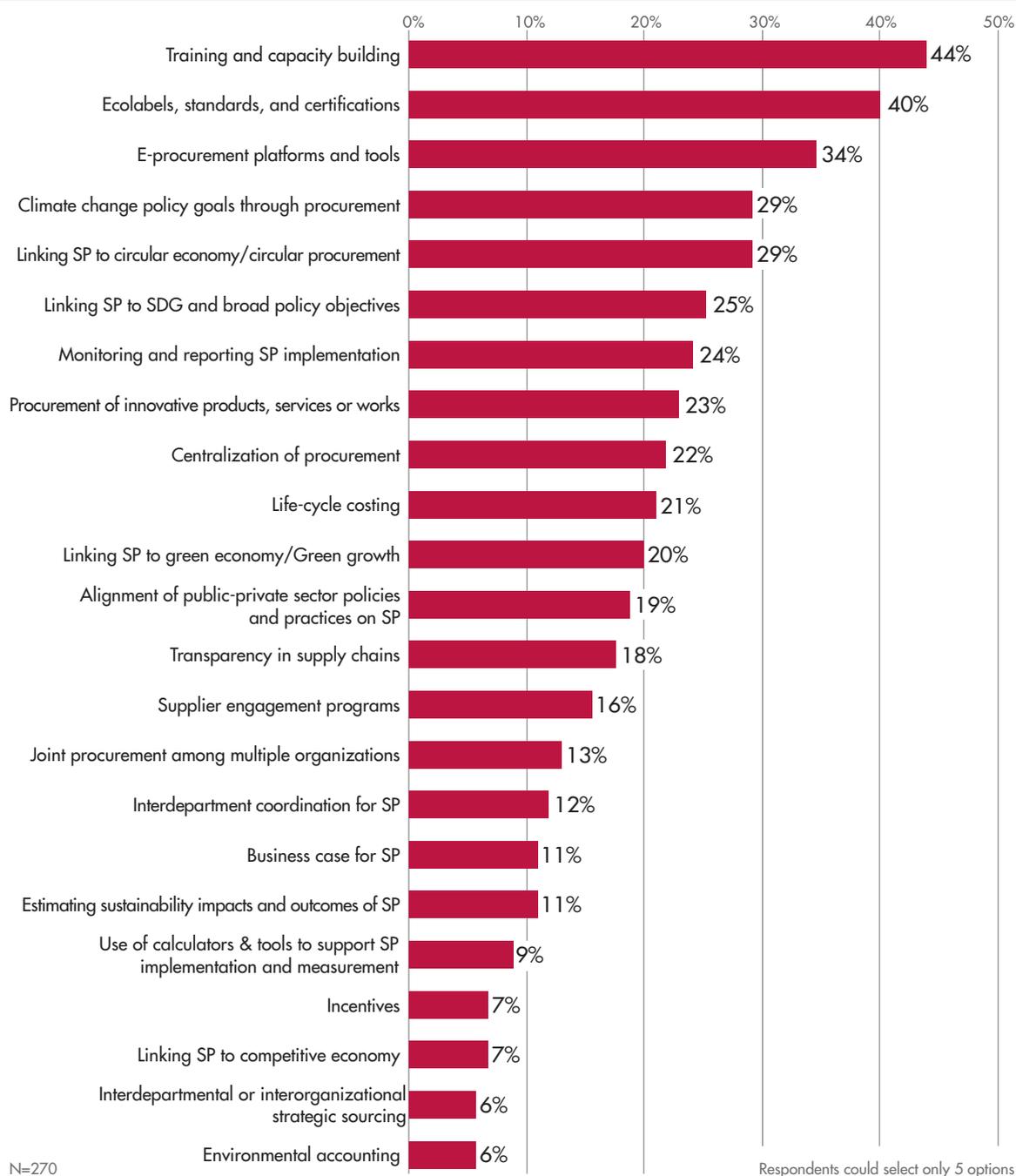
Respondents could select only 5 options

## 2.6 Stakeholder expectations for future sustainable procurement trends

Stakeholders who completed the survey were organizational and national leaders in the field of SP. As such, their expertise was essential for identifying

future trends and critical topics of concern. The results are shown in Figure 2.24 and 2.25.

**Figure 2.24. Emerging SP topics, strategies and activities according to survey respondents**

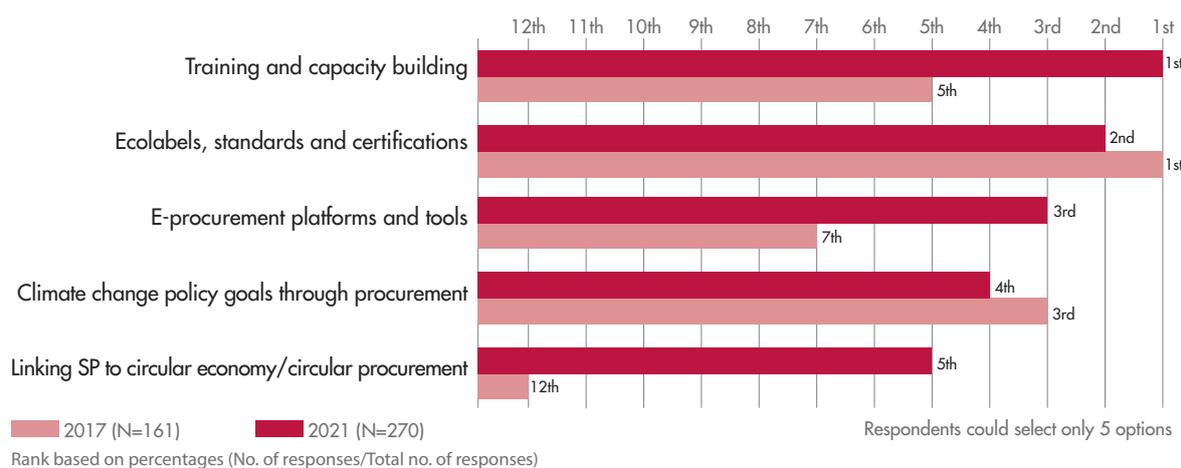


Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

As outlined in Figure 2.25, emerging topics have changed considerably in the past five years and several critical trends seem to be emerging. Except for ‘eco-labels, standards and certification’ and ‘climate change policy goals through procurement’ that have held somewhat steady in the rankings, most other topics have shifted in importance. More specifically, 44% of SP stakeholders identified the importance of ‘training and capacity building,’ moving from fifth to

first place. This suggests more organizational investment in SP implementation and a greater focus on the professionalization of SP. Some steps in that direction have been taken within the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), with the publication of procurement professionalization frameworks that include sustainability as a core element.

**Figure 2.25. Emerging SP topics, strategies and activities according to survey respondents ranking, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

Additionally, about one-third (34%) of respondents listed ‘e-procurement platforms and tools’, which moved from seventh to third place. This highlights the importance of knowledge management and integration in SAP implementation.<sup>6</sup>

The expert interviews also confirmed the importance of e-procurement platforms. One expert said that, “e-procurement platforms and integration with AI [artificial intelligence] and supplier discovery systems to build strategic supply chains and make it easy to search for new suppliers that comply with our sustainability criteria are some new trends”. The COVID-19 pandemic also underscored the importance of these platforms, especially in the context of emergency procurement, social distancing and supply chain security (World Bank 2021).

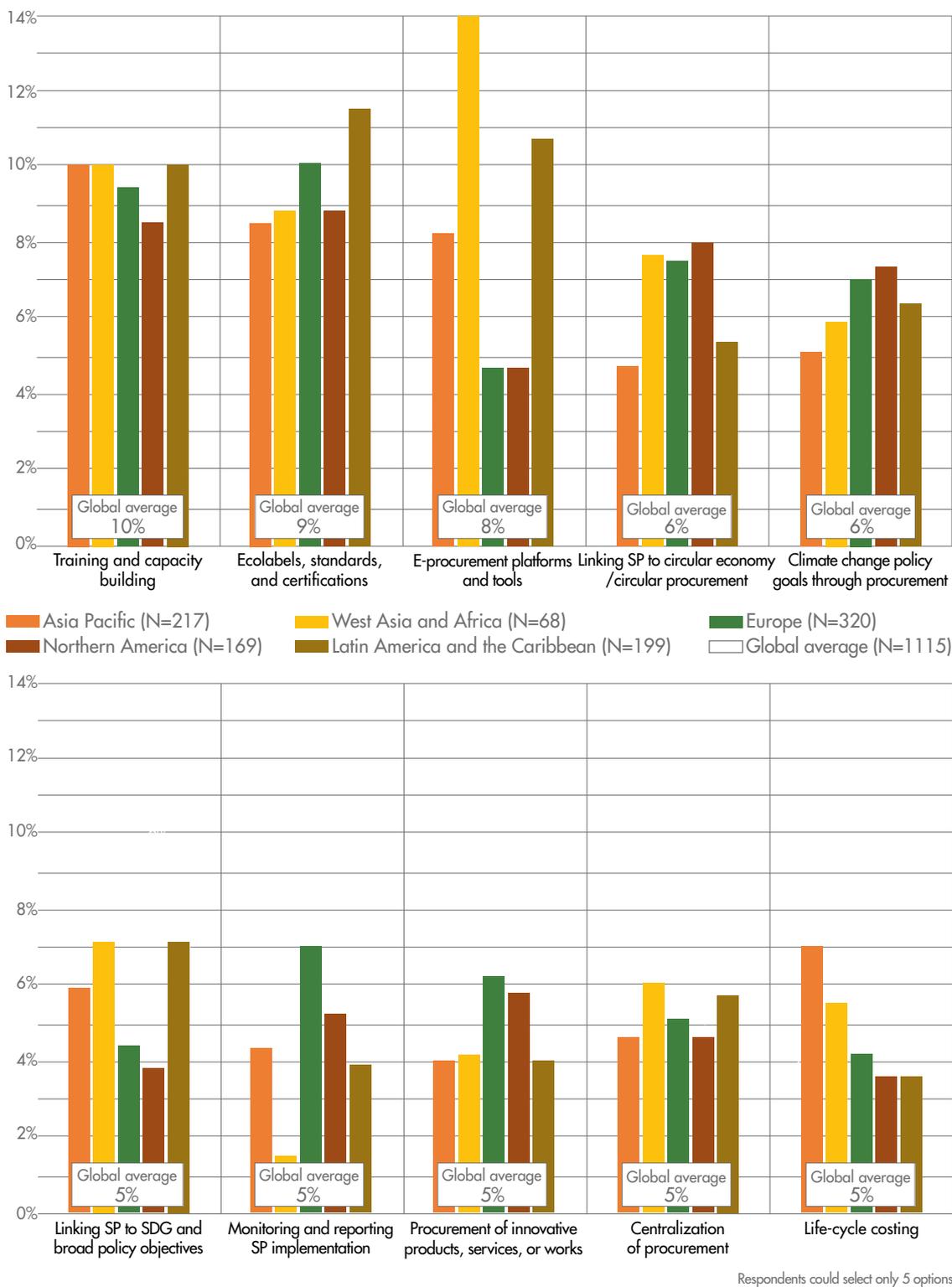
The importance of ‘linking SP to circular economy/circular procurement’ has also grown, moving from twelfth to fifth place in the rankings. This points to a broader understanding of green procurement, with an emphasis not only on the purchase of green products and services, but also on the importance of procurement in transitioning from a linear to a circular economy (closed energy and material loops within supply chains).

<sup>6</sup> SAP refers to Systems Applications and Products in Data Processing, a leading global provider of software that enables organizations to better manage their business intelligence, operations planning and purchasing and materials.

As for regional preference, stakeholders across almost all regions reported 'training and capacity-building', and 'eco-labels, standards and certifications'

among their top three emerging SP topics. However, some variation was noted in the importance of other areas (see Figure 2.26).

**Figure 2.26. Regional comparison of emerging SP topics**



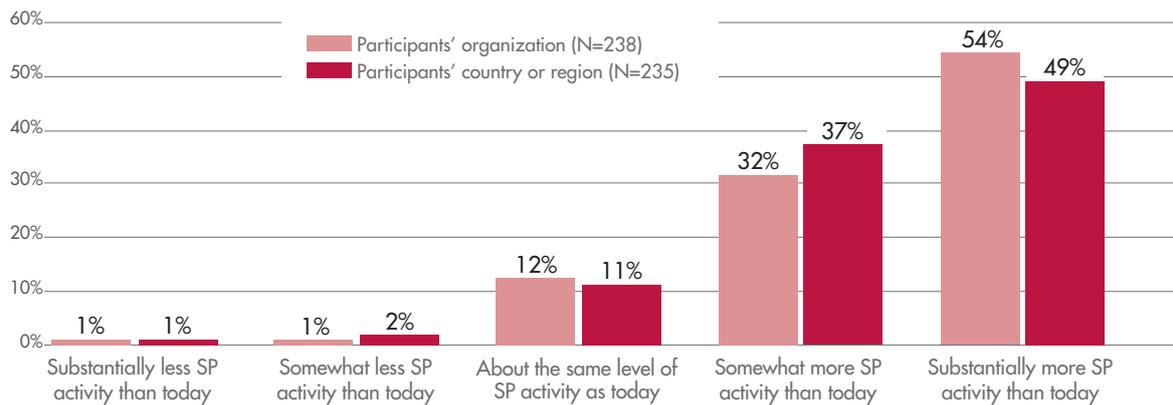
Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

Survey stakeholders were also asked to indicate how they expect their organization and their country/region to change the level of SP activity in the next five years. The results are summarized in Figure 2.27. A sizable proportion of respondents (86%) expected SP to be substantially more or somewhat more important organizationally and the same proportion indicated their country/region will

have more SP activities in the future. Stakeholders in organizations across all regions indicated that both their organization and country will have more SP activities in the next five years.

These findings are similar to results from the 2017 *SPP Global Review*, suggesting that SP will remain a priority for organizations.

**Figure 2.27. Expectations for the development of SP activities in the next five years**



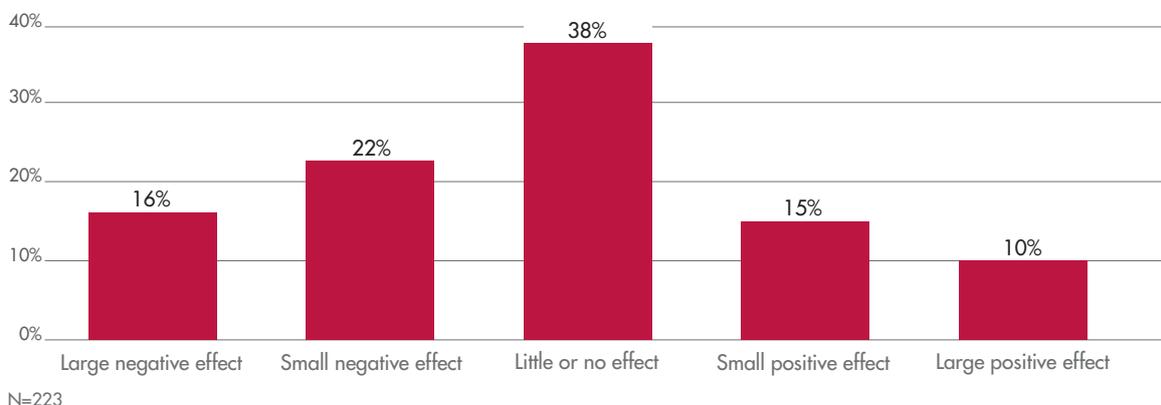
Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

## Impact of COVID-19 on SP

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to massive disruptions to organizations in the wake of health and economic uncertainty. Figure 2.28 shows that 38% of respondents indicated that COVID-19 had little or no impact on SP implementation, while the same proportion reported that it had a negative impact on their organization. One-quarter of stakeholders

(25%) indicated that COVID-19 had a positive impact on SP implementation. Moreover, stakeholders in Asia Pacific, Europe and Northern America mostly claimed that the pandemic had 'little or no effect'. In contrast, 49% of participants in Latin America and the Caribbean suggested that COVID-19 exerted a negative impact on SP implementation.

**Figure 2.28. COVID-19 impact on SP implementation**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey

Some respondents believed that COVID-19 might be an opportunity to increase awareness about how procurement is related to environmental/health impacts. Others felt that the pandemic may encourage suppliers to provide more cost-efficient ways of ordering and delivering. During the expert interviews, one participant mentioned that, "In the beginning, we saw the OECD [countries] choose speed and price over sustainability but then everyone realized, even in crisis, sustainability goals are necessary. These countries are showing they want to reinforce their goals in sustainability".

However, the global pandemic might also bring challenges, by creating more waste or waivers of SP requirements, in addition to reduced focus on SP. For instance, one expert reported that, "COVID-19 has hampered SPP. The focus was on emergency procurement. And then, with the economic impact of the pandemic, budgets have been constricted. Government funds are now more focused on price. In Africa, all non-essential spending was stopped, it has reversed what was being done".



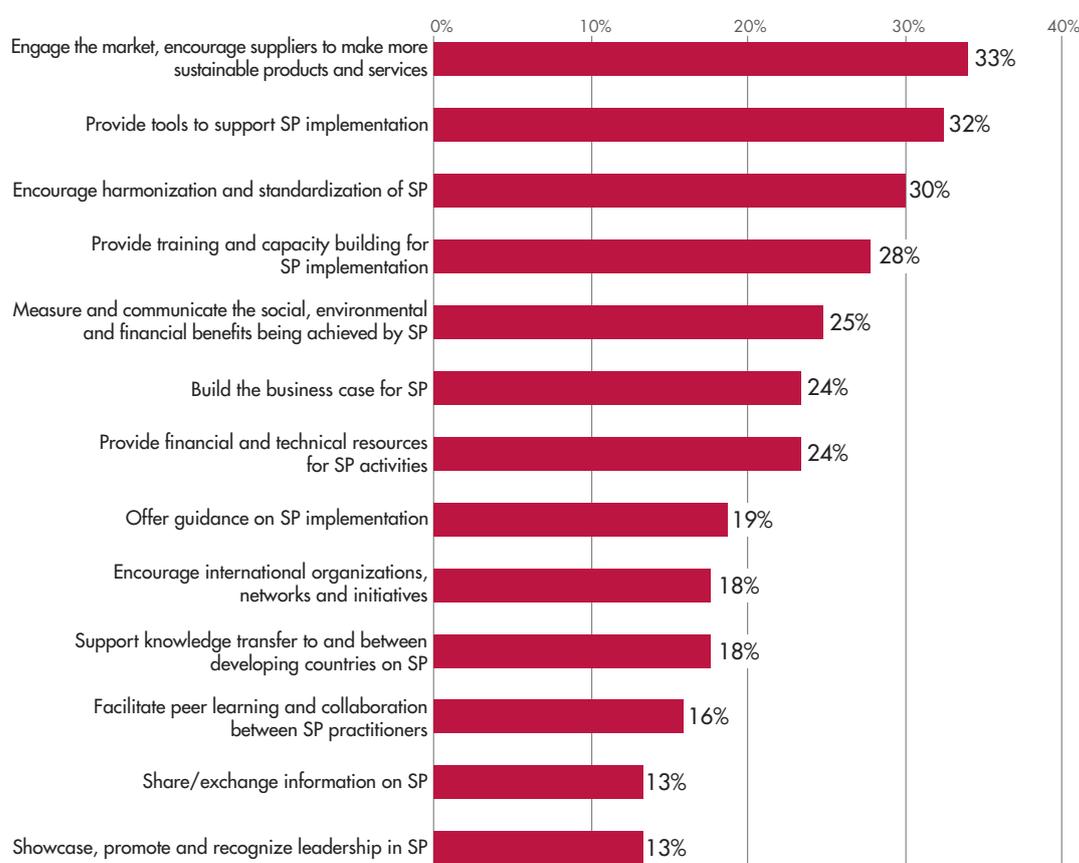
## 2.7 Role of international coordination to support sustainable procurement

The international development community plays a critical role in supporting SP policy development and implementation. It provides training, builds knowledge networks and can supply other resources to facilitate SP adoption. For instance, Cravero (2017) suggests that multi-stakeholder partnerships can help all countries – especially those in the developing world – meet the SDGs. Approximately two-thirds of the Stakeholder Survey respondents (63%) were part of local, national or international initiatives to promote sustainable procurement.

Figure 2.29 indicates which SP activities Stakeholder Survey participants felt should be coordinated internationally. One-third of respondents (33%) indicated ‘engage the market, encourage suppliers to make more sustainable products and services’ as an

activity that should be coordinated internationally. Indeed, such coordination might provide a mechanism for smaller organizations to collaborate and use their collective purchasing power to promote sustainability across supply chains. International coordination is also seen as important in providing knowledge to organizations, as 32% of respondents mentioned ‘provide tools to support SP implementation’. A similar proportion of respondents (30%) reported that international coordination should ‘encourage harmonization and standardization of SP’. This result is consistent with the findings from expert interviews, where participants suggested that international organizations “should share good examples and techniques around SPP and present outcomes in different countries and contribute to the data gap on SPP”.

**Figure 2.29. Survey respondents’ recommendations for international organizations supporting SP implementation**



N=237

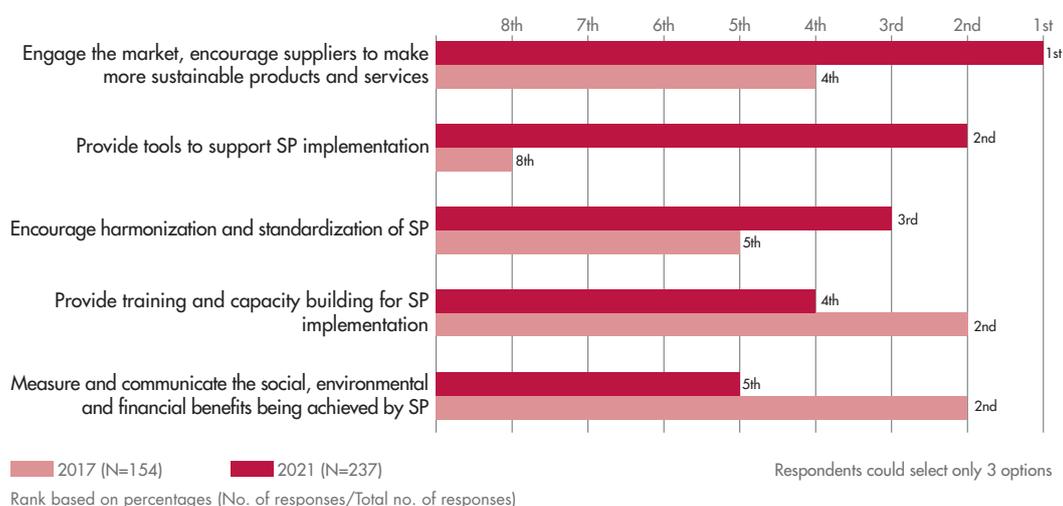
Respondents could select only 3 options

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review Stakeholder Survey.

The regional results are consistent among stakeholders from West Asia and Africa, the Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean: most of them indicated ‘provide training and capacity building for SP implementation’ as an activity that should be internationally coordinated to facilitate SP. However, most stakeholders in Europe indicated that international coordination should ‘provide tools to support SP implementation’, while stakeholders from Northern American organizations prioritized ‘engage the market, encourage suppliers to make more sustainable products and services’.

The need for support from international organizations is evolving over time as SP progresses, as seen in Figure 2.30. In the earlier edition of the *SPP Global Review*, building the case for SP and measuring and communicating its benefits were highlighted as more important to support SP implementation (ranked second in 2017, dropping to fifth place in 2021). Nowadays, there is a widespread recognition of the importance of procurement for organizations and their supply chains to have a positive impact.

**Figure 2.30. Survey respondents’ recommendations for international organizations supporting SP implementation ranking, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 *SPP Global Review* and 2021 Stakeholder Survey.

On the other hand, as practices to engage with the market become more relevant (moving from fourth to first place in the rankings) and because some markets are international, it makes sense that respondents are recommending that international organizations support SP in that regard. This is also related to encouraging harmonization and standardization of SP (moving from fifth place in 2017 to third in 2021), as both measures can help to accelerate market transformation, in addition to the increased global

emphasis on fair trade and circular economy initiatives. One example of a such an initiative, is the [Circular and Fair ICT Pact](#) of the Dutch Government. Launched in 2021 it is an international procurement partnership to stimulate circularity, fairness and sustainability in the ICT sector. For further information on the role of international organizations and networks in promoting SP, see Chapter 7 in Part II of the *2022 SPP Global Review*.

## 2.8 Conclusion

The 2021 Stakeholder Survey and interviews yield important insights into current and future SP trends worldwide. Below are the key conclusions that can be drawn from this Chapter.

- ◆ The overwhelming majority of stakeholders reported SP increasing in importance in their organizations and countries/regions since 2017. Most stakeholders also indicated they expect SP to continue to increase in importance over the next five years. These findings reflect a continued rise in SP engagement that will persist into the future.
- ◆ The most common activity that organizations identified as part of their SP remains the purchase of sustainable products and services. A few activities moved up in the rankings – ‘awards based on the economically most advantageous tender’, ‘market engagement’ and a ‘reduction in needs/purchases’, although all activities registered an increase since 2017. This points to a broader understanding of SP and the different approaches that can be applied.
- ◆ Climate change, waste minimization and the sustainable use of natural resources continue to be the main environmental priorities pursued as part of SP. However, some changes were observed in terms of socio-economic priorities. While promoting SMEs and local community development and engagement are still the main priorities, technology development and innovation, diversity, inclusion and equality and human rights in global supply chains have become more prominent in 2021. This can probably be attributed to an increased focus on the socio-economic dimension of SP.
- ◆ While office IT equipment continues to be the top product/service category for SP, categories related to climate mitigation and circularity – such as energy supply, vehicles and buildings and infrastructure construction – have displaced other categories such as paper or cleaning products and services (when compared to the 2017 *SPP Global Review*). This probably points to growth in the maturity level of SP implementation among stakeholder organizations, greater prevalence and acceptance of eco-labels and/or the policy priorities to mitigate climate change and promote a more circular economy.
- ◆ The development of technical specifications and product requirements is still seen as the main phase of the procurement cycle for applying sustainability criteria. Contract management and monitoring are still perceived as the most difficult phases in SP implementation. These findings suggest that the potential for integrating SP in the procurement cycle is largely untapped.
- ◆ While eco-labels and other sustainability standards for products and management are commonly adopted to identify sustainable products and services, there were only marginal increases in their use as a reference or verification tool since 2017. About the same proportion of stakeholders (21% in 2021 versus 18% in 2017) reported that their organization did not use them at all.
- ◆ As in the previous edition, almost a third of respondents indicated that their organization did not monitor or measure SP implementation, while the most monitored aspect was the number of procurement processes with sustainability criteria or SP outputs. However, some changes were observed since 2017 in terms of the aspects that were commonly monitored. These include measuring the level of SP institutionalization. Although monitoring the adoption of SP action plans has become less relevant, measurement of the number of staff trained in SP is more common now.
- ◆ Policy commitments, goals and action plans are still the number one SP drivers among survey respondents. The presence of laws and legal mandates, as well as the availability of sufficient product information, are also important drivers of SP (as reported by over one-third of the SP stakeholders in 2021).
- ◆ The ongoing perception of sustainable products and services being more expensive remains the most commonly cited barrier to SP. However, a

'lack of policy commitments/goals/SP action plans' is no longer considered significant. This probably points to the increased adoption of SP policies among organizations and goes hand-in-hand with a registered increase in the importance of 'mandatory sustainable procurement rules/legislation', as SP policies are often implemented on a voluntary basis.

- ◆ Although more than 60% of stakeholders reported that the COVID-19 global pandemic either had no impact or a positive impact on their SP, roughly one-third of stakeholders reported a detrimental effect. Negative impact was noted in particular among stakeholders in Latin America and the Caribbean. As the world recovers from the pandemic, it will be important for organizations to re-engage and build on prior SP goals that might have been disrupted.
- ◆ Respondents identified the need for support from international organizations in SP implementation, which includes coordinating and engaging markets to encourage suppliers to provide more sustainable products and services, providing tools for SP implementation and leading in the harmonization and standardization of SP. These activities show a shift from 2017, when building a case for SP and measuring and communicating its benefits were highlighted as key areas in which support was needed from international organizations.

#### Box 2.2

### In a perfect world, what would SP look like?

The SP expert interviewees had the following thoughts:

"Environmental, economic or social impacts would be checked in line with the SP definition. Large procuring entities would have SPP departments/officers. SPP would be measured in terms of level of SPP but also impact".

"It is not an exercise of spending money but a focus on global outcomes of decision-making".

"It would be completely integrated in all procurements. There would be mandates in every department, evaluated in organizations and staff performance reviews, in supplier selection".

"It should be the only way in which procurement is conducted. It ensures innovation, inclusion, due diligence and the development of companies from a human dimension and triple impact".

"The public sector can communicate its goals in a clear way to the market and the market is open to changing practices".

"In a perfect world, which is not the current world, SPP would not be SPP. It would be regular public procurement. It would not be a 'thing', but just the way we are".

"Innovate around public and private partnerships that facilitate innovation. Procurement practitioners are empowered. In a perfect world SPP would not exist. SDG and SPP would be mainstreamed into the concept of investment, you would not think about it as separate".

# 3. Sustainable procurement

## in national governments



Over the last few decades, public procurement has evolved from a rules- and process-driven administrative function to a strategic policy instrument promoting national sustainable development objectives. Commonly referred to as ‘sustainable public procurement’ or ‘SPP’, this approach to government purchasing has gained traction around the world, as reported in the *2013* and *2017 SPP Global Review* publications. National governments have increasingly embedded SPP provisions in overarching and thematic policies and strategies, as well as public procurement legislation and regulations. Some governments have even developed dedicated SPP policies, action plans, guidelines and sustainability criteria to guide and support the implementation of SPP practices. This Chapter provides an overview of the current SPP landscape at the global level. It evaluates progress in SPP policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation activities among national governments, while highlighting significant trends or shifts in the evolution of SPP since 2017.

Data for the development of this Chapter were collected through a National Government Questionnaire,

henceforth referred to as the ‘Questionnaire’, which is a revised version of an earlier public sector survey designed to generate information for the *2017 SPP Global Review*. It covers topics such as SPP policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, and was completed by 45 national governments (out of 102 contacted) between April and June 2021, representing an overall response rate of 44%. Twenty-six of the 45 national governments that responded to the 2021 Questionnaire took part in the previous 2017 survey, representing 57% of the 2021 respondents.

In some instances, findings from the Questionnaire were compared with or supplemented by data from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise.<sup>1</sup> Although this exercise covers similar topics to the Questionnaire, it was designed as an assessment tool for evaluating the SPP maturity level of national governments in an effort to gauge progress in SDG Target 12.7.<sup>2</sup> Forty national governments took part in this exercise (out of 70 who were contacted) between October 2020 and February 2021, with a response rate of 57%.



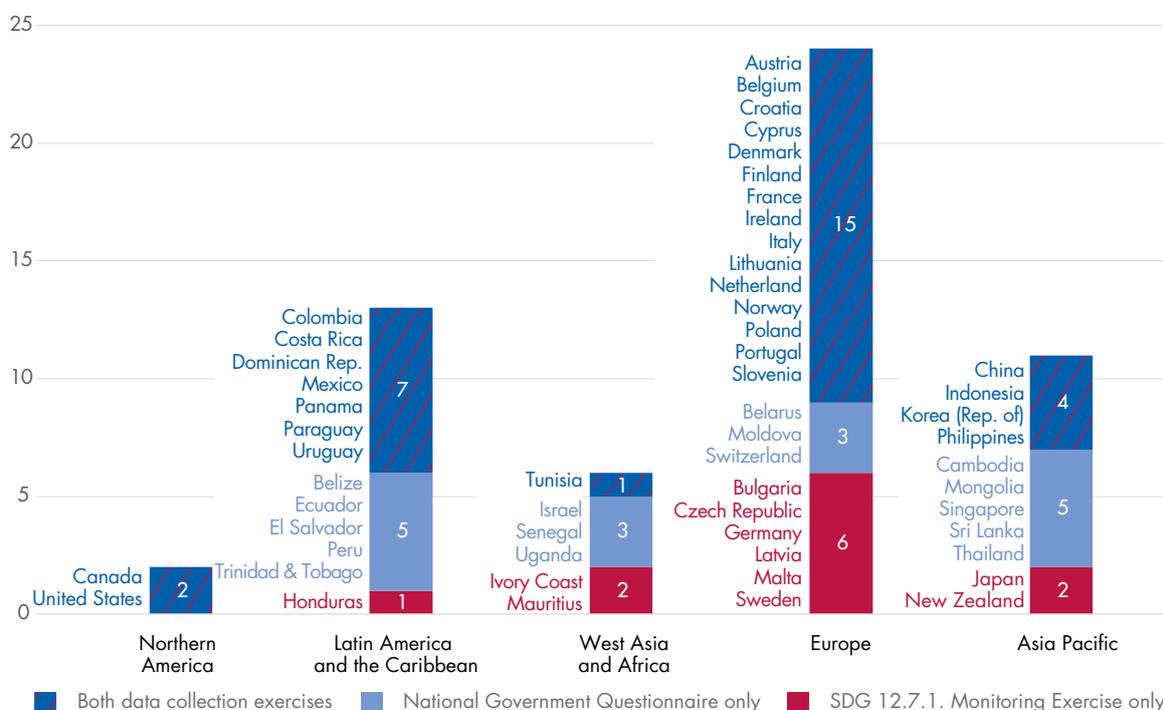
<sup>1</sup> The 2020/2021 Data collection for SDG Indicator 12.7.1: Main results and conclusions from the first reporting exercise details the findings of the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise. See: <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/37967/SDG.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> SDG Target 12.7 – ‘promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities’ – is measured through Indicator 12.7.1, defined as the ‘number of countries implementing sustainable public procurement policies and action plans’.

In total, 56 countries were represented across the two data collection exercises (the Questionnaire and the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise), with 29 national governments participating in both. As shown in Figure 3.1, most respondents were

from Europe, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean. Northern America (50%) and Europe (40%) registered the highest response rates, reflecting the relative maturity levels of SPP in these regions (Andhov M. et al. 2020; World Bank 2021).

**Figure 3.1. Participating national governments in the 2021 data collection exercises<sup>3</sup>**



Responses were rigorously checked for accuracy using either supporting documents from participating national governments (such as an SPP policy or action plan) or links to national procurement portals. A cross-cutting analysis of the data is presented in this Chapter, while Factsheets on the status of SPP implementation at the national level can be accessed [here](#).<sup>4</sup>

For further details on the methodologies and a copy of the Questionnaire, please see Annexes 1.2 and 1.3. A study on SPP in local governments, carried out by Arizona State University, is also available in the Annexes (please see Annex 3 in Part II of this publication).

<sup>3</sup> Country groupings are based on the geographic regions defined under the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use of the United Nations Statistics Division. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups>.  
<sup>4</sup> <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/37967/SDG.pdf>

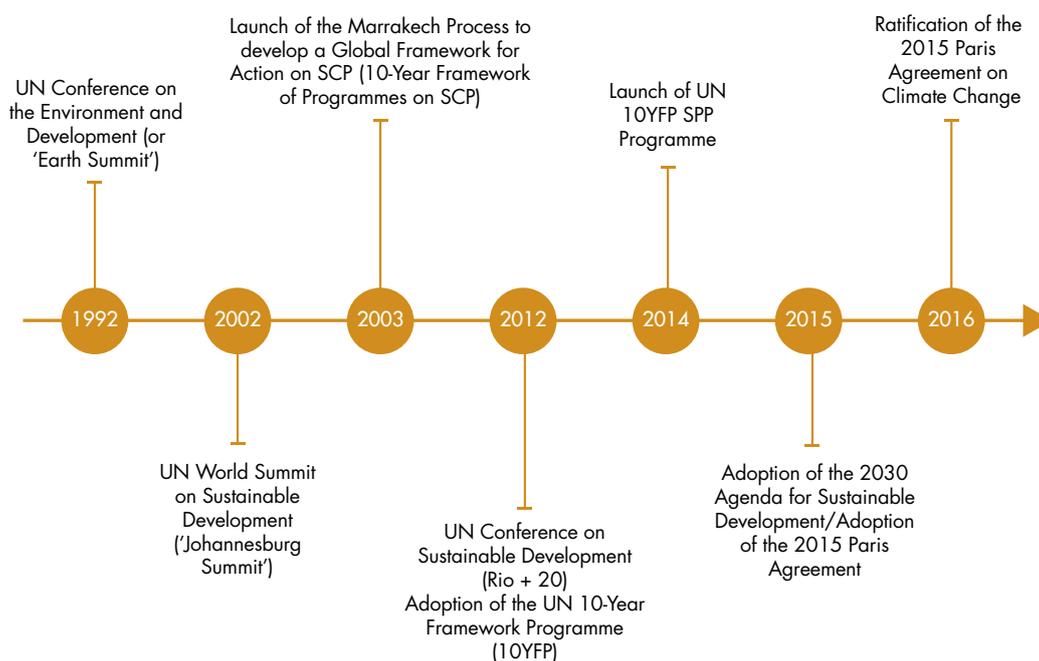
## 3.1 Policy frameworks supporting SPP

### Historical overview

While there is some evidence of government spending being leveraged to achieve national policy objectives from as far back as the late 1800s,<sup>5</sup> this practice only became mainstream in the last decade or so. The reason for this shift has less to do with the natural evolution of the public procurement func-

tion adapting to the complexities of a modern, globalized economy and more to do with exogenous factors that thrust public procurement to the fore of the global discourse on sustainable development (see Figure 3.2 for important international events).

**Figure 3.2. Milestone events that facilitated SPP mainstreaming (1992-2016)**



Public procurement's potential contribution to sustainable development was first highlighted at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (or 'Earth Summit') in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. As the largest consumers at the national level, governments were called upon to change their consumption patterns to protect the environment and exercise leadership through government purchasing.<sup>6</sup> This marked a shift in the

perception of public procurement, elevating it to a strategic function of government that could affect environmental outcomes.

While a few countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) adopted policies and procurement regulations in support of SPP following this conference,<sup>7</sup> concrete global action to promote and implement

<sup>5</sup> In 1891, for example, the United Kingdom required government contractors to comply with fair labour standards. Three decades later, following World War I, government procurement was also leveraged in the United Kingdom in an effort to provide work for disabled servicemen. This practice was later generalized to the disabled working population and even adopted by the United States. See McCrudden, *Buying Social Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

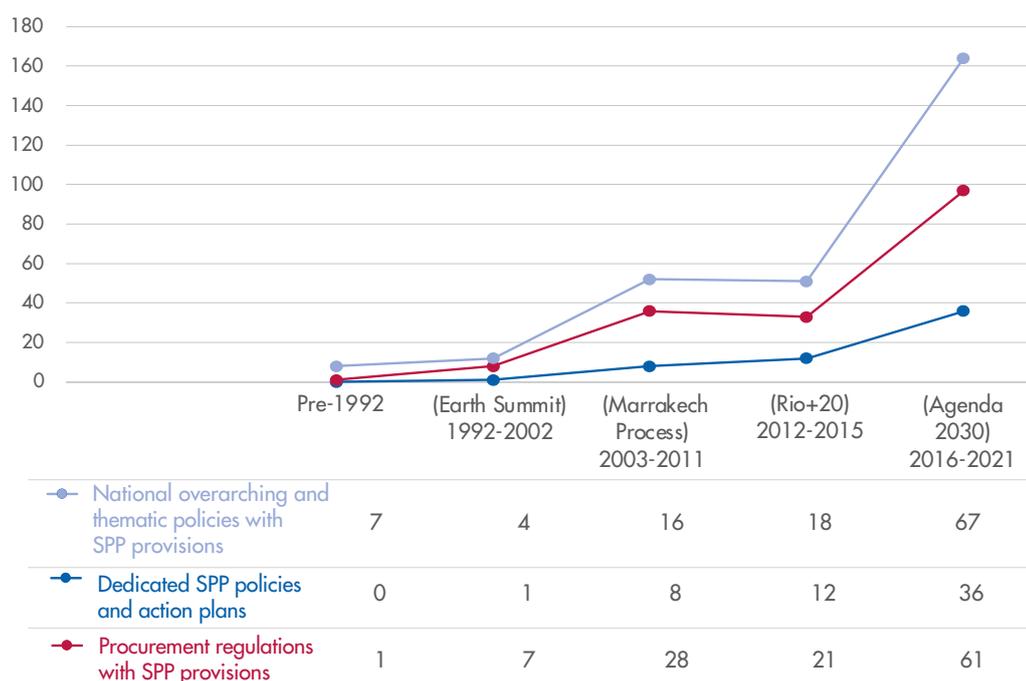
<sup>6</sup> As indicated in Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 (a non-binding action plan on sustainable development that was adopted by more than 178 governments at the Earth Summit): 'Governments themselves also play a role in consumption, particularly in countries where the public sector plays a large role in the economy and can have a considerable influence on both corporate decisions and public perceptions. They should therefore review the purchasing policies of their agencies and departments so that they may improve, where possible, the environmental content of government procurement policies, without prejudice to international trade principles' (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> The first SPP policy to emerge following this conference, focusing on environmental aspects, was the United States Government's Executive Order 12873: Federal Acquisition, Recycling and Waste Prevention, adopted in 1993.

SPP did not materialize until a decade later at the 2002 United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. This conference placed sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns at the heart of the discourse on sustainable development. It called upon the international community to develop a Global Framework for Action on SCP,<sup>8</sup> better known as the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on SCP, with SPP as one of six programme areas.<sup>9</sup>

As shown in Figure 3.3, in the years following this conference, national-level policy frameworks supporting SPP began emerging worldwide. In some cases, the development of these frameworks was driven by UNEP and the Marrakech Task Force on SPP, which was the first international initiative promoting and supporting the implementation of SPP in developing countries.<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 3.3. Growth in policy frameworks supporting SPP worldwide, 1990-2021<sup>11</sup>**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire and 2021 SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise.

- 8** Chapter 3 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, drafted shortly after the Johannesburg Summit, called for the development of a 10YFP to ‘accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production, promoting social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems, by delinking economic growth from environment degradation’ and encouraged ‘relevant authorities at all levels to take sustainable development considerations into account in decision-making, including on national and local development planning, investment in infrastructure, business and development and public procurement...’ (World Summit on Sustainable Development and United Nations, 2003).
- 9** In 2003, a year after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the first international expert meeting on the 10YFP was held in Marrakech, Morocco, in an effort to launch a global initiative – the ‘Marrakech Process’ – for implementing concrete SCP projects and formulating a 10YFP on SCP. Between 2003 and 2011, seven international task forces were organized around specific SCP themes or programmes, including one on SPP – the Marrakech Task Force on SPP.
- 10** UNEP supported a number of countries in developing SPP action plans based on the Marrakech Task Force SPP Approach. From 2009 to 2017 SPP action plans were developed in the framework of three EU-supported projects: the SPP Capacity Building project, the SPP and Eco-labelling project and the Eastern Partnership Green project. The countries involved were: Costa Rica, Uruguay, Mauritius, Tunisia and Lebanon (SPP Capacity Building project); Viet Nam, Mongolia, Morocco, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Argentina (SPP and Eco-labelling project); and Ukraine and Moldova (Eastern Partnership Green project). See: [www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/sustainable-public-procurement/project-countries](http://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/sustainable-public-procurement/project-countries)
- 11** Part B of the Questionnaire asked national governments to describe their national policies and legal instruments containing SPP provisions. Specifically, countries were asked: ‘Are SPP provisions included in overarching and/or thematic national policies?’ If their response was ‘yes’, additional information was requested (such as name of policy, year of adoption, web link to the document and the references to relevant sections in the document) in a table (B1). The same type of question and instructions were issued in relation to existing procurement regulations (B2) and dedicated SPP policies or action plans (B3).

These efforts, both national and international, helped pave the way for the inclusion of SPP in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, or 'Agenda 2030', in 2015, which outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated Targets. The issue of SPP is addressed under Goal 12 ('Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns'), as Target 12.7 ('Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities'). This milestone achievement helped promulgate and mainstream the development and implementation of policy frameworks supporting SPP worldwide.

In addition, the international community's efforts to halt climate warming are encouraging sustainable procurement policies, as the link between pat-

terns of consumption and production and the rise of greenhouse gas emissions is now clearly established (BSG 2022). In 2016, the Paris Agreement entered into force, recognizing that 'sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production... play an important role in addressing climate change' and calling for a full mobilization of stakeholders if the global community is to keep 'the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels'.<sup>12</sup>

In the years following the adoption of Agenda 2030 and the ratification of the Paris Agreement, a steep increase in the adoption of policy frameworks supporting SPP was registered worldwide.

## What is the current state of policy frameworks supporting SPP globally?

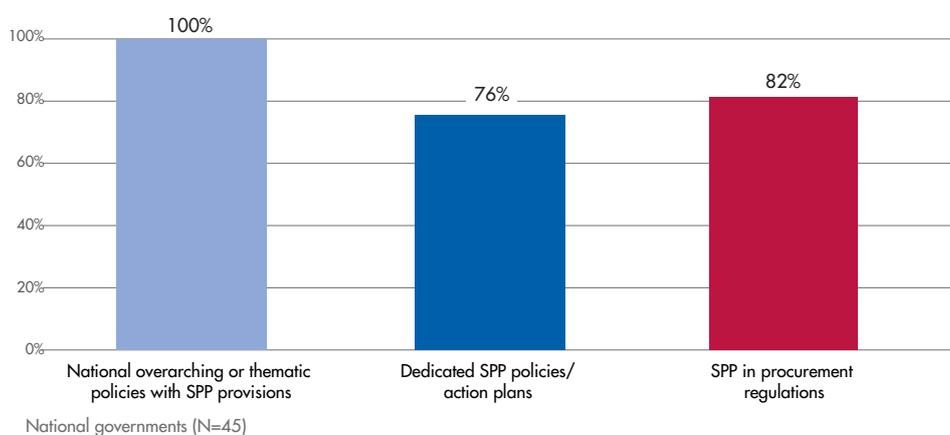
To assess the current state of these frameworks at the global level, national governments were asked to report on the following set of policies and regulations:

1. Overarching and thematic policies and strategies with SPP provisions, such as sustainable development, environmental and socio-economic policies and strategies;
2. Dedicated SPP policies, strategies and action plans, as well as public procurement strategies inclusive of SPP provisions (henceforth referred to as 'SPP policies'); and

3. Public procurement regulations inclusive of SPP provisions, such as public procurement acts/laws, government decrees/executive orders and circulars/guidelines.

Results from the Questionnaire show that all 45 participating national governments include SPP provisions in one or more of their overarching or thematic policies and strategies, 34 governments (76%) have policies specifically dedicated to the promotion of SPP and 37 governments (82%) include them in their procurement regulations (see Figure 3.4).

**Figure 3.4. Policy frameworks supporting SPP**



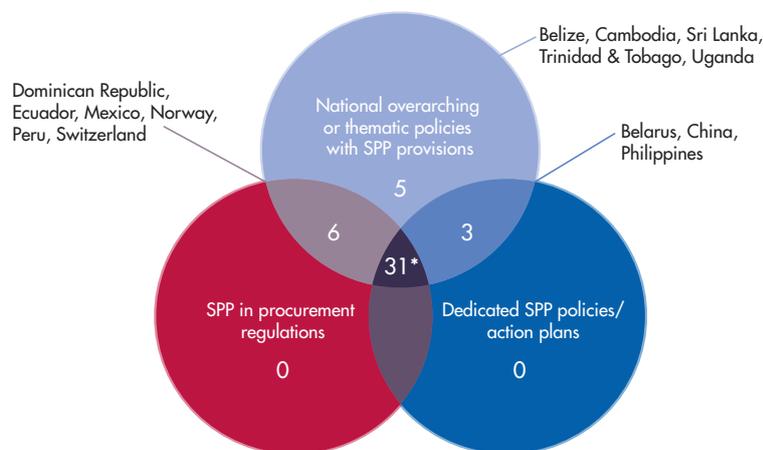
Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

<sup>12</sup> The Role of Public Procurement in Low-carbon Innovation Background paper for the 33rd Round Table on Sustainable Development', citing Articles 2 and 4 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 2015, p. 5, OECD, April 2016. Available at <https://www.oecd.org/sd-roundtable/papersandpublications/The%20Role%20of%20Public%20Procurement%20in%20Low-carbon%20Innovation.pdf>

As shown in Figure 3.5, most countries (31 out of 45) have all three types of policies and regulations supporting SPP, while just five countries reported

only having SPP in their overarching or thematic policies and strategies.

**Figure 3.5. Types of national policy frameworks supporting SPP**



\*All other participating countries

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

A regional comparison of policy frameworks reveals that these five countries are distributed across West Asia and Africa, the Asia Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean – regions that are at an earlier stage of SPP implementation compared to Europe and Northern America.

This assessment is in line with earlier editions of the *SPP Global Review* that point to a natural evolution in the development of policy frameworks supporting SPP, beginning with the inclusion of SPP provisions in overarching and thematic national policies, such as sustainable development strategies and various environmental and socio-economic policies. It is common for these strategies and policy documents to reference public procurement as a mechanism for facilitating action and impact, thus creating a basis for the development of dedicated SPP policies, culminating in the inclusion of sustainability

requirements in procurement regulations (Bouwman 2020; Dabanja 2020).<sup>13</sup>

For example, in the case of Poland, its National Action Plan on Sustainable Public Procurement for 2017–2020 was an offshoot of its Sustainable Development Strategy 2020, which was adopted in 2017 and eventually resulted in the amendment of its Public Procurement Law in 2019, which entered into force in 2021. While less common, some countries (Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru) have included SPP in their procurement regulations without having first adopted a dedicated SPP policy (see Figure 3.5)<sup>14</sup>. In these cases, countries are either developing or updating their policy, or have other types of documents that can be used to promote and implement SPP in any of its environmental and/or socio-economic dimensions.

<sup>13</sup> Bouwman, G., 'Legislating social value into Dutch public procurement law: from symbolism to substance,' PPLR, 2020, 2, 91-102 in relation to SOMO Paper dated March 2014 on the '(A) review of Dutch policy for socially responsible public procurement,' which showed the same trend of establishing the goals for SPP for national governments (as in the Netherlands as early as 2005), then developing sustainability requirements for product categories (like with the 2021 Criteria Document), which lead to the obligation of national contracting authorities to 'achieve as much as societal value as possible for their public resources,' under Article 1.4 (2) Aanbestedingswet 2012 (Public Procurement Act of 2012 or Awet 2012). Dabanja, D.N., 'Developments in sustainable public procurement law and policy in Ghana and Australia,' PPLR, 2020, 6, 359-379.

<sup>14</sup> 'Adopted' means that the dedicated SPP policy (or action plan or strategy) has been approved or any decrees or act has been enacted, and these are currently in place.

## Countries with overarching and/or thematic national policies inclusive of SPP considerations

Given that the integration of SPP provisions in overarching and thematic policies is often the natural starting point for countries, it is unsurprising that all 45 national governments had included SPP in at least one of their overarching or thematic policies. From the 112 national policies that were reported,<sup>15</sup> a total of 18 thematic areas were identified, reflecting the versatility and growing importance of public procurement as a key tool for implementing strategic policy objectives.

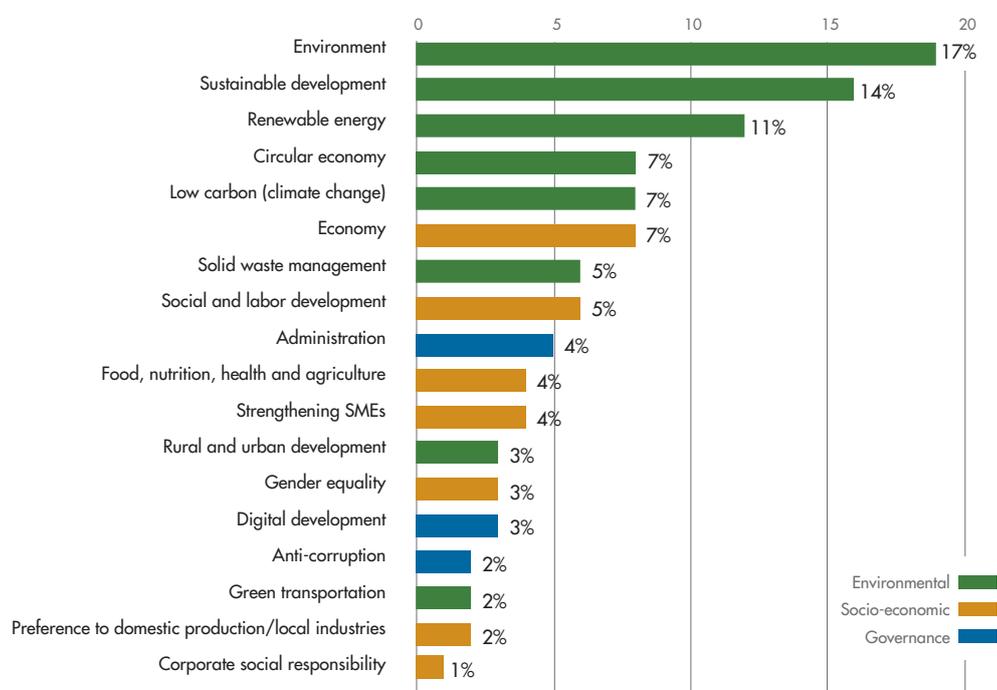
Some national governments (20 countries) have included SPP considerations in more general policies (such as policies on sustainable development, the environment and so on), while others (10 countries) have integrated provisions in more targeted ones (including policies on low carbon emissions, strengthening SMEs and so forth) – and some have done both (15 countries).

Policies that relate to the environment were most frequently cited (see Figure 3.6). General environmental

policies represented 17% of the total 112 policies, although targeted environmental policies were also common, such as those addressing renewable energy (11%), circular economy (7%), low carbon emissions (7%) and solid waste management (5%).

Provisions on SPP were also prevalent in policies promoting sustainable development (14% of 112 national policies). Less common was the integration of SPP considerations in targeted social or economic policies. In these, general economic policies topped the list at 7%, followed by social and labour development policies (5%). Other types of policies that included SPP provisions relate to improvement of public service (administrative policies such as modernization of national agencies, anti-corruption policies, and digital development policies). However, these only applied to the private sector in the form of policies promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) (with only 1% of the responding national governments having SPP provisions in CSR policies).

**Figure 3.6. Types of overarching and thematic national policies with SPP provisions**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

<sup>15</sup> A country could report as many policies as the focal person thought relevant to SPP.

A regional comparison reveals considerable diversity in the overarching and thematic policies containing SPP provisions in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, as shown in Figure 3.7. This

indicates that procurement is being used as a strategic lever for achieving policy objectives at an almost universal level in these regions (across various thematic areas).

**Figure 3.7. Regional distribution of overarching and thematic policies**

	Asia Pacific	Europe	Latin America and the Caribbean	Northern America	West Asia and Africa
Environmental policy	6	5	4	2	2
Sustainable development policy	2	8	3	1	2
Renewable energy policy		4	5	2	1
Circular economy policy	1	5	2		
Low carbon policy (climate change)	1	5	1	1	
Solid waste management policy	1		4	1	
Rural and urban development policy		1	2		
Green transportation policy		1	1		
Economic policy	3	2	3		
Social and labor development policy	1	3	2		
Food, nutrition, health, and agriculture policy		1	2	1	
Strengthening SMEs policy	1	3	1		
Policy on gender equality			3		
Preference to domestic production/local industries			2		
Corporate social responsibility policy		1			
Administrative policy		1	3		
Digital Development policy		1	2		
Anti-corruption Policy		2			
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Some countries in West Asia and Africa (such as Senegal, Tunisia and Uganda) are leveraging strategic procurement for the delivery of sustainable development objectives as an offshoot of the international call for more environmental protection.

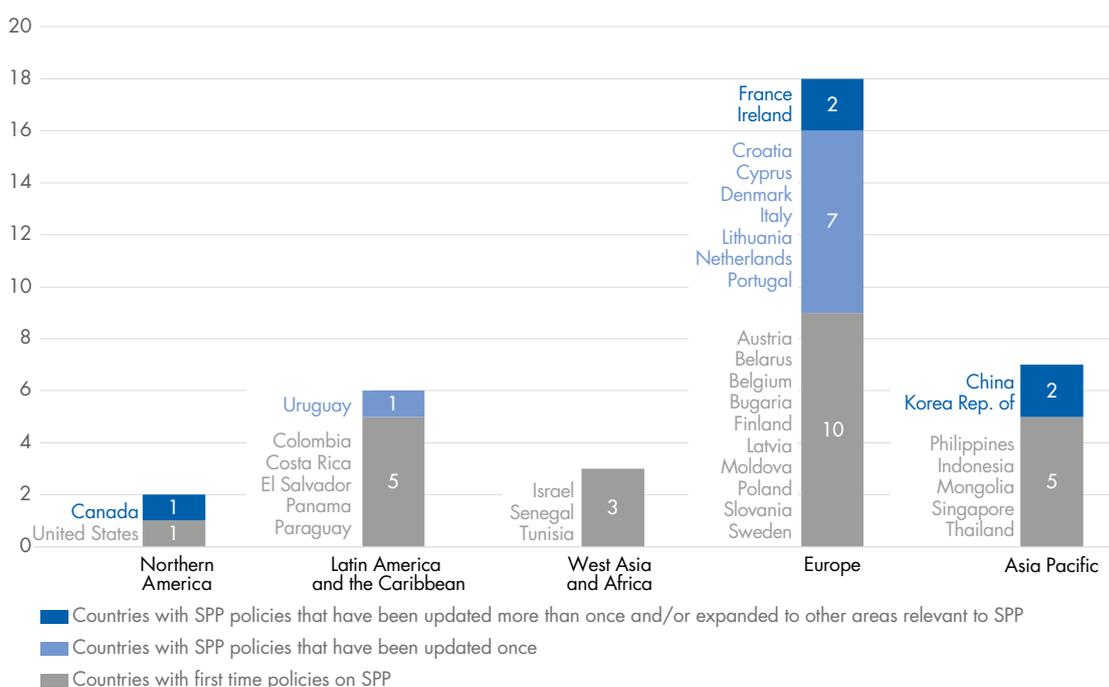
The first set of thematic policies on environmental protection with SPP provisions in participating countries from this region were adopted between 2009 to 2011 and a second set were adopted after the 2015 Paris Agreement.

## Countries with SPP policies

In addition to integrating SPP considerations in overarching and thematic national policies, Questionnaire results showed that 34 out of 45 participating national governments (76%) adopted dedicated SPP policies to guide and support SPP implementation. If data from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise

are also considered, an additional three countries (Bulgaria, Latvia and Sweden) can be added, bringing the total number of countries with SPP policies to 37 (out of 56 countries) across both data collection exercises (see Figure 3.8).

**Figure 3.8. Participating national governments with SPP policies across both data collection exercises**



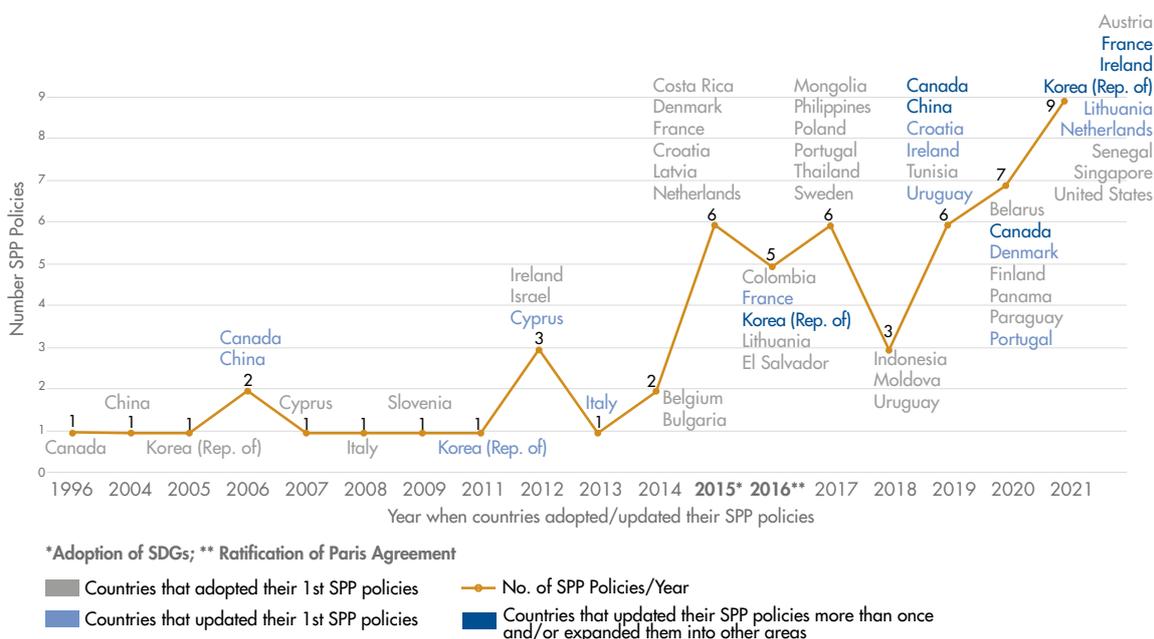
Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

*Of the countries that reported having no policy specifically dedicated to SPP, almost half indicated that they did have other types of documents that could be used to promote and implement SPP and/or are currently in the process of developing their SPP policies.*

As shown in Figure 3.9, 57 policies were reported by participating national governments across both data collection exercises. Of these, 37 were first time policies on SPP,<sup>16</sup> most of which (79%) were developed following the adoption of Agenda 2030 in 2015. Another 13 were policies that had been updated once. For instance, Ireland adopted its first SPP policy – ‘An Action Plan for Green Public Procurement’ – in 2012 and subsequently updated it in 2019 – ‘Promoting the Use of Environmental and Social Considerations in Public Procurement’. Seven others had been updated more than once and/or expanded into other areas relevant to SPP through

the development of additional instruments, such as China adopting its first SPP policy in 2004 for the procurement of energy-savings products, which was then expanded to cover government procurement of environmental labelling products in 2006 and then adjusted to optimize the procurement processes for green products in 2019. It should be noted that all the SPP policies reported by participating national governments in the 2017 SPP Global Review are either still in force in 2021 (as in Belgium, Croatia and others), or have been updated (like in France and the Republic of Korea) and/or expanded (such as in Ireland).

**Figure 3.9. Adoption of SPP policies, 1996–2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Of the 19 countries that reported having no policy specifically dedicated to SPP, almost half indicated that they did have other types of documents that could be used to promote and implement SPP<sup>17</sup>

and/or are currently in the process of developing their SPP policies (as in Sri Lanka, Norway, Switzerland and Trinidad and Tobago).

<sup>16</sup> A country could report as many policies as the focal person thought relevant to SPP.

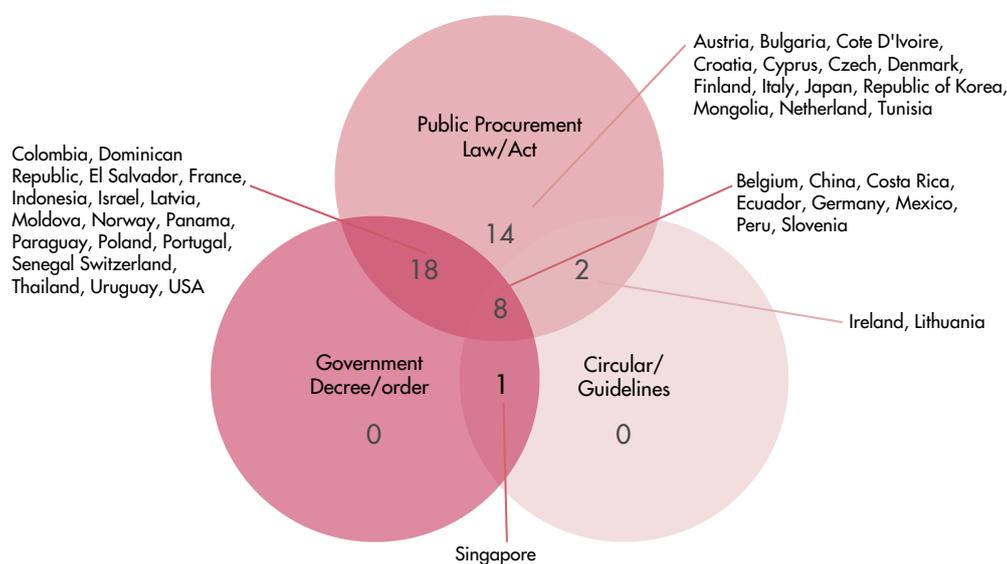
<sup>17</sup> Cambodia, for example, indicated that, although it did not have any policy or regulation relating to SPP, it has other documents such as the 2021 Sustainable Consumption and Production Roadmap, which calls for cooperation of all stakeholders for the promotion of sustainable consumption and production.

## Countries with public procurement regulations that include SPP provisions

The adoption of public procurement regulations that include SPP provisions is usually the last step in developing a policy framework to support SPP. Out of the 45 national governments participating in the Questionnaire, 37 (82%) indicated having adopted procurement regulations that include SPP provisions. If data from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise are considered, an additional 6 countries with public procurement regulations that include SPP can be added, bringing the total number of countries with such regulations to 43 across both exercises.

In total, 118 different legal instruments (such as public procurement laws or acts, government decrees or orders and/or circulars or guidelines) were reported by respondents across both data collection exercises. All countries except one<sup>18</sup> (42 out of 43) reported having amended existing or having developed new procurement legislation that includes SPP provisions (see Figure 3.10).

**Figure 3.10. National governments with procurement regulations that include SPP provisions**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire and 2021 SDG 12.7.1. Monitoring Exercise.

In some cases, the integration of these provisions was part of a broader approach to sustainability, such as in the European Union (Manunza 2020), while in others it was driven by efforts to modernize the public procurement function, or wider structures of government such as public financial management systems (as in Caribbean countries). Of the 42 countries that amended or adopted new procurement legislation that include SPP provisions, 28 countries opted to further address SPP by issuing executive orders and/or secondary legislation.

Secondary legislation, such as circulars or guidelines, is often adopted last as it serves as the im-

plementing rules of the previously issued law/act or decree. Of the 11 countries that reported having circulars or guidelines, two had existing prior procurement legislation that included SPP (Ireland, Lithuania), one had an existing prior decree (Singapore) and eight had both existing prior legislation and decrees/orders supporting SPP (Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Peru and Slovenia).

For more detailed analysis on the SPP legal frameworks of national governments, see the [SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise Report](#).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Although Singapore has not amended its Government Procurement Act (1997) to include SPP provisions, SPP is supported by a government issuance called 'Public Sector Taking the Lead in Environmental Sustainability (PSTLES) Initiative' for which several guidelines are available.

<sup>19</sup> <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/37967/SDG.pdf>

## 3.2 Objectives, targets and scope of SPP policies

Taking a closer look at the policies specifically dedicated to SPP can improve understanding about the evolution and emerging trends of SPP as a strategic tool for implementing national policy objectives. While the earlier section touched upon the versatility

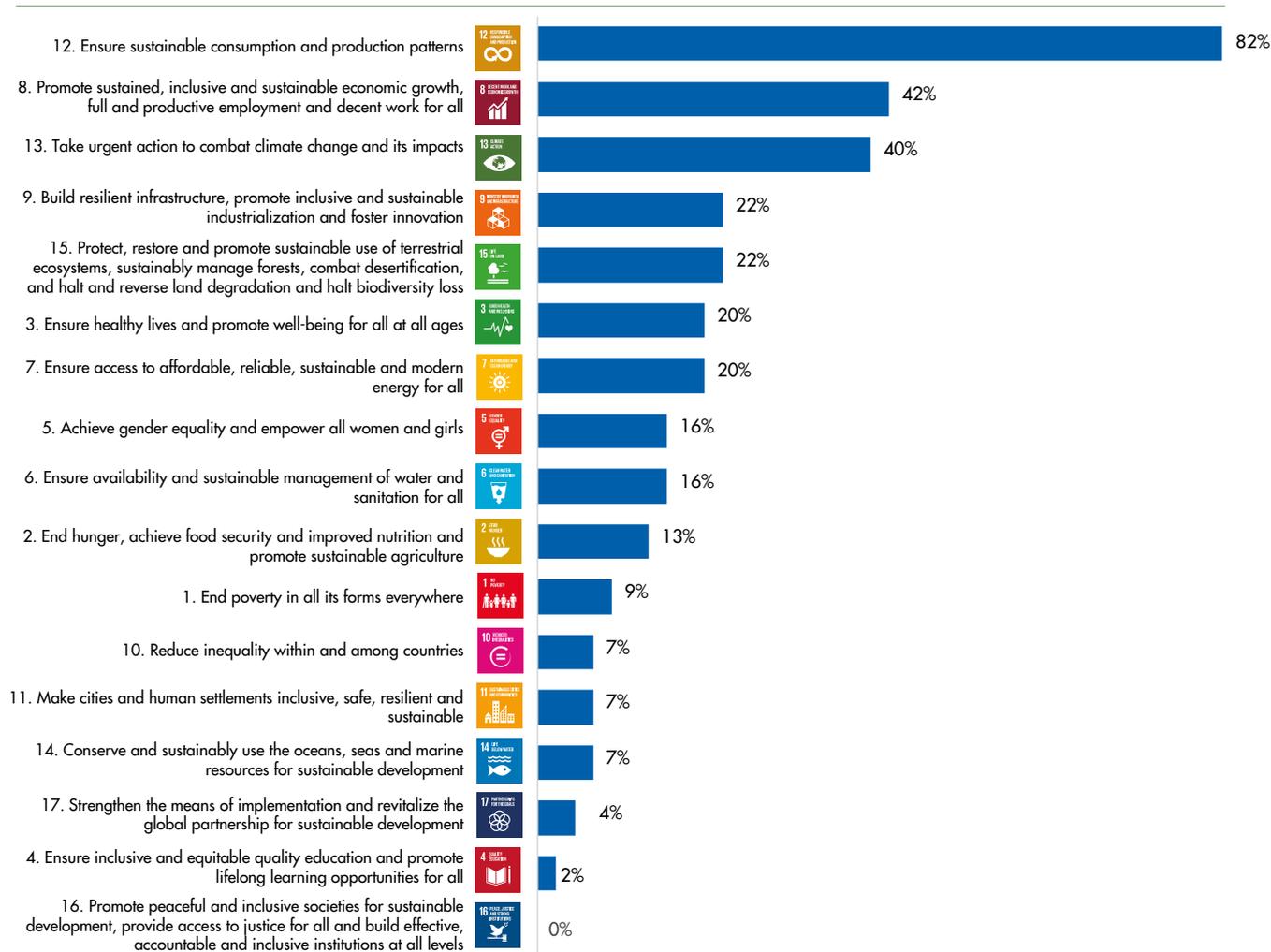
of SPP in its application across a range of overarching and thematic national policies, this section specifically hones in on the objectives and targets set out in SPP policies, as well as the scope of application.

### Which SDGs are addressed in SPP policies?

Policies on SPP can address a broad range of sustainable development objectives that are often aligned with one or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Questionnaire asked national governments whether they view contributions to the achievement of the SDGs as a key consideration in their policies and, if so, to indicate which of the 17 SDGs were being addressed.

Out of the 34 national governments with SPP policies, a resounding 100% indicated that they consider the achievement of the SDGs as a key factor in their policies. Of the 17 SDGs, the respondents identified the following five (in descending order) as having the most direct link with objectives set out in their policies: SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure and SDG 15 on life on land (see Figure 3.11).

**Figure 3.11. SDGs that are linked to SPP policies**



Participating national governments could select more than one option  
National governments with SPP policies (N=34)

Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

These findings are consistent with the Stakeholder Survey results in Chapter 2, which indicate SDG 12, 13 and 8 as the most frequently addressed by respondents' organizations through SP activities. Changes in the identification of key SDGs from the *2017 SPP Global Review* were not noted, as the earlier publication did not address the SDGs directly. However, it is clear that SPP policies are

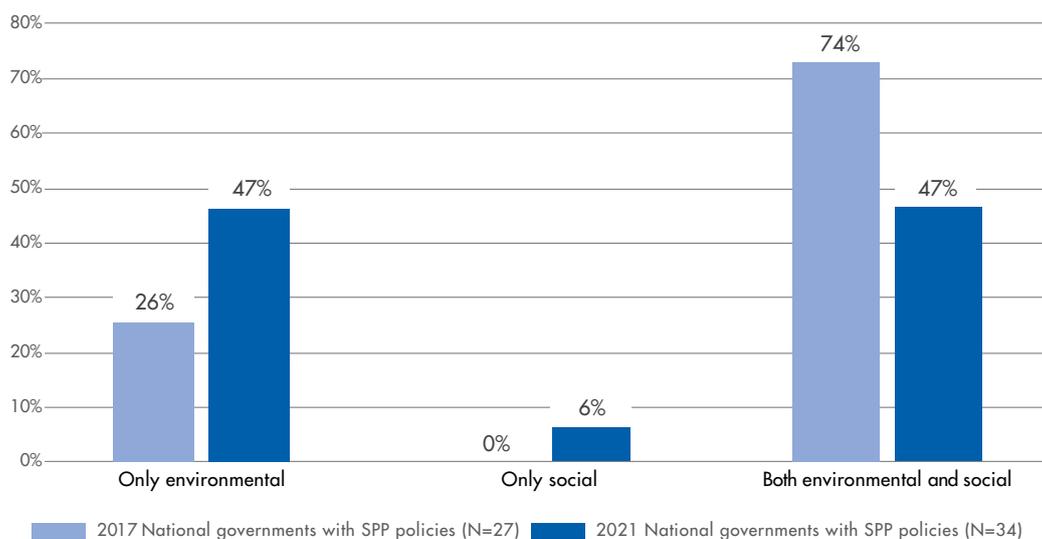
no longer limited to promoting environmental and social considerations. Recent policies also consider innovation and economic competitiveness (SDG 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure), as well as governance-related issues such as responsible business conduct (SDG 8 – decent work and economic growth).

## Are environmental or socio-economic objectives more common?

National governments were also asked whether the objectives set out in their SPP policies address the environmental and/or socio-economic dimensions of sustainable development. As shown in Figure 3.12, most countries indicated that their policies only address the environmental dimension (47%) or the environmental and socio-economic dimensions together (47%). However, two countries (Tunisia and Indonesia) reported that their policies fo-

cused exclusively on the socio-economic dimension (see Figure 3.12). This is a departure from findings in the *2017 SPP Global Review* where the majority of countries (74%) reported having SPP policies addressing both dimensions, while the remaining 26% indicated only the environmental dimension; no countries reported SPP policies related to only the socio-economic dimension.

**Figure 3.12. Sustainability objectives in SPP policies, 2017 and 2021**

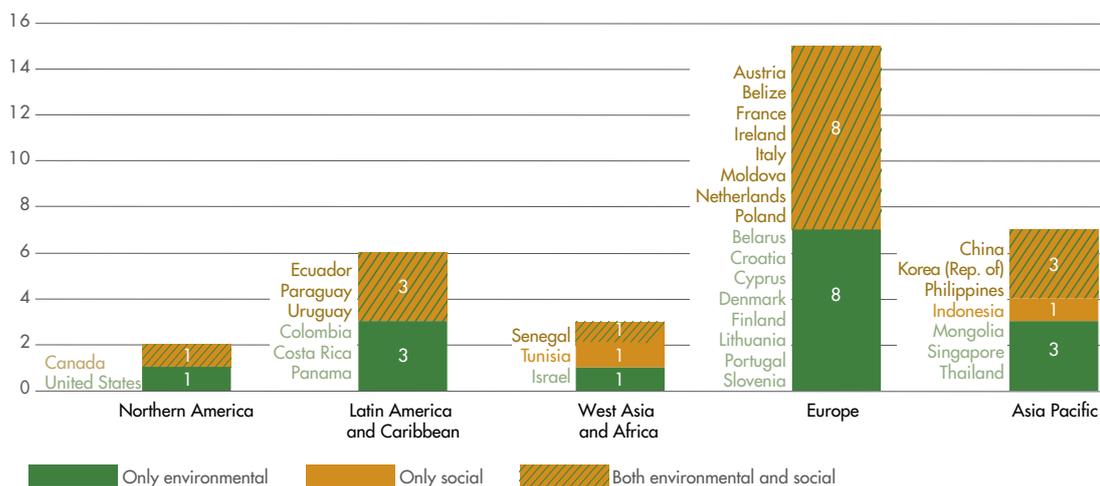


Source: *2017 SPP Global Review* and *2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire*.

In fact, it is quite common for countries new to SPP to focus their policies on a single dimension of sustainability – either social or environmental. For instance, nine countries that adopted their first SPP policies between 2015 to 2021 covered only environmental objectives – Belarus, Colombia, Costa

Rica, Finland, Mongolia, Panama, Singapore, Thailand and the United States (see Figure 3.13). However, the social dimension is becoming more prominent. This is a trend that will probably continue as an increasing number of developing countries take on SPP.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 3.13. Sustainability objectives in SPP policies of participating national governments by region**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.



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<sup>20</sup> Of the 16 participating countries that reported a single dimension of sustainability in their SPP policies, 7 are developing countries with only either an environmental (Belarus, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mongolia and Panama) or a social dimension (Indonesia and Tunisia).

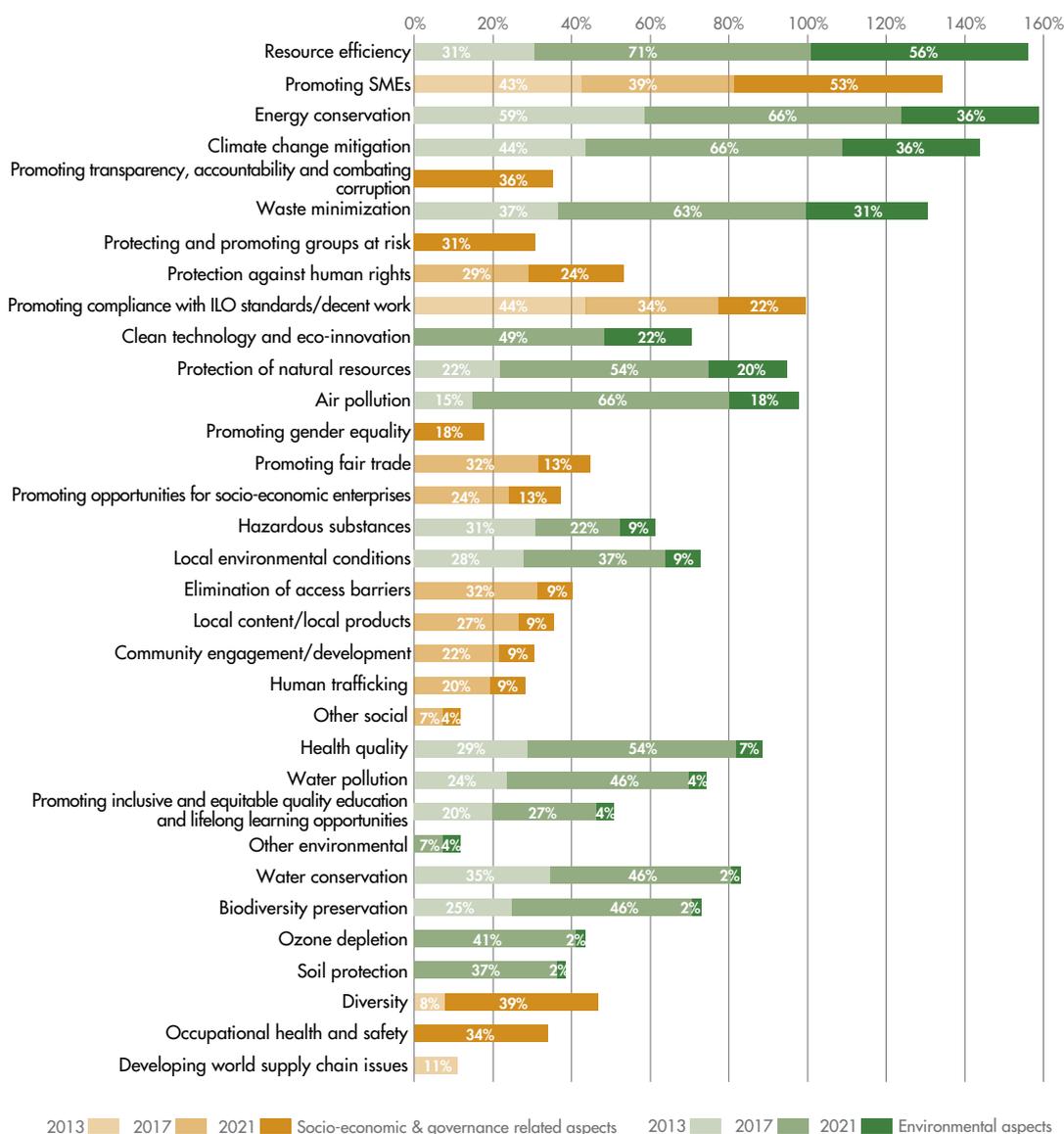
## What specific priority issue areas are addressed?

As revealed by Questionnaire results, environmental and socio-economic objectives of SPP policies can address an impressive range of issues – from climate change and gender equality to the promotion of local industries and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

As shown in Figure 3.14, issue areas relating to the environment were cited with the greatest frequency. More than half of the national governments (56%) indicated that their dedicated SPP policies addressed resource efficiency. Other commonly cited environ-

mental issues included energy conservation (36%), climate change mitigation (36%), waste minimization (31%) and clean technology and eco-innovation (22%). These results highlight the importance of climate change and circular economy in countries' environmental policies, and how SPP is used to contribute to those policies. In fact, this is consistent with the top five SDGs mentioned by the participating countries in the previous section, which included SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), 13 (climate action) and 7 (affordable and clean energy).

**Figure 3.14. Sustainability issues addressed in SPP policies (2021, 2017 and 2013), ranked according to 2021 data**



2013 Socio-economic & governance related aspects 2017 Socio-economic & governance related aspects 2021 Socio-economic & governance related aspects 2013 Environmental aspects 2017 Environmental aspects 2021 Environmental aspects

2021 National governments (N=45)

2017 National governments (N=41)

2013 Public sector stakeholders (N=63)

Note: National governments were asked to report on the top three priority issue areas addressed by their SPP policies

Source: 2013 and 2017 SPP Global Reviews and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

With regard to socio-economic concerns, the promotion of SMEs topped the list (53%), followed by transparent and accountable governance (36%), the protection and promotion of groups at risk (31%), human rights (24%) and compliance with International Labour Organization (ILO) standards for decent work (22%). Again, this is in line with the top five SDGs selected by Questionnaire respondents, which included SDG 8 on decent work and growth and SDG 3 on good health and well-being. It is also worth noting that, despite the importance of gender equality, this issue did not feature at the top of the list of socio-economic concerns.

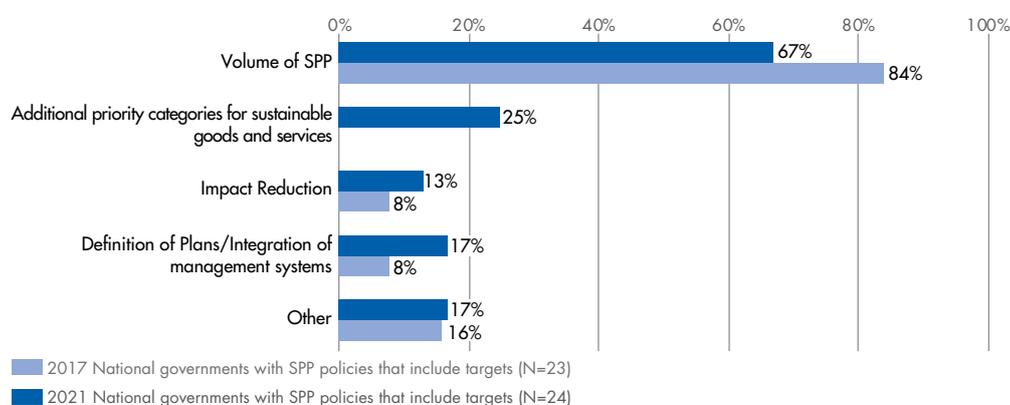
When comparing results from the 2021 Questionnaire with data from the *2017 SPP Global Review*, the growing concern for the social dimension is reflected. While in almost all instances environmental issues ranked higher than socio-economic concerns in 2017, in this edition certain socio-economic issues gained importance. In fact, the promotion of SMEs (53%) ranked second, almost on a par with the top environmental issue – resource efficiency (56%), while good governance (transparency, accountability and anti-corruption) tied for third with climate change mitigation and energy conservation (36% each).

## What targets are set out in SPP policies?

National governments continue to set specific targets in their SPP policies. Of the 34 national governments that reported SPP policies in the Questionnaire, 24 (71%) indicated that their policies included targets. These data are similar to findings from the *2017 SPP Global Review*, where 23 of 27 national governments (85%) with SPP policies included target setting.

As presented in Figure 3.15, of the 24 Questionnaire respondents with SPP policies that include targets, more than half (67%) set the target as a specific volume of SPP (the amount of expenditure on sustainable products and services or the number of contracts or tenders with sustainability considerations).

**Figure 3.15. Specific targets in SPP policies, 2017 and 2021**



Source: *2017 SPP Global Review* and *2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire*.

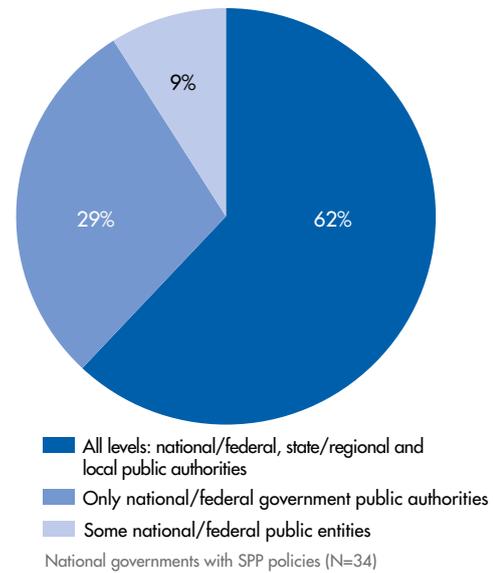
This is a departure from 2017 findings, where 84% of countries set such a target. The likely explanation for this variation, beyond the difficulty to quantify SPP, is an increased uptake in environmental ‘impact reduction’ targets (from 8% in 2017 to 13% in 2021), targets on the ‘definition of plans/integration of management systems’ (8% in 2017 to 17% in 2021), as well as setting the number of ‘additional priority categories for SPP’ as a target. This last target, reported by a quarter of participating national governments in 2021 and none in 2017, is a clear indication of increasing maturity in SPP over the last four years.

In addition, targets on the definition of plans/integration of management systems have expanded to include investing in sustainable goods and services (such as investment in eco-labelling of new and existing buildings in Singapore), increasing competition in public procurement and measuring compliance in the implementation of sustainable criteria in public procurement. Three countries identified very specific targets: Belize on phasing-out single use plastics in public procurement, Mexico on the allocation of at least 35% of public contracts earmarked for SMEs and the Dominican Republic on the use of shopping as a procurement method.

## What is the scope of SPP policy application?

Policies on SPP can vary not only in their objectives and targets, but also in their scope (see Figure 3.16). Although most policies address all levels of government – national/federal, state/regional and local public authorities (62%), some policies can be limited to a single level such as national/federal authorities (29%), or some combination of levels. Although less common, policies can even address a select set of government entities (9%). Compared to findings from the *2017 SPP Global Review*, a slightly higher percentage of SPP policies covered all levels of government in 2021 (62% compared to 58% in 2017), while a lower number addressed only national government (29% in 2021 versus 36% in 2017). This probably reflects the general acceptance of SPP as a strategic public policy instrument and the mainstreaming of SPP practices across all levels of government.

**Figure 3.16.** Types of public authorities covered by SPP policies



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

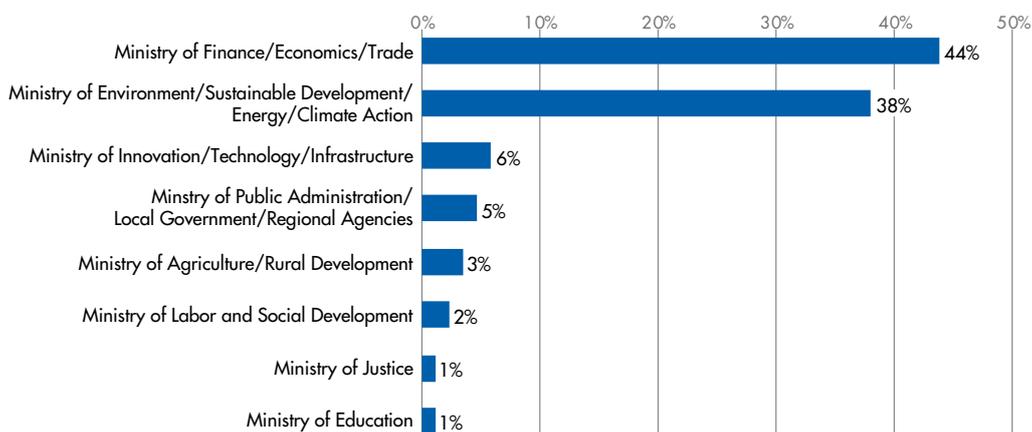
## 3.3 Public authorities leading SPP policy development and administration

### Which public authority is responsible for SPP policy development?

As in earlier editions of the *SPP Global Review*, Questionnaire findings indicate that the development of SPP policies is most often led by public authorities associated with economic or financial responsibilities and/or environmental affairs (see Figure 3.17). More recently, as the socio-economic dimension of SPP has become more pronounced, ministries and agencies responsible for economic development

and social affairs have become increasingly involved. In these cases, the Ministry of Finance or the National Procurement Agency work together with relevant line ministries depending on the objectives of the policy. It is common to see collaboration between various government authorities in the development of dedicated SPP policies, sometimes in the form of an interministerial or inter-agency committee on SPP.

**Figure 3.17.** Public authorities leading the development of the most recent SPP policy



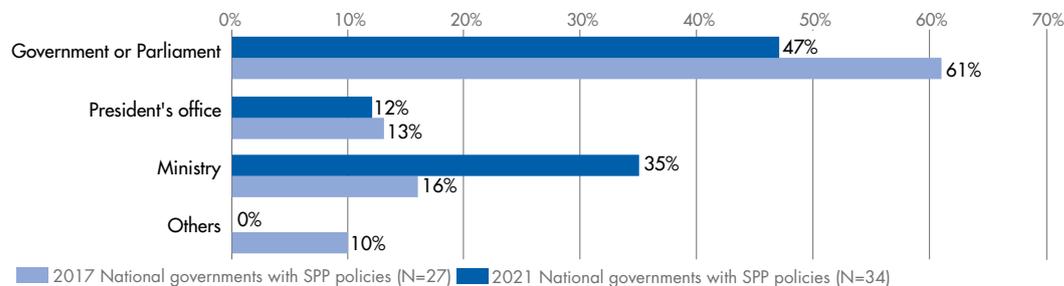
Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

## Who approves SPP policies?

National governments were also asked to report on which public authorities were in charge of approving dedicated SPP policies. As shown in Figure 3.18,

the distribution of the authorities with this role has substantially changed in comparison to 2017, according to Questionnaire results.

**Figure 3.18. Change of authorities in charge of approving SPP policies, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

The increase in the number of national governments with public procurement legislation that includes SPP provisions probably explains the decrease in the role of the government or (legislative) parliament in approving SPP policies from 61% in

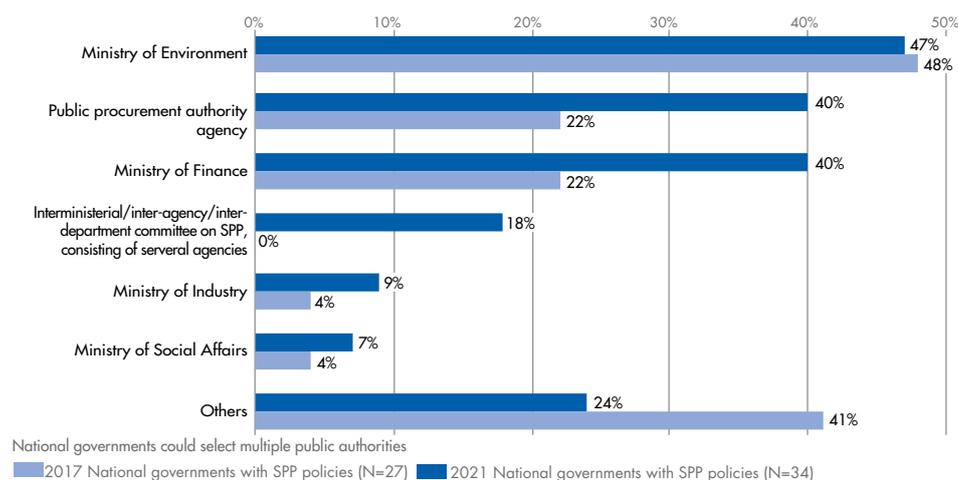
the 2017 SPP Global Review to 47% in 2021. This is also in line with the increasing role of (executive) ministries in approving SPP policies in accordance with emerging relevant public procurement legislation, which rose from 16% to 35%.

## Which public authority is responsible for policy administration?

In nearly all cases, the administration of dedicated SPP policies is carried out by the same public authorities responsible for SPP policy development, as indicated by Questionnaire findings. Public au-

thorities leading or co-leading in the administration of SPP policies are still those associated with environmental affairs and/or those with economic or financial responsibility (see Figure 3.19).

**Figure 3.19. Public authorities leading or co-leading the administration of SPP policies, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

When 2021 Questionnaire findings are compared to data from the *2017 SPP Global Review*, there is a notable increase in the role of the Ministry of Finance (from 22% to 40%) and the Public Procurement Authority (also from 22% to 40%). The increased role of these public authorities probably reflects the strategic importance of SPP. Ministries or agencies with social responsibilities still play a supporting role rather than a leading role in this area (only 7% – still the agency with lowest percentage among identified agencies).

The substantial changes in the distribution of authorities in charge of the administration of SPP policies in 2021 in comparison to 2017 point to a shift in public procurement from a traditional ‘process and transaction-based approach’ (Lloyd and McCue 2004) to a strategic tool to achieve policy objectives (Andhov 2019; EC 2019), thereby highlighting the importance of collaboration among various government agencies in the development and administration of SPP policies.

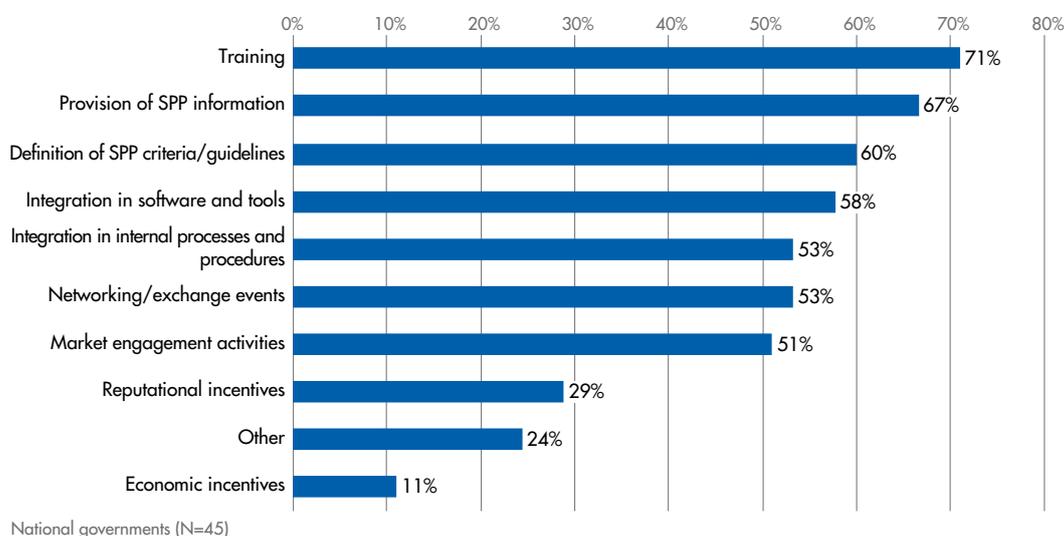
## 3.4 SPP implementation

### Activities supporting SPP implementation

National governments continue to carry out a broad range of activities and measures to support and facilitate sustainable procurement practices – even in the absence of a dedicated SPP policy. As shown in Figure 3.20, training, the dissemination of SPP related information and the development of SPP criteria

and guidelines were reported by participating national governments as their key SPP activities and measures. Apart from a slight increase in the importance of market engagement activities, no significant shifts were noted when compared to *2017 SPP Global Review* data.

**Figure 3.20. Common activities and measures to support SPP implementation**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

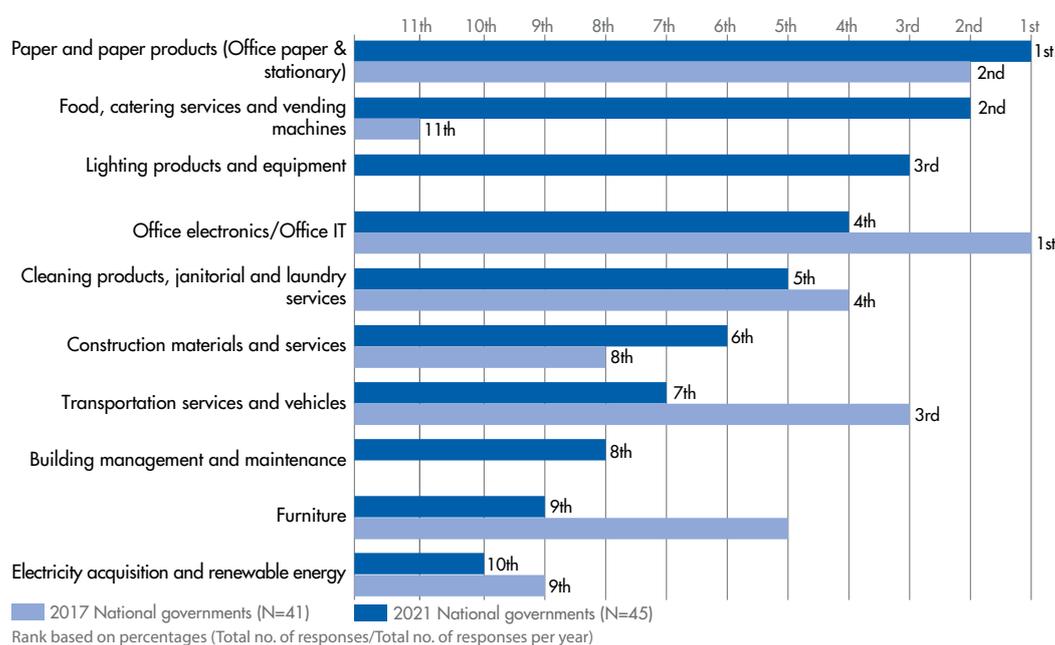
## What are the priority product and service categories for SPP?

Product prioritization is a critical activity of SPP implementation. The selection of priority products and services for SPP is a crucial undertaking for achieving tangible impacts. According to results from the Questionnaire, 69% of all 45 responding national governments prioritize certain categories of products and services for SPP implementation such as paper, food and catering services, office IT, cleaning services and construction materials. Eight new categories of products and services were introduced in the 2021 Questionnaire and two of them ('lighting products and

equipment' and 'building management and maintenance') were included among the priority categories by participating national governments.

As presented in Figure 3.21, the top five most commonly prioritized product and service categories in 2021 were 'paper and paper products'; 'food, catering services and vending machines'; 'lighting products and equipment'; 'office electronics/office IT'; and 'cleaning products, janitorial and laundry services'.

**Figure 3.21. Top ten products and services categories prioritised for SPP Implementation, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

These categories are consistent with findings from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise, which indicate cleaning products, janitorial and laundry services; office electronics/IT; and paper or paper products as the top three most commonly prioritized products and service categories. Results from the Stakeholder Survey also point to similar categories, with office electronics/IT; energy supply and energy services; and building design and construction being the most frequently selected.

For the most part, product and service rankings in the Questionnaire have held steady since the 2017 SPP

Global Review, featuring 'common use' categories such as paper and paper products, lighting and office electronics. This is probably attributable to the relative simplicity of introducing sustainable alternatives for such products in public procurement, thanks to well-established standards and eco-labelling schemes. A significant jump was noted, however, in the ranking of food services (moving from eleventh place in 2017 to second place in 2021). This is likely due to a rise in sustainable food policies (such as the EU Farm to Fork policies)<sup>21</sup> and their effective backing with sustainable procurement of food services.

<sup>21</sup> The EU Farm to Fork Strategy, which was published in May 2020, is a 10-year plan that supports the European Green Deal by aiming to make the food system fairer, healthier and more sustainable across the supply chain. The strategy sets out regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives, with the common agricultural and fisheries policies as key tools. See: [https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-05/f2f\\_action-plan\\_2020\\_strategy-info\\_en.pdf](https://food.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-05/f2f_action-plan_2020_strategy-info_en.pdf)

## Product prioritization and development of eco-labels: Thailand, a case study

Thailand is one of the leaders of Green Public Procurement (GPP) in South-East Asia, with more than ten years of commitment promoting GPP. Its formal GPP Promotion Plan was initiated in 2008. Since then, GPP has been extended to different government organizations and is routinely monitored.

Given the increasing interest in sustainability in the last few years, GPP has been expanded to new priority areas - especially in the construction sector. Accordingly, the Government developed common GPP criteria for three high impact products used in construction, namely: cement, thermal insulation and steel products.

To develop the criteria, the Thai Government used existing eco-labels to address key hot spots in construction purchasing from a life-cycle perspective. Eco-labels were also important for helping ensure better sustainability/environmental performance. For cement and thermal insulation, the Thai Green Label criteria served as an important reference to ensure

that products complied with their GPP requirements. For steel products, there is no Thai eco-label. In this case, the Government benchmarked other relevant eco-label standards.

The Thai Government also conducted a market readiness survey in partnership with the Thai Environmental Institute to determine whether Thai manufacturers could satisfy the proposed requirements. Based on that information, draft GPP criteria were developed. The Thai Government also solicited written feedback and hosted meetings with the Federation of Thai Industries to collect additional opinions from local manufacturers and adjust the GPP criteria to the national context. The meetings also helped raise general awareness and transfer knowledge among approximately 100 internal and external stakeholders (including manufacturers and public purchasers). These discussions were particularly valuable for the deployment of Thai Government's sector-based procurement strategy.

## Application of SPP criteria and product guidelines

Most participating national governments (28 out of 45) reported developing SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines for priority goods, services or works categories. However, there is considerable variation in terms of how the criteria and guidelines are applied. Of the 28 countries with SPP criteria and/or product guidelines, 50% (14 countries) claimed that the use of the said SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines is mandatory (see Figure 3.22). This is consistent with findings from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise, where 67% of the 33 participating national governments with SPP policies indicated that the procurement of certain categories of sustainable products and services is mandatory.

**Figure 3.22.** Participating national governments with mandatory SPP criteria or product guidelines

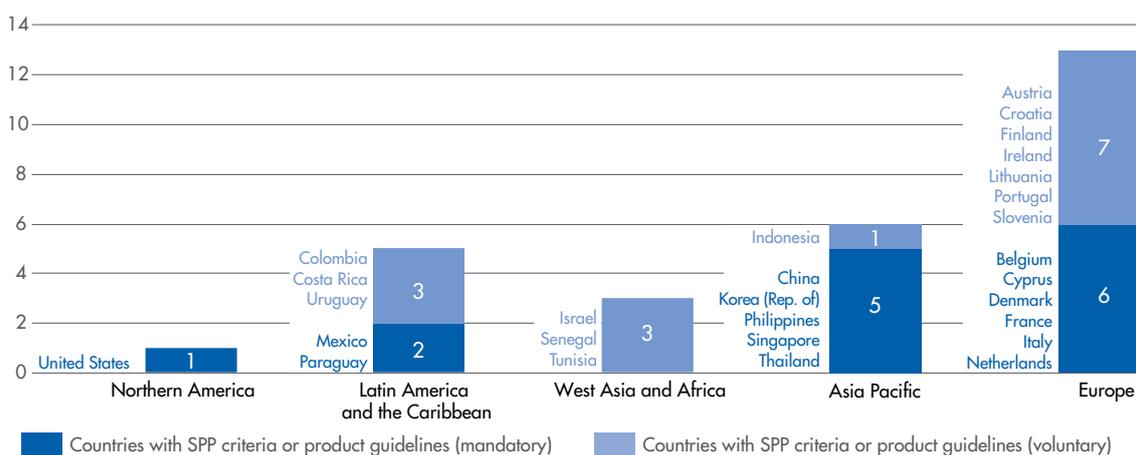


Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

A comparison across regions reveals that, while Europe has developed the greatest number of SPP criteria and product guidelines, only about 46% (6 out of 13) of these have mandatory application (see Figure 3.23). This contrasts with other regions such as Asia Pacific, where more than 83% (5 out of 6) of

the existing SPP criteria and product guidelines are already mandatory. Other regions are also leaning towards more mandatory SPP criteria and product guidelines due to the existence of procurement regulations. In contrast, Europe is more focused on SPP policies and action plans.

**Figure 3.23. Mandatory application of SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines within national governments by region**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Mandatory application of SPP criteria and guidelines can vary in scope – both in the number of prioritized products, as well as the number of procuring entities required to apply the criteria (see Figure 3.24). Application can be for all prioritized products, as in four national governments (Cyprus, Italy, Republic of Korea and United States), or only for certain products, as reported by ten others

(Belgium, China, Denmark, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Paraguay, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand). The criteria can also be mandatory for all procuring entities, as in ten countries (Belgium, China, France, Italy, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Paraguay, Philippines, Singapore and the United States) or only for targeted entities, as in four others (Cyprus, Denmark, Netherlands and Thailand).

**Figure 3.24. Application of SPP product criteria or product procurement guidelines**

Countries with mandatory SPP criteria/product guidelines	For all products	For certain products	For all procuring entities	For targeted entities
Belgium		✓	✓	
China		✓	✓	
Cyprus	✓			✓
Denmark		✓		✓
France		✓	✓	
Italy	✓		✓	
Republic of Korea	✓		✓	
Mexico		✓	✓	
Netherlands		✓		✓
Paraguay		✓	✓	
Philippines		✓	✓	
Singapore		✓	✓	
Thailand		✓		✓
United States	✓		✓	

## 3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of SPP implementation has continued to progress since 2017, with 73% of countries, or 33 out of the 45 Questionnaire respondents,<sup>22</sup> indicating that they monitor SPP implementation compared to 66% in 2017.

If data from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise are considered, the number of participating national governments that monitor SPP implementation across both data collection exercises increases to 38, with the addition of 5 countries (Bulgaria, Germany, Japan, Latvia and Sweden).

The presence of SPP policies does not guarantee that implementation will be subject to monitoring and evaluation, according to Questionnaire findings. Six countries with SPP policies (out of a total of 34)

responded that they were not currently monitoring/evaluating implementation of those policies for various reasons. Challenges cited include the lack of tools or devices to generate reports on the use of sustainable criteria or the lack of human and financial resources to carry out monitoring/evaluation.

With respect to frequency, 61% of Questionnaire respondents indicated that they conduct annual monitoring, while 15% carry out monitoring twice or more per year. Some countries conducted their SPP monitoring as participants in external SPP data collection assessments, such as the GPP Awards every 4 to 5 years (Cyprus) or at the end of a programme such as the ENCPE (Estratégia Nacional para as Compras Públicas Ecológicas) in 2020 (Portugal).

### Which aspects of SPP are monitored by national governments?

Results from the Questionnaire show that governments continue to monitor the following three aspects of SPP:

- ◆ Institutionalization – the process and actions undertaken by an organization to integrate SPP in their culture and daily operations, such as the adoption of SPP policies and/or integration of sustainability considerations in procedures and tools;
- ◆ Outputs – the direct results of procurement activities, such as the number or value of tenders or contracts that include sustainability criteria; and
- ◆ Outcomes – the benefits to or impacts on the environment and society generated by SPP practices, such as reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

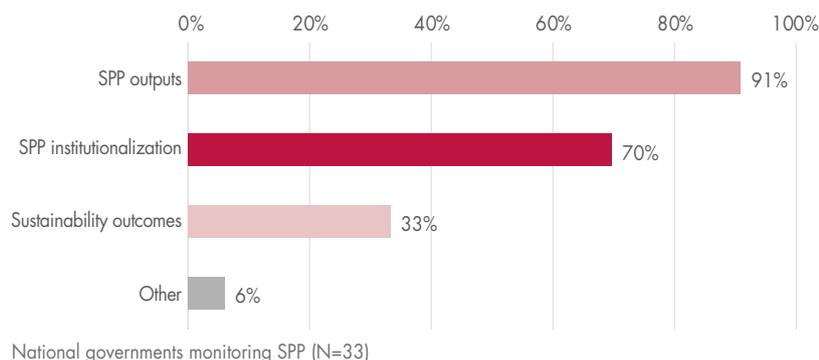


<sup>22</sup> The 33 participating national governments that monitor and evaluate SPP implementation are Austria, Belgium, Belize, Cambodia, Canada, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand and United States.

As shown in Figure 3.25, SPP outputs remain the most commonly monitored aspect for participating national governments (91% of the monitoring 33 countries), with a small increase in the number of countries tracking this aspect since 2017 (from 26 to 30). This is probably attributable to the fact that SPP outputs are the easiest of the three SPP implementation aspects to quantify. Likewise, no new

trends were noted in the monitoring of SPP outcomes, with an increase of just two countries tracking this aspect in 2021 compared to 2017 (from 9 to 11). However, there was a significant increase in the number of countries monitoring SPP institutionalization, (from 10 countries in 2017 to 23 in 2021), pointing to a stronger commitment to SPP policies and their actual deployment.

**Figure 3.25. SPP aspects monitored by participating national governments**

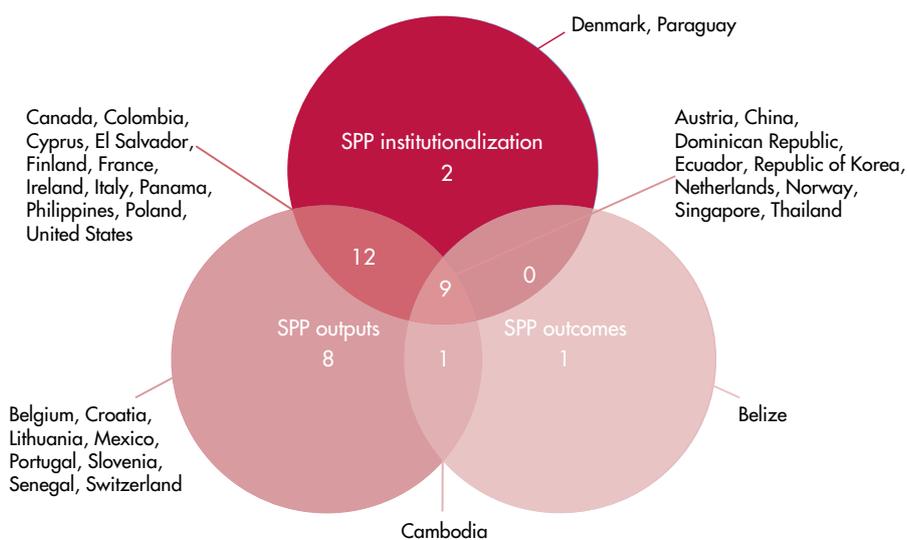


Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Questionnaire results also indicate that most participating national governments (64%) monitor two or more aspects of SPP implementation, with 12 countries monitoring outputs and institutionalization, and 9 countries monitoring all three aspects (see Figure 3.26). It is interesting to note that almost all countries monitoring SPP outcomes also monitor outputs

and institutionalization. This points to the fact that outcomes (such as reduced GHG emissions) largely depend on the degree of SPP institutionalization (adoption of SPP policies, integration of SPP in procedures and tools), as well as the generation of SPP outputs (issuance of tenders and contracts) – marking a high level of SPP implementation/maturity.

**Figure 3.26. SPP aspects monitored by participating national governments**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

A regional analysis reveals that countries in Europe (Austria, Netherlands, Norway), Asia Pacific (China, Korea, Singapore and Thailand) and Latin America

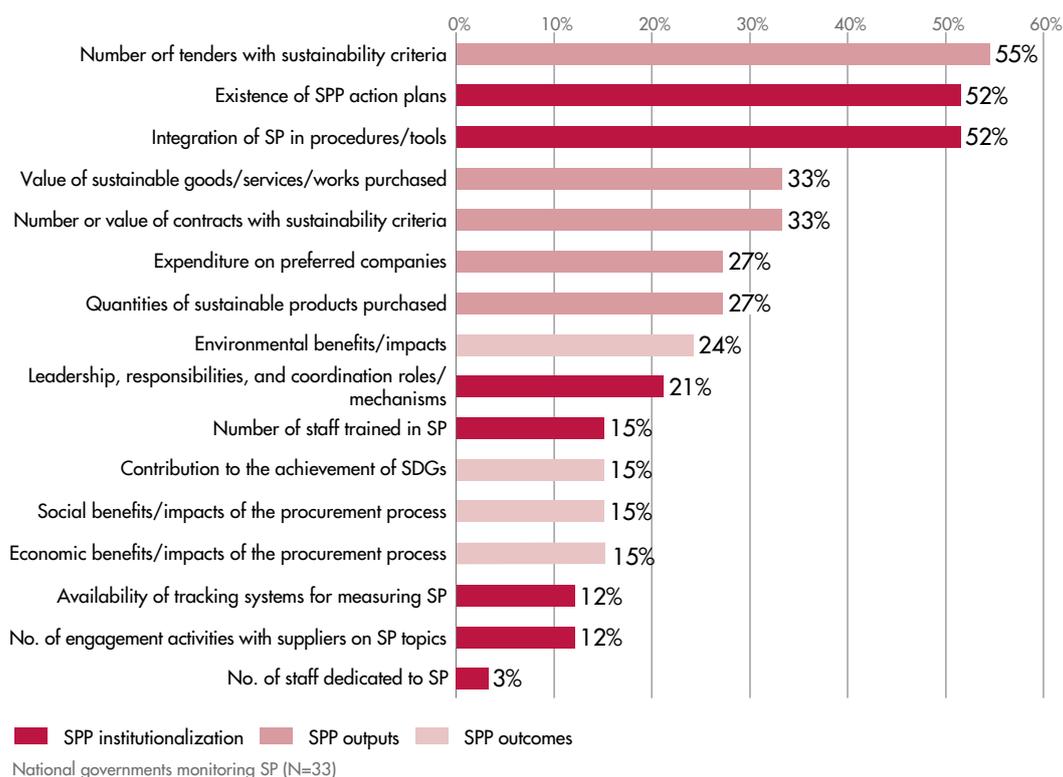
and the Caribbean (Dominican Republic and Ecuador) are monitoring all three aspects of SPP implementation.

## What indicators are used to measure and evaluate SPP performance?

National governments use a broad range of indicators to measure the three aspects of SPP implementation (institutionalization, outputs and outcomes). Results from the Questionnaire reveal the following

three top indicators: the number of tenders with sustainability criteria (55%); existence of SPP action plans (52%); and integration of SP in procedures/tools (52%) , as shown in Figure 3.27.

**Figure 3.27. Key SPP indicators monitored by participating national governments**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

*SPP outputs remain the most commonly monitored aspect, however a significant increase in the number of countries monitoring SPP institutionalization was noted, pointing to a stronger commitment to SPP policies and their actual deployment.*

More than half of national governments monitoring SPP implementation reported tracking SPP institutionalization through the following two indicators: existence of SPP action plans and/or integration of SP in procedures and tools. This represents a near doubling of the number of countries monitoring such indicators – from 10 participating national governments in 2017 to 18 in 2021 (see Figure 3.28 for variance between key SPP aspects monitored in the 2021 Questionnaire versus the 2017 SPP Global Review).

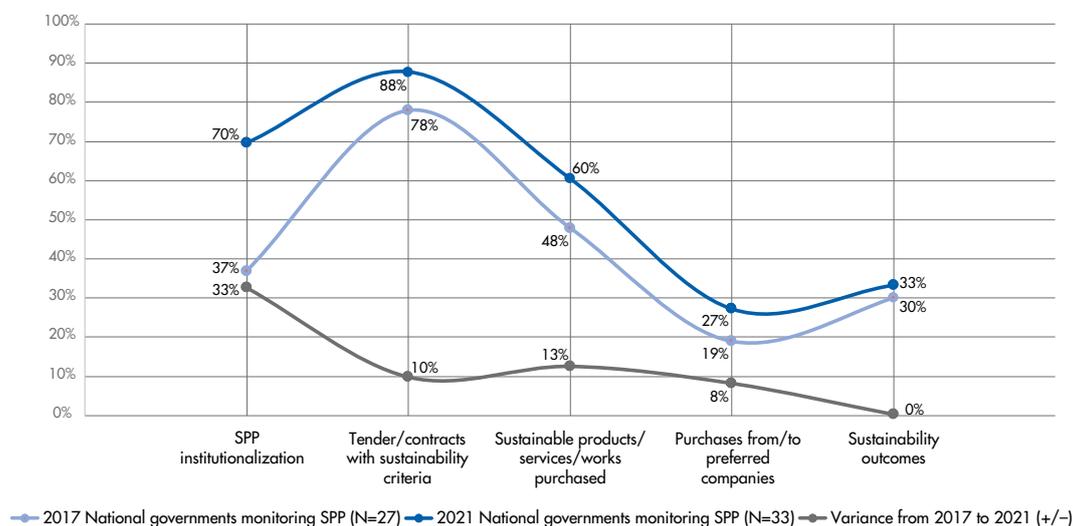
Most countries (88%) also reported monitoring SPP outputs through the number of SPP tenders and contracts issued with sustainability criteria. It was also common to monitor sustainable products purchased (either in the number or value of contracts issued), which showed an increase from 48% in 2017 to 60% in 2021. Another positive development was observed in the monitoring of purchases from preferred companies such as SMEs, women-owned enterprises and local industries (an increase from 19% in 2017 to 27% in 2021).

It is interesting to note that, despite the high percentage of participating national governments

monitoring SPP outputs, findings from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise revealed that only 27% of countries were able to provide data on the share of sustainable procurement in total procurement expenditure.<sup>23</sup> On average, sustainable procurement represented 8% of total procurement expenditure, with the highest percentage reaching 40, while others ranged from 0.01 to 12%. Most respondents (60%) providing this information were from the Asia Pacific region, probably due to their advanced e-procurement platforms that facilitated the processing of complex data.

The least commonly monitored aspect reported by participating national governments in the Questionnaire were the outcomes generated by SPP. In fact, a decrease was noted in the monitoring of certain outcome indicators, such as social and economic benefits – dropping from 33% of national governments in 2017 to 30% in 2021. Given that a greater number of developing countries participated in the 2021 Questionnaire – which are less further along in SPP implementation – fewer countries might be expected to report on monitoring such outcome indicators that are more complex to calculate.

**Figure 3.28. SPP aspects monitored by participating national governments, 2017 and 2021**



Source: 2017 SPP Global Review and 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

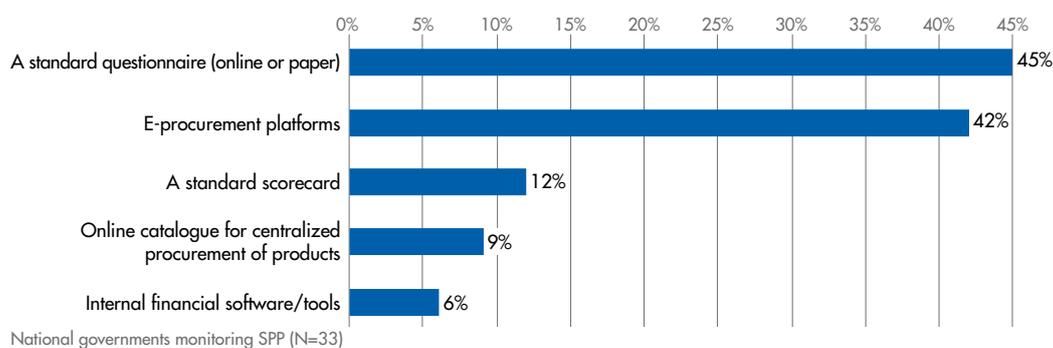
<sup>23</sup> It is likely that most countries are only partly measuring the value of their SPP, which prevents them from computing the rate of SPP in public procurement.

## Methods and tools to gather SPP data

Questionnaire results reveal that national governments use similar systems to gather data on SPP implementation as they did in 2017 – mainly e-tendering platforms or standard questionnaires (see Figure 3.29). These findings are similar to results from the

SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise, where 42% of respondents indicated using traditional data collection methods (such as surveys, self-assessment and so on), while 37% use e-procurement platforms.

**Figure 3.29.** Tools used to gather and/or report SPP implementation data



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Overall, national governments recorded a strong response rate to their SPP monitoring exercises (73%), with only a handful of countries (6) reporting anything less. In addition, the majority of nation-

al governments that monitor SPP implementation (58%, or 19 of 33 countries) publish the results of these exercises.

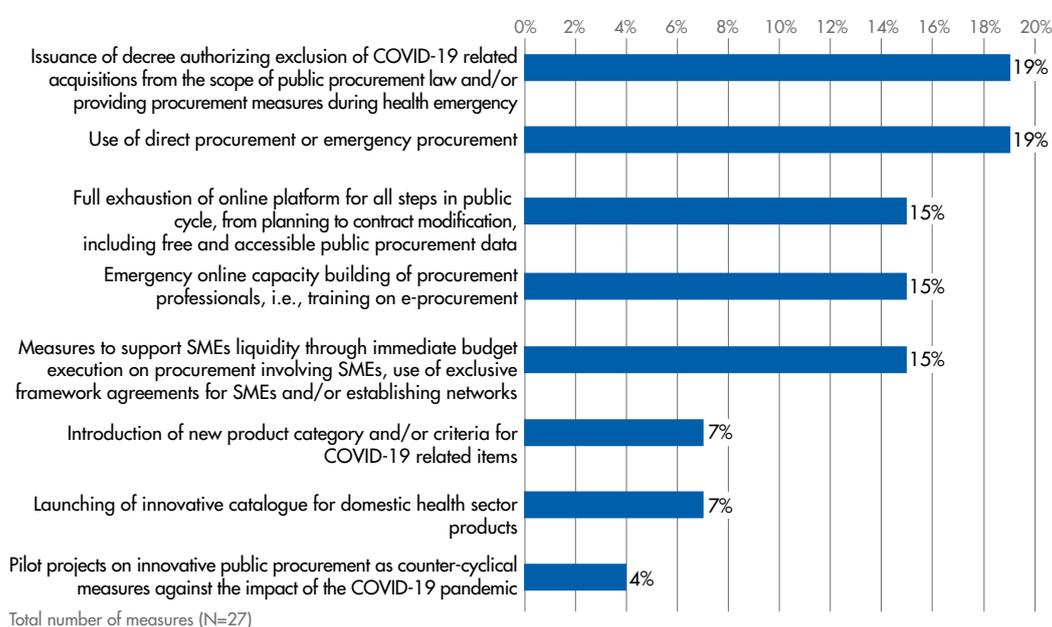


## 3.6 Impact of COVID-19 on SPP

While it may be difficult to determine the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global SPP advances, a number of insights can be drawn from data collected in the 2021 Questionnaire. Forty per cent (18) of the 45 participating national governments indicated having specific initiatives, strategies and/or actions to address the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, listing 27 measures in total. Given that every government's frontline response to the pandemic was the swift acquisition of per-

sonal protective equipment, ventilators, vaccines and COVID-19 testing, it is not surprising that most of these measures relate to expediting public procurement processes. In this context, environmental sustainability considerations took a back seat, as national governments issued decrees exempting COVID-19 related acquisitions from the scope of public procurement law and/or authorizing the use of direct procurement or emergency procurement for such purchases (see Figure 3.30).

**Figure 3.30. Measures taken by participating national governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic**



Source: 2021 SPP Global Review National Government Questionnaire.

Interestingly, the socio-economic dimension of SPP was given new importance, as several governments sought to leverage the public procurement function in support of local businesses and/or marginalized groups adversely affected by the pandemic. Such measures included immediate budget execution in favour of contracts awarded to SMEs, the use of exclusive framework agreements in favour of SMEs and establishing networks of suppliers<sup>24</sup> to include

SMEs. In some instances, countries enacted new legislation aimed at encouraging and facilitating SME participation in public tendering. Costa Rica's Decree 42709 of January 2021,<sup>25</sup> for example, goes a step further by not only encouraging the participation of SMEs, but prioritizing those from less developed areas and those that provide employment to disadvantaged segments of the population, such as the disabled, women and youth.

<sup>24</sup> Some countries have introduced initiatives to lower the barriers to SMEs participating in public procurement by establishing online platforms for connecting them to public procurers and major suppliers or prime contractors for possible collaboration (Colombia), as well as conducting online networking events for SME suppliers and environmental groups for innovative personal protective equipment (PPE) and other relevant supplies (Ireland).

<sup>25</sup> Decree 42709-MEIC-MTSS-MINAE-MICITT.

More recently, as governments shift their focus from saving lives to saving livelihoods, new opportunities are emerging for driving the SPP agenda forward. Over the last two years, a number of governments around the world have approved COVID-19 stimulus and recovery packages in support of job creation, poverty reduction, development and economic growth.<sup>26</sup> Given the magnitude of these investments, there are immense opportunities for governments to leverage their purchasing power in a strategic manner to deliver public works projects that not only provide jobs and drive economic growth, but that also generate the lowest possible environmental impacts, including carbon emissions, while also producing positive social outcomes. These opportunities may drive countries to take a critical look at their public procurement framework and determine if the current set-up brings about the best social, economic and environmental outcomes of investments. The United States is a case in point. In November 2021, the US\$65 billion Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal was passed into law, aimed at rebuilding roads, bridges, railways and other infrastructure, with environmental and social considerations at its heart. President Biden subsequently

issued an Executive Order,<sup>27</sup> calling upon the Government to promote cleaner and more sustainable federal procurement. Section 303 of this Order sets out a 'Buy Clean' initiative for construction materials intended to reduce 'embodied emissions' (greenhouse gases emitted during the production of the relevant construction materials), and this dovetails with the Infrastructure Deal.

However, even in the absence ambitious COVID-19 recovery plans, countries feeling the pinch of economic fallout may look to a more strategic approach to government procurement, thus maximizing the value of their purchases, particularly as they relate to social and economic outcomes.<sup>28</sup> In fact, according to the International Labour Organization, the pandemic eliminated approximately 114 million full-time jobs in 2020, creating an unemployed population competing for limited job opportunities (International Labour Organisation [ILO] 2021). This scenario increases the vulnerability to labour exploitation, including forced labour. There is therefore a need to elevate due diligence practices in procurement processes.

*Interestingly, the socio-economic dimension of SPP was given new importance, as several governments sought to leverage the public procurement function in support of local businesses and/or marginalized groups adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.*

<sup>26</sup> These include the United States Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal, the European Green Deal and China's pledge to pursue carbon neutrality by 2060.

<sup>27</sup> The Executive Order on Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability and the accompanying Federal Sustainability Plan (collectively referred to as 'The Federal Sustainability Plan') aims 'to achieve a carbon pollution-free electricity sector by 2035 and net-zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050.' See: [www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/12/08/executive-order-on-catalyzing-clean-energy-industries-and-jobs-through-federal-sustainability/](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/12/08/executive-order-on-catalyzing-clean-energy-industries-and-jobs-through-federal-sustainability/).

<sup>28</sup> Some governments have implemented measures to streamline procurement procedures for SMEs. In Italy, for instance, 59 measures on simplified procurement procedures for SMEs were implemented in 19 regions. Other countries have addressed the shortage of medical equipment to fight coronavirus. In India, for example, the Government used ventilators developed locally by small-scale industries in Rajkot. See: [www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/covid-19-gujarat-firm-makes-low-cost-ventilators-in-10-days/1919297/](https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/covid-19-gujarat-firm-makes-low-cost-ventilators-in-10-days/1919297/) and [www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/COVID-19-Italian-regions-SME-policy-responses.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/COVID-19-Italian-regions-SME-policy-responses.pdf).

## 3.7 Conclusion

As revealed by the 2021 Questionnaire results and data from the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise, the global SPP landscape has evolved since the last *SPP Global Review* in 2017. There has been a considerable increase in the development of policies and regulations in support of SPP, which is likely attributed to the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in 2015 and the ratification of the Paris Agreement in 2016. In fact, an increasing number of countries have adopted policies specifically dedicated to the promotion of SPP (from 15 in 2017 to 34 in 2021), while many are currently in the process of developing them.

Importantly, even in the absence of a dedicated policy, countries are still taking action. All 45 national governments responding to the 2021 Questionnaire indicated that one or more of their overarching or thematic national policies include SPP provisions (such as environmental protection) and 37 reported having included SPP provisions in their procurement regulations.

There has also been an evolution in the type of sustainability issues addressed in SPP policies, with the socio-economic dimension increasing its presence, particularly among developing countries. This more holistic approach to SPP is reflected in the growing importance of interministerial and inter-agency collaboration in the development and administration of SPP policies. In parallel, there has been a nota-

ble increase in the role of public authorities with economic or financial responsibility, thereby underscoring the strategic importance of SPP to national governments.

The scope of most SPP policies has also expanded to all levels of government. This suggests that national governments are making efforts to mainstream SPP practices. In addition, many countries are making SPP criteria and guidelines mandatory for all procuring entities or targeted ones.

Against this backdrop, countries are providing support to SPP through various activities, with training, dissemination of SPP related information and development of SPP criteria and guidelines still being the most common. Efforts are also under way to track progress in SPP, particularly with regards to SP institutionalization.

Findings from the 2021 Questionnaire all point to a general acceptance of SPP as an international public procurement best practice. How national governments find the right balance between the 'vertical' objectives of public procurement (generally recognized as integrity, transparency, economy, openness, fairness, competition, and accountability – Lynch 2014) and the 'horizontal' ones (advancing national sustainable development objectives) will be the challenge – with no 'one-size-fits-all' approach.



# 4. Recommendations

## and conclusion



Successful SP requires a solid policy foundation, excellence in implementation and a robust monitoring system. As such, the *2022 SPP Global Review* highlights important developments in these areas across national governments, the private sector and intergovernmental organizations. While there is no one formula or path for introducing SP in the procurement framework of organizations, this Chapter highlights several SP recommendations identified in expert interviews, Stakeholder

Survey and National Government Questionnaire responses and literature reviews. Rather than being prescriptive, this Chapter seeks to share recommendations to better equip decision makers and public procurement experts with knowledge about SP practices that have proved effective in a number of settings. It is hoped that these eight recommendations encourage additional discussion about how organizations may further integrate SP into their procurement practices.

## 4.1 Shift from 'lowest cost procurement' to 'value for money procurement'

'Lowest cost procurement' is a strategy that prioritizes the purchase of goods and services based on their acquisition price. While this approach seems appropriate because product and service prices are determined by the cost of labour and production, face prices rarely account for the full cost of production and disposal, which also involves costs associated with negative social impacts and environmental harms. By contrast, 'value for money procurement' strategies include social and environmental costs and criteria related to quality, time to delivery and support services. This procurement strategy allows organizations to more accurately assess the true cost of their goods and services, whilst simultaneously contributing to social benefits such as the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in procurement practices as well as supply chains.

Multiple countries have embraced 'value for money' procurement strategies. Many have done so by enacting formal policies or legislation. For instance, in 2012, the United Kingdom enacted its Social Value Act. This regulation requires that United Kingdom governments account for their environmental and social costs and benefits when making procurement decisions. The Social Value Act<sup>1</sup> forces government departments to 'explicitly evaluate social value when awarding most major contracts'. Such requirements create incentives for the private sector to demonstrate the social value of their contracts.

Argentina, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay are other examples of countries embracing 'value for money' procurement. They have incorporated sustainability criteria in their standard procurement specifications and have promoted framework agreements<sup>2</sup> (Casier and Ruete 2020).

'Value for money' procurement strategies are also relevant to subnational governments. For instance, the Argentine province of Mendoza has restructured its public procurement tenders to incentivize vendors to embed social and environmental concerns into their business practices. Mendoza Province began by educating procurement professionals about sustainability in an effort to encourage procurement decisions that took into account 'triple impacts' to balance economic, environmental and social equity issues (Casier and Ruete 2020). To further encourage 'value for money' procurement decisions, Mendoza also devised a policy whereby vendors were able to demonstrate their 'triple impacts' and be allocated extra points in the decision-making process (Casier and Ruete 2020). Mendoza's aim is for its policy to spur market competitiveness and bids from companies that are more sustainable. For more information on SP in local governments, see Annex 3 in Part II of this publication.

1 [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/3/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/3/enacted)

2 According to the Model Law from the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) on definition of terms, a framework agreement is an agreement between the procuring entity and selected supplier (or suppliers) or contractor (or contractors) concluded upon completion of the selection process for supplier (or suppliers) or contractor (or contractors) (also known as 'first stage of the framework agreement procedure'). It can either be closed (no additional supplier/contractor may subsequently become a party) or open (additional supplier/s is/are allowed) with or without a second-stage competition. See: <https://uncitral.un.org/sites/uncitral.un.org/files/media-documents/uncitral/en/2011-model-law-on-public-procurement-e.pdf>

## 4.2 Emphasize training, capacity-building and incentives

Training, capacity-building and incentives are effective ways to embed SP practices more fully into an organization's purchasing patterns by helping create a shared understanding around SP and highlighting its importance throughout the organization. The results of the expert interviews indicate that SP training, capacity-building and incentives are especially important because procurement managers often do not see the full value of sustainable procurement. In some instances, procurement managers do not see how social sustainability goals (such as purchasing from women- or minority-owned businesses) are important to their organization's objectives. In other instances, procurement professionals are less willing to make SP decisions without clear guidance because of perceived risk associated with making such decisions. This is particularly important for the private sector, where soft components (such as leadership support and organizational adhesion) were reported as the most important drivers of SP, according to Stakeholder Survey participants.

Training should focus on 'value for money' procurement strategies that are offered to new employees and as continuing education. This idea is supported by Stakeholder Survey and National Government Questionnaire respondents. They indicated that robust training programmes are vital for facilitating SP and providing purchasing professionals with assurance about their SP approach. As one expert interviewee states, "People are self-driven; [training] enables them to pursue SPP with confidence".

In addition, the importance of human resources for the private sector to tackle mounting SP challenges should not be underestimated. In a turbulent environment characterized by multiple crises, increased stakeholder pressure and more regulation, private organizations will need to acquire internal SP capabilities quickly. This can either be done through training or recruiting. However, as new tasks and requirements related to SP pile up, SP might generate frustration and detachment from practitioners. It is therefore equally important to provide professionals with adequate resources to integrate SP in their day-to-day activities.

Organizations should also consider extending their training to vendors. Many vendors have developed or have access to sustainable product offerings. However, they have not promoted their more sustainable products sufficiently. Training programmes are needed to highlight organizations' enhanced focus on sustainability criteria, sustainability goals and contract incentives that emphasize SP offerings. Relevant training may be especially helpful for small and local businesses and businesses owned by women and various disadvantaged groups – so that they can more successfully compete for government contracts.

Similarly, incentives increase employee investment in SP and create a culture that encourages and rewards creativity. Incentives include typical internal recognitions and rewards. Other examples include creative



competitions among (or across) organization units or for specific purchasing categories. Other incentives that can be leveraged to embed SP may come from outside the organization. Examples include [ICLEI's Procura+ awards](#)<sup>1</sup> that highlight innovative approaches to sustainable purchasing and tender

procedures and give visibility to forward-looking public authorities and their initiatives. Similarly, the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council offers awards for organizational and individual green purchasing leadership and profiles case studies that highlight different sustainable purchasing successes.

### 4.3 Enhance reputation for sustainability

Expert stakeholder interviewees suggest that organizations adopting SP can benefit from an improved public image and reputation. However, they need to take an active role in their reputation building. Organizational reputations are shaped by, inter alia, global and regional rankings, media attention and stakeholder engagement. For instance, dozens of publications maintain an up-to-date list of the most sustainable cities in the world (including National Geographic, Conde Nast, Forbes and BBC Travel). Other publications rank the world's most sustainable countries (such as the World Economic Forum, World Population Review, Forbes, US News and Business Insider). Strong sustainability reputations can attract new business or tourists, as well as helping to satisfy stakeholder concerns.

Organizations that are serious about SP can leverage their sustainable purchasing activities to help demonstrate their overall sustainability commitment. To do so, organizations should amplify their messaging about the importance of SP towards

promoting sustainability. Additionally, organizations should make their SP policies publicly available, especially information about their metrics, goals and progress towards their sustainability goals, in addition to elevating their sustainability reputation. Making this information public also has the added benefit of increasing transparency with a wide range of stakeholders.

This is particularly clear for the private sector. While many business organizations now officially claim to embrace SP, the ability to measure and publicly report on SP tends to separate superficial adopters from more credible forms of engagement. This is especially true in a context where stakeholders have growing expectations on environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting, as well as growing capacities to monitor this reporting. The next step for both public and private organizations will be the ability to reliably report actual social and environmental outcomes as opposed to mere inputs or institutionalization (for instance, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions versus training provided).

*“One South African municipality is offering purchasing preferences to businesses that are based on labour-intensive work rather than businesses that are automated in an effort to broaden local employment. This same municipality is also using purchasing quotas to prioritize purchases from local women-owned businesses”.*

*SP expert interviewee*

<sup>1</sup> <https://procuraplus.org/awards>

## 4.4 Advance all aspects of sustainability

Some governments, especially in the developing world, have had great success leveraging SP to improve their social equity and economic development (Cravero 2017). These countries are using purchasing to increase opportunities for small and local businesses, and especially those from disadvantaged groups, by using creative tendering processes such as allowing them to band together to apply for large procurement contracts. Other governments are promoting purchases from businesses that prioritize human labour over automation so that they can incentivize businesses to create jobs for low-skilled labour. Similarly, India is utilizing its SP as a tool to promote economic development by prioritizing small and medium-sized businesses with 25% of procurement set aside for these companies (Rawat 2020). These efforts are helping the government address SDG 8, which promotes decent work and economic growth.

Given their experience with promoting social concerns in the tendering process, contracting and other aspects of purchasing, these countries are in a strong position to extend their SP to address environmental concerns as well.

As was highlighted in expert interviews, governments (especially those in OECD countries) initially implemented SP by focusing on reducing the environmental impacts of purchasing, but now they are progressively leveraging their procurement in support of social equity and economic development. For instance, cities in the United States are increasingly setting aside a portion of their total budget to spend on purchasing from small and local businesses to support local economic development (Cravero 2017).

According to Stakeholder Survey results and the literature review, the private sector tends to address social challenges more often than environmental ones, especially in terms of challenges beyond climate change, such as water, biodiversity and circularity. On the social side, while recent regulations push for the integration of traditional social challenges such as work conditions or human rights, private organizations should also integrate social issues around equity, diversity and inclusion that have come to the fore in recent years.

## 4.5 Leverage SP to build resilience in the face of crisis

A crisis is an unstable situation in which critical decisions are needed to mitigate negative outcomes. In terms of the natural environment, crises include storms, wildfires, earthquakes, droughts and pandemics. Crises tend to encourage purchasing professionals to revert to low-cost purchasing routines that can be executed quickly. As one expert stakeholder described it, "...when the lifeboat is sinking, no one is concerned about where their life jacket is made".

However, the global COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated how some organizations are using SP to enhance their purchasing resilience while fuelling economic development (see Chapter 5 on sustainable procurement in private sector organizations in Part II of this publication). Investors increasingly see good SP performance as a proxy for supply chain resilience. This view is supported by recent research results that are becoming available on the impact of COVID-19 in supply chains.

Moreover, by emphasizing SP, governments can help reduce the effects of crises by harnessing the power of small and local businesses (see Chapter 3 on sustainable procurement in national governments). In a recent report, 63% of buyers and 71% of suppliers stated that their sustainable purchasing focus helped them endure the COVID-19 crisis (Gillai et al. 2021). Moreover, this resilience appears to increase as SP implementation matures because mature programmes enable organizations to use richer indicators, engage suppliers more deeply and nurture suppliers to help them become sustainability performers (Gillai et al. 2021). As governments develop closer relationships with more sustainable vendors, they also benefit from the fact that these vendors tend to be strong performers in other areas such as quality, reliability and efficiency. This, in turn, helps lower the chance of disruption and reduce recovery times (Gillai et al. 2021). As such, organizations with SP have greater confidence in expecting fewer problems related to supply chain disruptions.

For instance, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Paraguay has incorporated sustainability and value-added principles to its laws and promoted framework agreements for innovative small and local businesses. Other countries, such as Colombia, Chile, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic, have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by expanding their supplier lists and electronic catalogues that support SP and facilitate the participation of small and medium-sized businesses in procurement processes. All these actions help support the economy and build supply chain resilience by diversifying the supplier base. They also illustrate a trend of using SP to 'build back better' – a term used by several experts interviewed for this publication.

In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, a number of private organizations were found to be considering reshoring some components of their supply chain (Bank of America [BoFA] 2020). This can increase their resilience and their positive social impact, as

well as reduce their environmental footprint. Those insights may point to a deeper change in the world organization of supply chains.

As governments grapple with the repercussions of the recent pandemic, leading organizations from the private and public sectors are using the recovery to harness procurement in innovative ways to build back a strong local economy that leverages purchasing from local businesses, businesses owned by disadvantaged groups and businesses promoting sustainable products more generally. Doing so will help organizations pivot from low-cost procurement strategies towards value for money strategies. As stated in the expert interviews, “[In the wake of COVID-19], we see sparks of hope... that this recovery is challenging the model of a standard economy. The potential for SP is significant”.

## 4.6 Integrate SP into e-procurement

E-procurement can effectively integrate sustainability information into purchasing and radically reduce the costs of seeking sustainable goods and services for purchasing managers. This is done by customizing standard e-procurement systems to include sustainability criteria and dashboards to track sustainability performance. Simple modifications can enhance purchasing professionals' access to sustainable product lists and online databases of sustainable products and services (Darnall et al. 2017). By integrating SP into e-procurement, organizations have the potential to raise the profile of sustainable products or services so that they become the default decision during purchasing. Because purchasing information is maintained in an integrated electronic system, organizations can more easily track their sustainable spend, monitor

SP progress and incentivize sustainable purchasing behaviour. This is important because many organizations have e-procurement systems but do not integrate information about the environmental and social impacts of products and services or have access to green product lists and online databases of sustainable products.

Other important modifications to e-procurement systems include integrating sustainability into tender templates. Tender documents are procurement documents used to invite vendors to provide information regarding their goods or services.

By creating e-templates that already include sustainability criteria, purchasing professionals need only adjust the template to their need by emphasizing

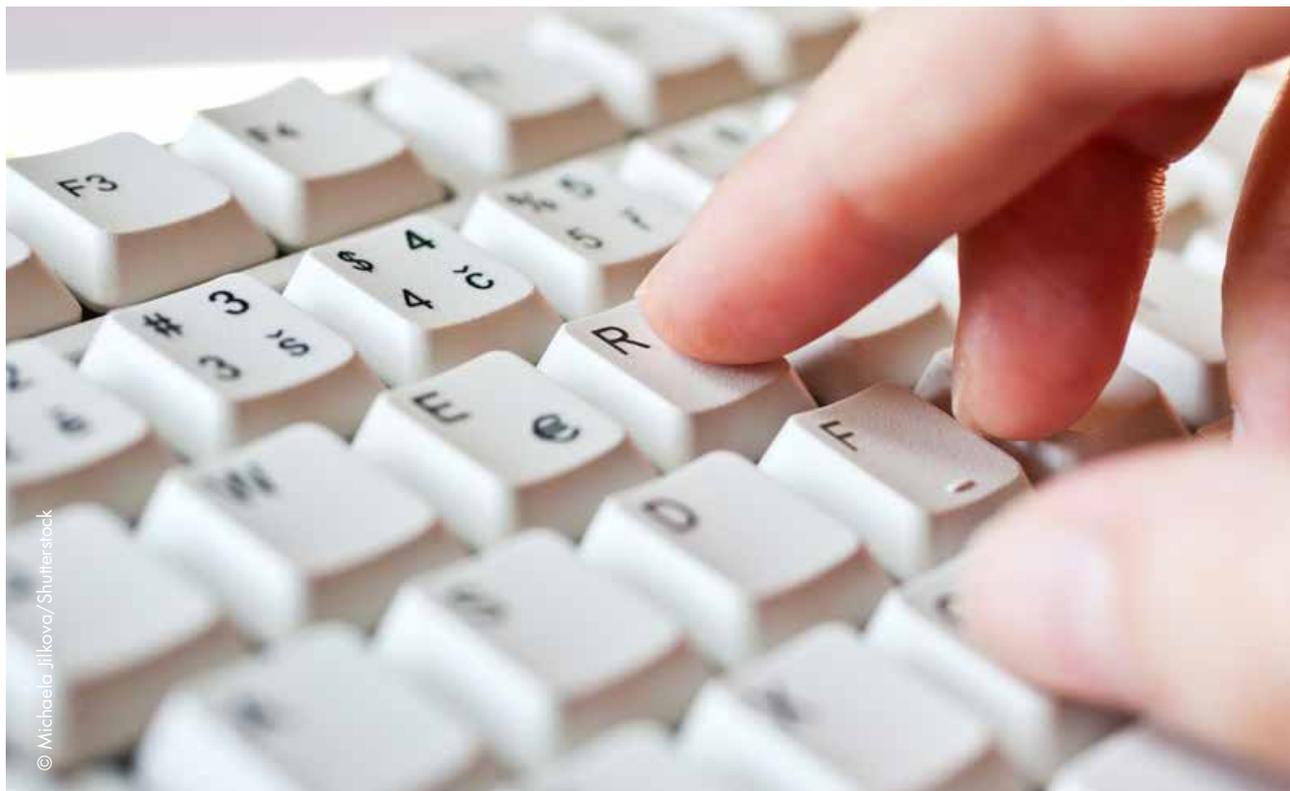
*“[In the wake of COVID-19], we see sparks of hope...that this recovery is challenging the model of a standard economy. The potential for SP is significant”*

*SP expert interviewee*

ing specific sustainability metrics and expectations as part of the contract management process. Expert stakeholder interviewees indicated that “e-procurement also has the potential to significantly increase transparency in the purchasing process by emphasizing fairness, non-discrimination, accountability and verifiability. As such, it can be a powerful tool that helps prevent corruption” (Eyo 2017). To increase the value of e-procurement in government, when implementing these systems, organizations

should educate purchasing officers about how to use these tools most effectively.

The development of solutions to integrate SP is also a dynamic area of innovation in the private sector, where advanced technologies are emerging that can be beneficial not only for SP, but also for improving the overall management of supply chains in terms of efficiency, transparency and resilience.



## 4.7 Participate in knowledge-sharing networks

As organizations develop their SP policies and practices, there is an opportunity to learn from others. Professional networks bring together actors from different regions and sectors to learn from each other’s expertise, innovation and sustainable purchasing commitments. By participating in these networks, organizations can learn additional ways to introduce, strengthen and expand SP across their operations. For instance, professional networks are sharing information about how organizations can use different tools to make SP part of their organizational routines and

culture, enhance innovative solutions around SP and build stronger relationships with vendors to reduce the complexity associated with SP. Professional networks provide access to peer learning to help organizations avoid the SP implementation hurdles that have been encountered by others. Examples include success stories described in case studies about SP policy implementation, activities to address complexities around SP for specific purchasing categories and appropriate SP tracking metrics. These networks can be international, national or subnational, such as the

International Green Purchasing Network,<sup>1</sup> the One Planet Network,<sup>2</sup> ICLEI's Procura+ Sustainable Procurement Network,<sup>3</sup> the Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council,<sup>4</sup> the Danish Sustainable Procurement Forum,<sup>5</sup> the Quebecker ECPAR<sup>6</sup> and many others (see Chapter 7 in Part II of this publication).

Additionally, knowledge-sharing networks often offer SP training webinars and conferences and can inform governments of external support, such as grants and educational programmes. Others offer awards/recognitions that can help accelerate SP implementation, as discussed earlier.

## 4.8 Enhance supplier engagement

Suppliers have an important role in helping to facilitate SP. Given the complexity associated with sustainable purchasing, suppliers can be useful partners in facilitating SP success. Indeed, governments that have successfully implemented SP policies tend to regard their suppliers as collaborators (Darnall et al. 2017; Darnall et al. 2018; Leal et al. 2020; Lukacs de Pereny et al. 2020; Testa et al. 2020; No et al. 2021). This may represent an important shift in how governments engage with markets around issues of sustainability. Given the complexity associated with sustainable products and services, the limited sustainable product offerings and government's limited access to information about sustainable product options, suppliers may serve as useful allies to facilitate SP success. Suppliers have the potential to inform government officials about sustainable purchasing options and create avenues for governments to increase their SP (Darnall et al. 2017; Darnall et al. 2018; Leal et al. 2020; Lukacs de Pereny et al. 2020; Testa et al. 2020; No et al. 2021).

When engaging with suppliers, governments need to be clear about their sustainability goals. As the market can be risk averse and slow to move, suppliers need sufficient time to respond and clarity in expectations. When sustainable products are identified, governments should purchase them consistently to encourage additional market expansion (Voda and Jobse 2016).

In the private sector, where large organizations regularly handle numerous suppliers across multiple jurisdictions, supplier management is a central component of SP. Private organizations should step up their efforts to drive SP beyond first-tier suppliers. It is also important to use SP as an opportunity to develop closer and mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers, as opposed to arm-length relationships based solely on audit and control. This is particularly relevant since COVID-19 showed the importance of caring for workers beyond the factory, and paying more attention to the living conditions of local workers and their community as a factor of resilience.

*Given the complexity associated with sustainable products and services, the limited sustainable product offerings and government's limited access to information about sustainable product options, suppliers may serve as useful allies to facilitate SP success.*

1 [www.igpn.org](http://www.igpn.org)

2 [www.oneplanetnetwork.org](http://www.oneplanetnetwork.org)

3 <https://procuraplus.org/home>

4 [www.sustainablepurchasing.org](http://www.sustainablepurchasing.org)

5 <https://eng.mst.dk/sustainability/sustainable-consumption-and-production/sustainable-procurement/forum-on-sustainable-procurement>

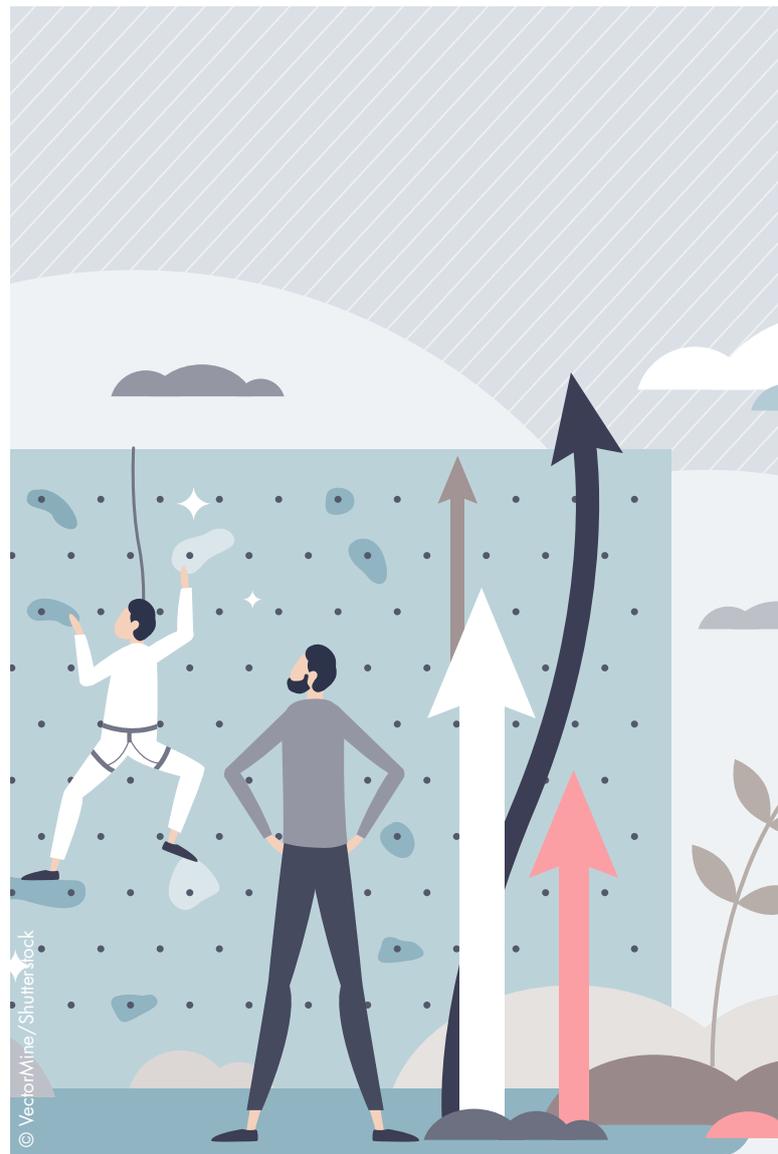
6 [www.ecpar.org/en](http://www.ecpar.org/en)

## 4.9 Conclusion

There is still a long way to go before SP is common practice, and there are many barriers that will be challenging to overcome. The eight recommendations presented in this Chapter illustrate that SP encompasses a variety of strategies, and that it goes beyond selecting greener products to incorporate a full range of programmatic activities and every step of a typical procurement cycle. The examples also illustrate that SP implementation requires the strategic engagement of stakeholders, including vendors. Changing entrenched practices such as procurement takes time, skill, leadership and policy. Given the realities of large, complex organizations, successful SP requires both technical changes and changes in organizational culture.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and its partners will continue to support SP advancements around the globe, while shedding light on SP activities and developments through future *SPP Global Review* publications. UNEP will continue to provide direct support to countries in developing and implementing SPP policies and action plans; fostering and facilitating regional SPP networks; and leading global monitoring of SDG indicator 12.7.1 in the framework of the One Planet Network SPP Programme.

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# Annex 1: Research methods



# A1.1 Stakeholder Survey

## Survey development and implementation

In April 2021, UNEP initiated the process of developing a questionnaire for the Stakeholder Survey. Survey questions were derived from the 2013 and 2017 *SPP Global Reviews*, and further revised. The following substantive changes were made:

- ◆ Rather than emphasising only ‘sustainable public procurement’, researchers decided to ask questions about ‘sustainable procurement’ (SP) more generally. The change was intended to facilitate participation among a more diverse set of stakeholders.
- ◆ A few items were added to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on SP, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

After four weeks of survey development and stakeholder input, the research team instrumented the survey items in Qualtrics Survey Software. Once an English version was available, the survey text, items, and answer choices were translated into Spanish and French. Finally, the research team conducted multiple rounds of quality checks on the instrument before the survey’s implementation and distribution.

The survey was scheduled to be distributed and available for participants to complete from May 17 through June 4, 2021. The research team granted an extension through June 11. The survey was distributed to participants through a survey link. The survey was disseminated in May and June 2021 to three samples. The first sample was the UNEP Sustainable Public Procurement Stakeholder List. This list consisted of 5,618 stakeholders that is maintained by UNEP and has been developed over 10 years. Emails of 3,717 of these stakeholders who represented 167 countries were verified. Approximately 75% of the individuals who received the survey spoke English, 15% spoke Spanish, and 9% spoke French. Stakeholders were emailed in May 2021 with survey invitations, reminders and notifications of extensions. Approximately 46% of the total survey respondents were from this sample.

The second sample that received the survey were individuals who are members of SP organizations

and networks. UNEP contacted the leaders of these stakeholder organizations and requested that they distribute the survey to their members. The following organizations were identified based on the collective expertise of the research team.

1. Asia Pacific Green Public Procurement Network
2. ECPAR – Quebec Space for Consultation on Responsible Sourcing Practises
3. European Union Green Public Procurement Advisory Group
4. GW Law Government Procurement Community – The George Washington University Law School
5. ICLEI Forum
6. International Green Purchasing Network
7. One Planet Network
8. Inter-American Network on Government Procurement
9. Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council

The final sample that received access to the survey consisted of individuals who were part of the research team’s social media networks, specifically LinkedIn, and Twitter. Approximately 54% of the total survey respondents were from the second and third samples.

Each sample was contacted on four occasions over a four-week period, as shown in the table below.

Date	Contact
May 17-21, 2021	Initial email/social media invitation
May 25, 2021	First email/social media reminder
June 3-4, 2021	Second/social media email reminder
June 9, 2021	Third/social media email reminder
June 11, 2021	Survey closed

## Sample Survey

Below is the introductory text and survey that stakeholders completed as part of the 2022 *SPP Global Review*. Question items were randomised to reduce order bias.

## 2021 UNEP Sustainable Procurement Stakeholder Survey Questions and Text

Please take a moment and read the following before starting:<sup>1</sup>

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is partnering with researchers at Arizona State University (ASU) and other experts to conduct the 2021 Sustainable Procurement Stakeholder Survey. The survey is part of the *2022 SPP Global Review of Sustainable Public Procurement*, and our goal is to better understand the state of sustainable procurement, the barriers to successful implementation, current trends, and future opportunities to advance sustainable procurement. The survey will help us understand the state of sustainable procurement internationally and offer insights into how leaders in sustainable procurement think about important policy issues. We invite sustainable procurement leaders from the public, private, non-profit/non-governmental, and academic sectors to participate.

- ◆ Answering the questions should take you about 20–30 minutes.
- ◆ Your responses will be kept confidential and will be anonymised before analysis.
- ◆ Only aggregated statistics will be reported.
- ◆ The survey will be open through June 11th, 2021.
- ◆ The aggregated findings will be published in the *2022 SPP Global Review of Sustainable Public Procurement*, which will be available for participants in spring 2022.

By completing the survey, you agree to participate in this project. Participants must be 18 years of age or older and may stop at any time. Please feel free to print and keep a copy of this page for your records. If you have any questions about the survey or the broader *2022 SPP Global Review of SPP*, please contact Sophie Loueyraud from UNEP at [unep-spp@un.org](mailto:unep-spp@un.org) or Survey Administrator, Dr. Justin M. Stritch at [jstritch@asu.edu](mailto:jstritch@asu.edu). Questions or concerns about your rights as a participant should be directed to the Social behavioural IRB at Arizona State University by e-mail at [research.integrity@asu.edu](mailto:research.integrity@asu.edu) or 480-965-6788.

We thank you for your participation.

## Section 1

In this section, we are going to ask questions about you and your organisation.

### Q1. For administrative purposes only (responses remain anonymous), please enter your<sup>2</sup>:

- ✧ First name
- ✧ Last name
- ✧ Email address
- ✧ Your organisation's name
- ✧ Your current job title

### Q2. Which of the following best describes the type of department or program you work in? (Select all that apply)

- Procurement
- Environment
- Social affairs
- Finance
- Facilities/Public works
- Other (please specify):

### Q3. Approximately how many employees work in your organisation?

- Not applicable; no other employees
- 10 or fewer employees
- Between 11 and 50 employees
- Between 51 and 100 employees
- Between 101 and 250 employees
- Between 251 and 500 employees
- More than 500 employees

### Q4. In which region does your organisation operate? (Select all that apply)

- Africa
- Asia
- Central American/Caribbean
- Oceania
- Middle East
- Europe
- North America
- South America

### Q5. What type of organisation do you represent?

- Academic institution
- Certification/Standards body or Ecolabel developer
- Company or business
- Consultancy

<sup>1</sup> On this page, respondents had an opportunity to choose whether the text, questions, and answers would be presented in English, Spanish, or French.

<sup>2</sup> Lowercase letters (e.g. "a") are used to indicate subquestions. Bullets are used to indicate answer choices presented to respondents.

- Industry association
- International/Intergovernmental organisation
- Non-government – Non-profit organisation
- Public authority – Local/Municipal/Regional
- Public authority – State/Provincial
- Public authority – National/Federal government
- Publicly owned enterprise
- Other (please specify):

**Q5b. [ONLY ASKED TO RESPONDENTS SELECTING "Company or Business" TO Q5]. Since you stated that you represent a company, please indicate the industrial sector which represents your company's main production activity. (Please select ONE)**

- Agriculture
- Basic metal production
- Chemical industry
- Commerce
- Construction
- Education
- Financial or professional services
- Food, drink, or tobacco
- Forestry, wood, pulp, and paper
- Health services
- Hotels, tourism, and catering
- Mining
- Mechanical and electrical engineering
- Media, culture, and graphics design
- Oil and gas production/Refining
- Postal and telecommunications
- Shipping, ports, fisheries, or inland waterways
- Transport (civil aviation, railways, road transport)
- Transport equipment manufacturing
- Utilities (water, gas, electricity)
- Other (please specify):

**Q6. Which best describes your organisation's sustainable procurement (SP) policy?**

- My organisation has a stand-alone SP policy
- SP is integrated into my organisation's general procurement policy
- SP is part of my organisation's overall sustainability policy
- My organisation has no formal SP policy
- Other (please specify):
- Don't know

**Q7. How many years have you personally AND your organisation worked on sustainable procurement (SP) issues and topics?**

- ✧ You
- ✧ Your organisation

**Q8. How are you personally involved in sustainable procurement (SP)? (Select all that apply)**

- Procure sustainable products, services, and works
- Advise/Consult on SP related topics
- Provide information data or tools that support SP
- Research SP and related topics
- Advocate for SP
- Provide SP training
- Develop and run standards/Ecolabels/Certifications that promote SP
- Set SP policy/Contribute to SP policy
- Make/Sell products that meet SP criteria
- Select sustainable suppliers
- Develop sustainable supply chains
- Not involved in SP
- Other (please specify):

## Section 2

Now that we know a little bit about you, we will now ask some questions about sustainable procurement (SP) in your organisation and country/region.

**Q9. How important is each of the following aspects of sustainability in your organisation's work on procurement?**

**a. Environmental (e.g., natural resources preservation, pollution reduction, biodiversity)**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important
- Don't know
- Not Applicable

**b. Social (e.g., diversity, equality, human and labour rights, health and safety)**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important
- Don't Know
- Not Applicable

**c. Economic (e.g., local suppliers, SMEs, innovation, fair dealings, corruption, dumping)**

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important
- Don't know
- Not Applicable

**Q10. Which of the following actions does your organisation define as being a part of its sustainable procurement (SP)? (Select all that apply)**

- Procurement of sustainable products
- Procurement of sustainable services
- Procurement of more sustainable buildings, works, and/or infrastructure
- Procurement from companies demonstrating more sustainable practises/operations
- Efforts to reduce needs/purchases (e.g., buying less, extending product use, maximizing product re-use)
- Reserve contracts for preferred companies (e.g., small and medium enterprises, economic development zones, women-owned, disability inclusive suppliers, etc.).
- Engagement of suppliers to encourage production of more sustainable products, services, works, and operations
- Replace a product purchase with a service purchase (e.g., product leasing/renting, pay per use, etc.)
- Outsource when an external party can better reduce impacts
- Procure offsets or credits to mitigate impacts (e.g., buying carbon credits)
- Award based on the economically most advantageous tender (best price quality ratio)
- Procuring from local sources/suppliers
- Gather information from suppliers on their sustainability impacts (e.g., their greenhouse gas emissions/climate footprint)
- Total cost of ownership
- Other (please specify):

**Q11. In your opinion, since 2016, how has sustainable procurement changed in terms of importance in your organisation and in the country/region in which your organisation operates?**

**a. Your organisation**

- Much more important
- More important
- No change

- Less important
- Much less important
- Don't know

**b. Your country/region**

- Much more important
- More important
- No change
- Less important
- Much less important
- Don't know

**Q12. In your opinion, what sustainable procurement (SP) strategies and activities are becoming more prominent in your organisation? (Choose the TOP FIVE from the following options)**

- Alignment of public-private sector policies and practises on sustainable procurement
- Incentives (e.g., fiscal, reputational, etc.) for procurers to promote sustainable procurement
- Inter-department coordination for sustainable procurement
- Linking SP to SDG and broad policy objectives
- Business case for sustainable procurement
- Linking SP to circular economy/circular procurement
- Climate change policy goals through procurement
- Linking SP to competitive economy
- Linking SP to green economy/Green growth
- Procurement of innovative products, services, or works
- Use of calculators and tools to support SP implementation and measurement
- Interdepartmental or inter-organisational strategic sourcing (category management)
- Centralisation of procurement
- Ecolabels, standards, and certifications
- Environmental accounting
- E-procurement platforms and tools
- Estimating sustainability impacts and outcomes of SP
- Joint procurement among multiple organisations
- Life-cycle costing
- Monitoring and reporting SP implementation
- Supplier engagement programs
- Training and capacity building
- Transparency in supply chains
- Other (please specify):

**Q13. Is your organisation currently a member of a regional, national or international initiative promoting sustainable procurement?**

- No

- Yes (If “Yes,” please tell us the names of up to THREE that your organisation is most active in)
- Don’t know

## Section 3

Thank you for your responses. We will now ask you about sustainable procurement (SP) implementation in your organisation.

### Q14. How influential is your national government’s sustainable procurement (SP) policy, law, regulation, or mandate on your own organisation’s SP activities?

- Not applicable – No national government policies, laws, regulations or mandates exist
- Not at all influential
- Slightly influential
- Somewhat influential
- Very influential
- Extremely influential
- Don’t know

### Q15. In which stages of a typical procurement cycle do you think it is most effective to implement sustainable procurement (SP) considerations? (Choose the TOP THREE procurement stages from the following options)

- Supplier development and collaboration
- Supplier qualifications
- Requirements and technical specifications
- Evaluation of bids/Proposal evaluation
- Contract performance clauses
- Awarding of contracts/Contract negotiation
- Auditing and improving supplier performance
- On-going contract management and monitoring
- Needs analysis, identification, and definition
- Market analysis and consultation
- Don’t know
- Not applicable
- Other (please specific):

### Q16. In your organisation, how important is each of the following purchasing criteria when weighed against sustainability objectives?

#### a. Price

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable

- Don’t know

#### b. Familiarity/Past use

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable
- Don’t know

#### c. Product quality

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable
- Don’t know

#### d. Ease of purchase

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable
- Don’t know

#### e. Delivery speed

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable
- Don’t know

#### f. End user preference

- A lot more important
- More important
- About the same importance
- Less important
- A lot less important
- Not applicable
- Don’t know

### Q17. How are product ecolabels used today by procurement entities in your organisation? (Select all that apply)

- As a mandatory requirement
- Not used
- As a reference tool to create product or service purchasing criteria
- As a means to verify claims that a product, service or contractor meets purchasing criteria
- Don’t know
- Not applicable

- Other (please specify):

**Q18. How are sustainability processes and management standards used today by procurement entities in your organisation? (Select all that apply)**

- As a mandatory requirement
- Not used
- As a reference tool to create product or service purchasing criteria
- As a means to verify claims that a product, service or contractor meets purchasing criteria
- Don't know
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q19. What aspects of sustainable procurement (SP) implementation does your organisation currently monitor and measure? (Select all that apply)**

- None; sustainable procurement implementation is not currently monitored
- Consultation of internal and external stakeholders
- Supply chain problems and nonconformities
- Actions taken to solve supply chain issues
- Existence of sustainable procurement action plans at organisation or department level
- Leadership and coordination mechanisms established for SP
- Number of staff dedicated to sustainable procurement
- Number of products, services, and works prioritised and with sustainable procurement criteria developed
- Integration of sustainable procurement in procedures and tools
- Number of staff trained in sustainable procurement
- Number of engagement activities with suppliers on sustainable procurement topics
- Availability of tracking systems for measuring sustainable procurement processes
- Number of procurement contracts and tenders with sustainability criteria
- Financial value of procurement processes with sustainability criteria
- Quantity of sustainable products purchased
- Financial value of sustainable products purchased
- Expenditure on preferred companies (sustainable, local, etc.)
- Environmental benefits/Impacts of the procurement (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub> saved)

- Social benefits/Impacts of the procurement (e.g., direct generation of employment opportunities)
- Don't know
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q20. On a scale of 0 (very unsuccessful) to 10 (very successful), how would you rate your organisation's sustainable procurement (SP) implementation?**

**Q21. Approximately what percentage (%) of your organisation's purchases integrate sustainable procurement criteria?**

**Q22. Indicate to the best of your knowledge the extent to which your organisation's sustainable procurement policy has had an impact on each of the following.**

**a. The environment**

- No impact
- Minor impact
- Average impact
- Major impact
- Don't know
- Not applicable

**b. Society**

- No impact
- Minor impact
- Average impact
- Major impact
- Don't know
- Not Applicable

**c. The economy**

- No impact
- Minor impact
- Average impact
- Major impact
- Don't know
- Not applicable

**Q23. What types of external stakeholders has your organisation worked with formally when implementing sustainable procurement? (Select all that apply)**

- Academic Institutions
- Certification/Standards body or Ecolabel developer
- Private sector companies and businesses
- Consultancies

- Industry associations
- Vendors
- International/Intergovernmental organisation
- Other Non-government – Non-profit organisation
- Public authority – Local/Municipal/Regional
- Public authority – State/Provincial
- Public authority – National/Federal Government
- Publicly owned enterprises
- Sustainability advocacy groups
- Clients
- Citizen groups
- Other (please specify):
- Don't know

**Q24. Which of the UN's Sustainable Development goals does your organisation currently address through its sustainable procurement (SP) activities? (Please select the TOP THREE goals)**

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
- Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development
- Don't know

## Section 4

Thank you for your responses. We will now ask you some items about drivers, barriers, and trends in sustainable procurement.

**Q25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?**

**a. My organisation has a strong commitment to innovation**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Not applicable

**b. Top leaders in my organisation support sustainable procurement**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Not applicable

**c. When selecting vendors, my organisation considers a vendor's commitment to sustainability**

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Not applicable

**Q26. In your opinion, which of the following factors are the strongest drivers for implementation of sustainable procurement (SP) in your organisation? (Please select the TOP FIVE drivers from the list)**

- Mandatory sustainable procurement rules/ Legislation
- Policy commitments/Goals/Action plans
- Strong SP monitoring, evaluation, and enforcement policies
- Expertise in SP: Legal, environmental, social, economic

- Staff's commitment to sustainability
- Inclusion of SP activities into staff performance and promotion reviews
- Need to minimise supply chain risks
- organisation's public image and reputation
- Compliance with general environmental or social laws/policies (non-SP related)
- Pressure from financial institutions or donors
- Training of procurement staff in SP
- Learning from peer organisations
- Pressure from clients
- Pressure from citizen stakeholders (activist campaigns)
- Sufficient availability of sustainable products and services
- Sufficient availability of sustainable products and services that cost the same or less than conventional equivalents
- Availability of SP criteria and specifications
- Availability of credible sustainability standards and ecolabels
- Access to tools that measure life cycle costs
- Measurement of the economic and financial benefits of SP (e.g., cost savings generated)
- Measurement of the environmental and/or social benefits generated from SP (e.g., GHG emissions reduced, or jobs created)
- External recognition for SP program (e.g., awards)
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q27. In your opinion, which of the following factors form the largest barriers to sustainable procurement (SP) implementation in your organisation? (Please select the TOP FIVE barriers from the list)**

- Lack of mandatory sustainable procurement rules/legislation
- Lack of policy commitments/goals/action plans
- Lack of strong political and organisational leadership on SP
- Lack of inter-agency cooperation
- Insufficient monitoring, evaluation and/or enforcement of SPP policies
- Lack of expertise in SP implementation
- Lack of staff commitment to SP
- Lack of inclusion of SP in staff performance and promotion reviews
- Lack of training of procurement staff in SP
- Competing procurement priorities
- Perception that procurement is administrative, not policy-driven
- Perception that sustainable products and/or services are more expensive

- Perception that sustainable products and/or services are of lesser quality
- Lack of sustainable products and/or services in the market
- Lack of information on the sustainability practises and operations of suppliers
- Lack of transparency in supply chains
- Lack of external pressure from stakeholders/activist campaigns
- Lack of a clear definition of what constitutes sustainable products, services, or suppliers
- Lack of credible ecolabels and sustainability standards
- Lack of tools available that measure life cycle costs
- Lack of measurement of economic/business outcomes from SPP implementation (e.g., cost savings)
- Lack of measurement of environmental and/or social outcomes from SP implementation (e.g., GHG emissions, water savings, jobs created, etc.)
- Lack of external recognition for SP implementation
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q28. Please indicate how you expect your organisation and your country/region to change the level of sustainable procurement (SP) activity in the next five years?**

**a. Your organisation**

- Substantially less SP activity than today
- Somewhat less SP activity than today
- About the same level of SP activity as today
- Somewhat more SP activity than today
- Substantially more SP activity than today
- Don't know
- Not applicable

**b. Your country/region**

- Substantially less SP activity than today
- Somewhat less SP activity than today
- About the same level of SP activity as today
- Somewhat more SP activity than today
- Substantially more SP activity than today
- Don't know
- Not applicable

**Q29. Overall, how would you describe the effect of COVID-19 on sustainable procurement implementation in your organisation?**

- Large negative effect
- Small negative effect
- Little or no effect

- Small positive effect
- Large positive effect
- Don't know

**Q30.** Please provide a brief description of how COVID-19 has affected sustainable procurement implementation in your organisation and country/region.

**Q31.** During the next five years, which three environmental issues should be a priority in your organisation's sustainable procurement activities? (Choose the TOP THREE issues from the following list)

- Air pollution
- Ozone depletion
- Biodiversity conservation
- Animal well-being
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Climate change adaptation
- Energy conservation
- Soil protection
- Climate change mitigation (greenhouse gas emission reductions)
- Waste minimisation
- Waste collection, diversion, and valorisation
- Hazardous substances
- Water conservation
- Water pollution
- Local environmental conditions
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q32.** During the next five years, which three social, economic, and/or governance issues should be a priority in your organisation's sustainable procurement activities? (Choose the TOP THREE issues from the following list)

- Diversity, inclusion, and equality
- Elimination of access barriers for people with disabilities (physical access to buildings, alternative communication formats, etc.)
- Fair or ethical trade
- Human rights in global supply chains (including forced labour, child labour, and human trafficking practises)
- Local community engagement/development (local content/local producers)
- Micro, small and medium enterprises
- Human health outcomes
- Skills and training opportunities

- Social, sheltered or set-aside enterprises (e.g., including disabled, veteran, and other marginalised owners, women-owned companies)
- Workers' rights & working conditions including occupational health and safety
- Technology development and innovation
- Not applicable
- Other (please specify):

**Q33.** During the next five years, which three product/service categories should be a priority in your organisation's sustainable procurement activities? (Choose the TOP THREE categories from the following list)

- Building equipment (water heaters, air conditioners, elevators, lighting, etc.)
- Building materials (windows, floor-covers, wall panels, faucets, etc.)
- Building design and construction
- Diverse chemical products (lubricant oils, paints, fire extinguishers, etc.)
- Energy supply and energy services
- Execution of work contracts
- Food and catering services
- Furniture
- Infrastructure design and construction
- Cleaning products and services
- Office IT equipment (computers, screens, printers, etc.)
- Office paper and stationery
- Vehicles (passenger and light duty vehicles, heavy duty vehicles and buses, motorcycles, car sharing services, etc.)
- Textiles (uniforms, gloves, shoes, bed sheeting, etc.)
- Travel services (transport options and accommodation, etc.)
- Waste collection and street cleaning services
- Household appliances (TVs, fridges, washing machines, etc.)
- Other (please specify):

**Q34.** During the next five years, what activities should be coordinated internationally to further promote and support sustainable procurement (SP)? (Choose the TOP THREE activities from the following list)

- Provide tools to support SP implementation (e.g., tools for life cycle costing, spend analysis)
- Provide training and capacity building for SP implementation
- Offer guidance on SP implementation
- Encourage harmonisation and standardisation of SP

- Share/exchange information on SP
- Facilitate peer learning and collaboration between SP practitioners
- Provide financial and technical resources for SP activities
- Showcase, promote and recognise leadership in SP
- Build the business case for SP (e.g., showing cost savings resulting from SP activities)
- Encourage international organisations, networks, and initiatives (e.g., Global Compat) to foster SP
- Measure and communicate the social, environmental, and financial benefits being achieved by SP
- Support knowledge transfer to and between developing countries on SP
- Engage the market, encourage suppliers to make more sustainable products and services
- Other (please specify):

**Q37. In what year were you born?**

**Q38. In what country do you reside?**

**Q39. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary/third gender
- Prefer to self-describe:

That concludes the UNEP 2021 Sustainable Procurement Stakeholder Survey. We truly appreciate your time and participation! Thank you!

## Section 5

Thank you for your time. We only have a few more items we would like to ask you.

**Q35. As a stakeholder participant in our survey, we would like to include your organisation's name in a list of participants to be published in the 2022 *Global Sustainable Public Procurement Review*. Do we have your permission to include your organisation in our list of participating stakeholders?**

- Yes, include my organisation in a list of participating stakeholders
- No, do not include my organisation in a list of participating stakeholders

**Q36. What is your highest level of educational attainment?**

- Secondary education
- Some college
- 2-year college degree
- 4-year college degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate

## Survey participants

Stakeholders who completed the survey were asked whether they would be willing to disclose their organisation's name to include in the list of participants that are published in the *2022 SPP Global Review*. Individuals in 67 countries representing the following 164 organisations gave their permission:

Argentina, Chief of Cabinet of Ministers  
Argentina, Independent  
Argentina, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development  
Argentina, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)  
Australia, City of Parramatta Council  
Australia, Edge Environment  
Australia, Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA)  
Australia, Hornsby Shire Council  
Australia, Local Government Procurement  
Australia, MidCoast Council  
Australia, Townsville City Council  
Australia, Upper Hunter Shire Council  
Austria, Bundesministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt, Energie, Mobilität, Innovation und Technologie (BMK)  
Austria, Public Procurement Agency Austria  
Austria, STENUM GmbH  
Barbados, Caribbean Development Bank  
Barbados, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
Belgium, Federal Institute for Sustainable Development  
Belgium, Service Public de Wallonie  
Belize, Ministry of Finance  
Brazil, Ministry of Economy  
Brazil, Secretariat of Infrastructure and Environment – Sao Paulo State  
Cambodia, Independent  
Canada, City of Levis  
Canada, City of Montreal  
Canada, Énergir  
Canada, L'Espace de concertation sur les pratiques d'approvisionnement responsable (ECPAR)  
Canada, Prism Care Corporation  
Canada, Public Services and Procurement Canada  
Canada, Saint-Nom-de-Marie boarding school  
Canada, Sustainability Advantage  
Canada, The Interuniversity Research Centre for the Life Cycle of Products, Processes and Services (CIRAIG)  
Canada, The Société des alcools du Québec (SAQ)  
Chile, Sustainability and Climate Change Agency  
Colombia, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development  
Colombia, National Public Procurement Agency  
Costa Rica, Alianza Empresarial para el Desarrollo (AED)  
Costa Rica, Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (CCSS)  
Costa Rica, General Directorate of Goods and Administrative Contracting  
Costa Rica, Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce  
Costa Rica, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications  
Costa Rica, The Office of the Comptroller General  
Croatia, Ministry of economy and sustainable development  
Czechia, Institute of Circular Procurement  
Czechia, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs  
Czechia, State Veterinary Administration  
Czechia, Vltava River basin  
Denmark, Miljømærkning Danmark  
Denmark, University of Copenhagen  
Dominican Republic, Directorate General of Public Procurement  
DR Congo, COFED  
DR Congo, Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development  
Ecuador, Servicio Nacional de Contratación Pública (SERCOP)  
Ecuador, University of Esmeraldas  
El Salvador, Ministerio de Hacienda – UNAC  
France, BuyYourWay  
France, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)  
France, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery – State Purchasing Department  
France, Pôle emploi  
France, Union des Groupements d'Achats Publics (UGAP)  
Georgia, State Procurement Agency of Georgia  
Germany, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Germany, GPP in Bhutan  
Germany, UNFCCC Secretariat  
Ghana, Public Procurement Authority  
Greece, General Secretariat for Natural Environment & Water, Ministry of Environment & Energy

**Greece**, General Secretariat of Commerce & Consumer Protection (CPB) – Ministry of Development & Investments  
**Honduras**, Oficina Normativa de Contratación y Adquisiciones del Estado de Honduras (ONCAE)  
**Hong Kong**, Green Council  
**Hungary**, PROVARIS Varga & Partners  
**Hungary**, Public Procurement Authority of Hungary  
**India**, Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production  
**India**, Association For Promotion Sustainable Development  
**India**, Centre for Chronic Disease Control  
**Indonesia**, Komibank Learning Institute  
**Indonesia**, LKPP  
**Ireland**, 6Rockets  
**Italy**, Consip  
**Italy**, University of Turin  
**Japan**, Green Purchasing Network  
**Japan**, Japan Ethical Initiative  
**Jordan**, Dimoma  
**Kenya**, UN Women  
**Lebanon**, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan  
**Lithuania**, Ministry of Environment  
**Lithuania**, Public Procurement Office (PPO)  
**Malaysia**, GSR Environmental Consultancy Sdn. Bhd.  
**Malaysia**, Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre  
**Malaysia**, SIRIM Berhad  
**Mauritius**, Construction Industry Development Board  
**Mexico**, CREARTON  
**Mexico**, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)  
**Mexico**, Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit  
**Mexico**, Us México Chamber Of Commerce Chapter Guanajuato  
**Netherlands**, PIANOo – Dutch Public Procurement Expertise Centre  
**Norway**, Norwegian Procurement Hospital Trust  
**Panama**, Directorate General of Public Procurement  
**Peru**, Centre for Eco-efficiency and Social Responsibility – CER/GEA Group  
**Philippines**, City Schools Division of Tanauan  
**Philippines**, Department of Education  
**Philippines**, Government Procurement Policy Board – Technical Support Office  
**Philippines**, Philippine Centre for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, Inc.  
**Philippines**, Philippine Health Insurance Corporation  
**Philippines**, PhilRice  
**Poland**, Public Procurement Office  
**Romania**, ROVEST Cluster  
**Singapore**, ABC Carbon  
**Singapore**, Singapore Environment Council  
**Slovakia**, Slovak Environment Agency  
**South Africa**, Stellenbosch University  
**South Africa**, Western Cape Government DEA&DP: Sustainability  
**South Korea**, Korea Environmental Industry & Technology Institute (KEITI)  
**South Korea**, Korea Green Foundation  
**Spain**, Basque Parliament  
**Spain**, Beterri Kostako Industrialdea, S.A.  
**Spain**, Bilbao city hall  
**Spain**, Cuadrilla de Laguardia-Rioja Alavesa  
**Spain**, Ihobe  
**Spain**, Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals (ICTA – UAB)  
**Spain**, Osakidetza  
**Spain**, Osi Goierri Alto Urola  
**Spain**, Sprilur, S.A  
**Spain**, University of the Basque Country  
**Sri Lanka**, Business and Industry Development Services BIDS  
**Sri Lanka**, Central Environmental Authority  
**Sri Lanka**, Information & Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka  
**St Kitts and Nevis**, Government of Bermuda  
**Sweden**, KTH Royal Institute of Technology  
**Switzerland**, University of Bern  
**Taiwan**, TCO Development  
**Thailand**, Thai Scp Network  
**Thailand**, Thailand Environment Institute  
**Thailand**, The World Bank  
**Tunisia**, Le Centre International des Technologies de l'Environnement de Tunis (CITET)  
**Turkey**, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
**Uganda**, Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Devlt.  
**Ukraine**, All Ukrainian NGO Living Planet  
**Ukraine**, Instytut Zakonotvorchosti Ta Informatsi-nykh Tekhnologii, GO  
**Ukraine**, International Standardisation Academy  
**Ukraine**, Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production Centre  
**United Arab Emirates**, DGRADE FZ LLC Dubai Sustainable Uniform/Product Manufacturers  
**United Kingdom**, Action Sustainability Community Interest Company  
**United Kingdom**, Rijkswaterstaat  
**United Kingdom**, Sandra Hamilton Strategy

United Kingdom, Sustainable Procurement Limited  
United Kingdom, University of Bristol  
United States, Arizona State University  
United States, ASI Government  
United States, CA Department of General Services  
United States, City of Phoenix Office of Environmental Programs  
United States, City of Portland  
United States, King County  
United States, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
United States, State of Maryland

United States, TCO Development  
United States, The Chemours Company  
United States, The World Bank Group  
United States, UL  
United States, University of Pittsburgh  
United States, Yale University  
Uruguay, Agencia Reguladora de Compras Estatales (ARCE)  
Vietnam, Buildvietinfo  
Vietnam, Ministry of Planning and Investment  
Vietnam, Vietnam National Productivity Institute

## A1.2 National Government Questionnaire

### Questionnaire development and implementation

The National Government Questionnaire assessed sustainable public procurement (SPP) activities being advanced by national governments. Survey questions were derived from the *2017 SPP Global Review* and further developed, refined and reviewed by the 10YFP SPP Programme advisory committee members<sup>1</sup>. The Questionnaire was sent to national contact persons in 105 countries between April 18–22, 2021 in English, Spanish and French. Contact persons were based on a list of national focal points identified by the Coordination Desk and the [European Commission's GPP Advisory Group](#); three

addresses returned error notifications. Contacts were given until June 2021 to complete the Questionnaire. Forty-five national governments responded to the Questionnaire, with one response per country. Responses were submitted together with supporting policies, regulations and reports for verification. A cross-cutting analysis of the data provided was conducted and is presented in Chapter 3. From the information provided, an SPP Factsheet for each national government was created based on a standard template.

### Sample Questionnaire

#### Country Factsheet Questionnaire Questions and Text 2022 SPP Global Review of SPP – April 2021

Please kindly note that this copy is shared for information only and that the questionnaire should be filled online in the Google form questionnaire.

Have you already submitted a report in SDG 12.7 data collection?

- Yes  
 No

#### A. General information

##### A1. Country:

(Please indicate your country)

##### A2. Persons contributing to the questionnaire:

- ✧ Mr./Ms.
- ✧ Name
- ✧ Surname
- ✧ Position
- ✧ Department
- ✧ Ministry/Organisation
- ✧ Number of Years in Public Service
- ✧ Number of Years in current position
- ✧ Number of employees under supervision (if any)

##### A2.1. (Other persons contributing to the questionnaire)

- ✧ Mr./Ms.
- ✧ Name
- ✧ Surname
- ✧ Position
- ✧ Department
- ✧ Ministry/Organisation

##### A3. Estimated total expenditure of the national/federal government in 2019:

Please provide the amount in the national currency and broken down by central national government and state owned enterprises (see annex for exact definition). If data for 2019 is not available, provide the latest available and state what year it refers to.

- ✧ National/federal government:
- ✧ State-owned enterprises:

##### A4. Estimated total procurement expenditure of the national/federal government in 2019:

Please provide the amount in national currency and broken down by central national government and state-owned utilities (see annex for exact definition). If data for 2019 is not available, provide the latest data available and kindly indicate what year it refers to.

- ✧ National/federal government:
- ✧ State-owned enterprises:

<sup>1</sup> By seven members of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) of the 10YFP SPP Programme. See Acknowledgements.

## A5. How centralised is the procurement function in your national/federal government?

Please indicate, from 1 to 6, what is the degree of centralisation:

1. Fully decentralised (each agency conducts its own procurement processes and nothing is purchased or contracted centrally)
2. Moderately decentralised
3. Rather decentralised
4. Rather centralised
5. Moderately centralised
6. Fully centralised (all procurement processes are conducted by one agency for the whole national government)

## B. Policies which support SPP at the national/federal level

This section focuses on SPP policy/action plan aspects.

### B1. Are SPP provisions included in overarching and/or thematic national policies?

- Yes  
 No

(E.g., sustainable development strategy, energy efficiency directive, SMEs promotion act, green economy strategy, circular economy strategy etc.)

If yes, please state the name of the policy(s), year of adoption, and web-links for their download (if available)

- ✧ Name of overarching and/or thematic national policy
- ✧ Year of adoption
- ✧ Web link to document
- ✧ References to relevant sections in this document

Name of overarching and/or thematic national policy	Year of adoption	Web link to document	References to relevant sections in this document

### B2. Are SPP provisions included in existing procurement regulations?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, please provide the name of the regulation, year of adoption, web-link for its download (if available), and a short description on where SPP provisions

are included (e.g. only in the introductory section as general principles that should be considered, in each section explaining how sustainability aspects can be included in the different procurement procedures and sections, i.e., inclusion of sustainability requirements – environmental/social aspects – in the technical specifications, or use of type I eco-labels, social labels or relevant sustainability standards, etc.), including the relevant sections (if any).

- ✧ Name of the regulation
- ✧ Year of adoption
- ✧ Web link to the document
- ✧ Short description of SPP provisions
- ✧ References to relevant sections in this document (e.g., Section x, life cycle costing law clause; Article x, value for money law clause or SMEs enterprises clause, etc.)

Name of the regulation	Year of adoption	Web link to document	Short description of SPP provisions	References to relevant sections in this document (e.g., Section x, life cycle costing law clause; Article x, value for money law clause or SMEs enterprises clause, etc.)

### B3. Have dedicated SPP policies/action plans for the whole national/federal government or larger scope been adopted?

- Yes  
 No

#### B3.1. If yes, when were these policies/action plans adopted (please provide the details below)?

- Name of the national government SPP policy/action plan (if any)  
 Year of adoption  
 Web link to document

#### B3.2. If no, are there any other types of documents (law, executive order, strategy, policy, programme) which can be used to promote and implement SPP in any of its environmental and/or socio-economic dimensions?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, and these document/s is/are not included in the listed policies in questions B1 and B2, kindly provide the official name of this/these document/s (e.g. Non-financial disclosure Act which includes concept of materiality for environment and social impact disclosures or Act Concerning the Promotion of Procurement of Eco-Friendly Goods and Services by the State), year of adoption, and web link for its download (if available).

- ✧ Other type of documents (law, executive order, strategy, policy, programme) other than those listed in B1, B2 and B3.1
- ✧ Year of adoption
- ✧ Web link to document
- ✧ References to relevant sections in this document

Other type of documents (law, executive order, strategy, policy, programme) other than those listed in B1, B2 and B3.1	Year of adoption	Web link to document	References to relevant sections in this document

**B3.3. If no, is a national policy/action plan under development?**

- Yes
- No

Please explain briefly.

**B3.4. If no, are there any SPP-related activities that are being implemented at (a) single agency(ies) level?**

- Yes
- No

Please explain briefly.

**B4. Which ministry(ies) and/or agency(ies) was/were responsible in the development/ elaboration of the latest SPP policy/action plan, and which additional ministries/ agencies were involved in the development/ elaboration process?**

Name of the lead/main ministry(ies) and/or agency(ies) responsible in the development of the latest SPP policy/action plan (if any). Additional ministries/ agencies which supported or were consulted by the lead/main ministry(ies) and/or agency(ies).

Name of the lead/main ministry(ies) and/or agency(ies) responsible in the development of the latest SPP policy/ action plan (if any)	Additional ministries/agencies which supported or were consulted by the lead/main ministry(ies) and/or agency(ies)

**B4.1. By which entity was the latest SPP policy/ action plan approved?**

Please indicate the name of the government entity (i.e., parliament, ministry) which approved the latest SPP policy/action plan.

**C. SPP policy/action plan scope, goals and priorities**

If your country is implementing SPP through means other than a SPP policy (e.g. laws, regulations, SPP component in overarching strategies), you may respond to questions in this section.

**C1. Do you consider the contribution to the achievement of SDGs as a key objective in your SPP policy/action plan?**

- Yes
- No

**Alignment of the SPP policy/action plan with SDGs**

If yes, which SDGs do you target as a priority through your SPP policy/action plan?

Kindly choose at most five (5) SDGs that you consider as priority targets in your SPP policy/action plan, and please explain briefly how the SPP policy/action plan contributes to the achievement of those SDGs.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)		Please explain briefly how the SPP policy/action plan contributes to the achievement of those SDGs
	SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.	
	SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.	
	SDG 3: Ensure health and healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.	
	SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.	
	SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	
	SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.	
	SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.	
	SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	
	SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.	
	SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.	
	SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.	
	SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.	
	SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.	
	SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	
	SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.	
	SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions.	
	SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.	

**C2. Does the SPP policy/action plan target environmental concerns?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please select the top three environmental aspects which your SPP policy/action plan is targeting:

- Air pollution
- Biodiversity preservation
- Climate change mitigation
- Clean technology and eco-innovation

- Energy conservation
- Hazardous substances
- Health quality
- Local environmental conditions
- Ozone depletion
- Protection of natural resources
- Resource efficiency
- Soil protection
- Waste minimization
- Water conservation
- Other environmental aspect(s), please specify:

**C3. Does your SPP policy/action plan target social, economic or governance-related aspects?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please select the top three social, economic or governance-related aspects which your SPP policy/action plan is targeting:

**Social, economic, and governance-related aspects**

- Protecting against human rights abuses (for example, discrimination, unsafe working conditions child labour, forced labour, and human trafficking). It is advised to refer to the UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights in the definition of such considerations.
- Protecting and promoting groups at risk (for example, minorities, indigenous people, persons with disabilities, migrant workers) through social inclusion, which may include employment opportunities.
- Promoting compliance with ILO standards and decent work
- Promoting transparency and accountability and combating corruption
- Promoting SMEs (for example, set aside, preferential treatment to SMEs)
- Promoting fair trade (for example, by ensuring fair living wages for those along the supply chain)
- Promoting gender equality (for example, through the promotion of women-led businesses, or requiring a certain percentage of women in the workplace)
- Promoting opportunities for social economy enterprises (NGOs, etc.)
- Promoting inclusive and equitable quality education, and lifelong learning opportunities for all (such as apprenticeship or training opportunities)
- Other social, economic and governance-related aspect(s), please specify:

**C4. Do(es) the current policy(ies) set specific targets or goals for SPP implementation in the national/federal government?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe briefly the target and the year by which it should be reached if defined, e.g. reaching a certain percentage of Sustainable public

procurement by 2020; having all targeted authorities publish an annual SPP Action Plan; 95 percent of all contracts including sustainability criteria annually; the expenditure on prioritised green products and services set to reach X percent by 2020 and Y percent by 2025; reduction of X percent in GHG emissions through SPP, etc.

**C5. What is the current scope of your SPP policy? Does it apply to:**

- All national/federal, state/regional, and local public authorities
- All national/federal and state/regional public authorities
- Only national/federal government public authorities
- Some national/federal public authorities
- Other, please specify: ...

**C6. Which ministry(ies) or agency(ies) lead(s) the application/implementation of the SPP policy/action plan?**

Select all that apply.

- Inter-ministerial/Inter-agency/ Interdepartmental committee on SPP, consisting of the following agencies: ...
- Public procurement agency
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Industry
- Other, please specify: ...

**C7. How is the current SPP policy/action plan being implemented?**

Please describe the institutional framework for the implementation of SPP (which departments or agencies are involved; what are their responsibilities, their coordination mechanisms and implementation approach).

(E.g. The Ministry of Environment sets a bi-annual plan rolling out the general activities aimed at promoting Sustainable public procurement and has the overall control of the programme. The rest of the agencies have to set annual SPP objectives and action plans and report on achievements, and the Ministry of Environment provides support to all of them in the process; or there is an inter-ministerial committee composed of X and Y ministries which plans and coordinates all SPP activities, the other agencies having to implement SPP but without any specific plan; etc.)

**C8. What is your best estimation of the percentage of the national/federal government procurement budget which falls into the scope of SPP policy/action plan implementation?**

*This is meant to be indicative, so your best estimate will be fine.*

**D. Activities to support the implementation and institutionalisation of SPP**

This section aims at identifying the practical support provided to procurement practitioners in the implementation of SPP.

**D1. Have certain categories of goods, services or works been selected as a priority in SPP implementation by the national/federal government?**

- Yes
- No

*If not, why? Please explain briefly:*

**D2. What are the categories prioritised for SPP implementation? Please provide the eventual link to the action plan, policy document or decree defining the list of priority products (goods, services or works).**

*Please select all that apply:*

- Appliances (commercial and residential appliances, such as clothes washers, ovens, refrigerators, etc.)
- Lighting products and equipment (incl. lamp bulbs, indoor and outdoor lighting).
- Building interior products (carpeting, wallboards, paint and stains, etc.)
- Meeting and conference services
- Building management and maintenance
- Office electronics (incl. computers, monitors and imaging equipment) and electronic equipment leasing
- Cleaning products, janitorial and laundry services
- Office supplies (non-paper supplies)
- Construction materials and services (including concrete, insulation materials, etc.)
- Paper and paper products
- Doors and windows
- Road Design, Construction and Maintenance
- Electricity acquisition and Renewable energy
- Shipping, Packaging & Packing Supplies
- Food, catering services and vending machines
- Textiles (including workwear)
- Furniture

- Transportation services and vehicles (including fleet maintenance)
- Healthcare, biomedical equipment and supplies
- Urban Waste collection
- Heating, venting and cooling products
- Wastewater infrastructure
- Landscaping and park services
- Water-using products/ plumbing systems
- Other, please specify:

**D3. Have SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines been developed for the procurement of priority goods/service/works categories identified in question D2?**

- Yes
- No

*If yes, for which products? Please provide the links to the SPP criteria/specifications or guidelines for the procurement of these products.*

**D4. How were these SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines developed?**

*Please explain briefly the process followed, and on which grounds were those SPP criteria developed (e.g. based on international/national/regional eco-labels and voluntary sustainability standards, international/national/federal/regional regulatory standards, criteria by other public authorities, etc.)*

**D5. Do these SPP criteria or guidelines address environmental and/or social aspects?\***

- They address only environmental aspects.
- They address only social aspects.
- They address both environmental and social aspects.

*Please provide the link to those SPP criteria/ specifications or guidelines below.*

**D6. Is the use of these SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines mandatory?**

- Yes
- No

**D6.1. Is the use of these SPP criteria or product procurement guidelines mandatory for all products?**

- Yes, for all products.
- No, only for certain products.

*Please provide the link to these SPP criteria/specifications or guidelines.*

**D6.2.** Is the use of these SPP Criteria or product procurement guidelines mandatory for all procuring entities?

- Yes, for all procuring entities.  
 No, only for targeted procuring entities.

Please clarify which categories of procuring entities are covered by the obligation, e.g., national/federal, regional, or local entities:

**D7.** Has SPP been integrated into regular management and procurement-related processes and procedures (such as internal regulations, staff performance evaluations...)?

Please explain briefly.

**D8.** Has SPP been integrated into regular management and procurement-related software and tools (eProcurement platforms, bidding document templates, accounting software...)?

Please explain briefly.

**D9.** Is training on SPP provided?

Please explain the type and nature of the training, target audience, frequency, and the number of staff who receive the training annually.

**D10.** What other activities or measures are used to support SPP implementation?

Select all that apply:

- Reputational incentives (awards, recognition programmes, publication of good practise...)  
 Economic incentives (bonus based on SPP performance or others)  
 Networking and socialising events  
 Provision of SPP-related information (through a SPP website, newsletters...)  
 Suppliers and market engagement activities  
 No other support activities exist  
 Other activities, please specify: ...

**D11.** How many annual human and economic resources are allocated for the promotion and implementation of the SPP policy/action plan?

Please provide an estimate of the annual budget allocated to the implementation of the SPP policy/action plan (in the national currency) and the number of employees working annually on the implementation of SPP (in full-time equivalent jobs – see annex for exact definition).

## E. Monitoring SPP implementation and results

This section aims at evaluating whether SPP implementation progress and results are monitored.

**E1.** Does the national/federal government monitor and evaluate SPP implementation?

- Yes  
 No

**E2.** If not, why?

Please explain briefly the reasons why SPP implementation is not monitored, and go to section F.

**E3.** If yes, what aspects are monitored?

Select all that apply:

Kindly specify the SPP indicators you measure or calculate for each aspect that you monitor, and describe briefly for each indicator the categories of goods, services or works covered and procurement thresholds considered.

**E4.** Does the national/federal government publish the results of the SPP monitoring exercises?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, please provide links to those publications or relevant websites:

**E5.** What is the frequency of the SPP monitoring?

- Monthly  
 Quarterly (every three months)  
 Semi-annually (every six months)  
 Annually (once a year)  
 Biannually (every two years)  
 Other, please specify:

**E6.** Which public authorities are subject to national/federal SPP monitoring?

(E.g. all authorities targeted falling under the SPP policy/action plan representing XX agencies/only national/federal government authorities representing XX agencies/etc.)

Aspects of SPP Implementation	SPP Indicators
<input type="checkbox"/> SPP institutionalisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Existence of sustainable procurement action plans at organisation or department level
	<input type="checkbox"/> Integration of sustainable procurement in procedures and tools
	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership, responsibilities, and coordination roles/mechanisms established or assigned for sustainable procurement
	<input type="checkbox"/> Availability of tracking systems for measuring sustainable procurement
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of staff trained in sustainable procurement
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of engagement activities with suppliers on sustainable procurement topics
	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of staff dedicated to sustainable procurement
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
	<input type="checkbox"/> None
	<input type="checkbox"/> Procurement processes (e.g. calls for tenders, procurement orders and/or contracts including sustainability criteria)
<input type="checkbox"/> Number or value of contracts including sustainability criteria	
<input type="checkbox"/> Quantities of sustainable goods, services or works purchased	
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial value of sustainable goods, services or works purchased	
<input type="checkbox"/> Expenditure on preferred companies (SMEs, women-owned businesses, local companies, etc.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:	
<input type="checkbox"/> None	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental benefits/ impacts of the procurement (e.g. CO <sub>2</sub> saved)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Economic benefits/impacts of the procurement process (e.g. greener supply chains)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Social benefits/impacts of the procurement process (e.g. direct generation of employment opportunities, including the promotion of labour standards for workers in the global supply chain)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Contribution to the achievement of the SDGs
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:
<input type="checkbox"/> None	

**E7. What was the response rate, i.e. the percentage of agencies subjected to the monitoring which provided information, in the last monitoring exercise?**

**E8. How is information gathered from and reported by the different public authorities subject to the national/federal monitoring of SPP?**

*Please select all that apply.*

- A standard questionnaire (online or on paper)
- A standard scorecard
- Internal financial software/tools (e.g. SAP systems or equivalent)
- E-procurement platform(s)
- Online catalogue for centralised procurement of products
- Other, please specify: ...

**E8.1. What is the name of your eProcurement system?**

*Kindly indicate the link:*

**E9. Please share the key results from the monitoring of SPP**

The results should be presented in the form of graphic illustrations, charts or tables in English, so as to allow their direct inclusion in factsheets (please send the graphic illustrations, charts or tables by email to [unep-spp@un.org](mailto:unep-spp@un.org)). Results should refer to the last monitoring period, or should present the evolution of SPP over time, from the beginning of the monitoring to the last monitoring period. Please include the web link(s) from which monitoring reports can be downloaded, if available, or to a relevant presentation providing details of those results.

**E9.1. If you estimate or calculate the SPP impacts/benefits, please share the key results of the said impact/benefits analysis.**

The results should be presented in the form of graphic illustrations, charts or tables in English, so as to allow their direct inclusion in factsheets (please send the graphic illustrations, charts or tables by email to

[unep-spp@un.org](mailto:unep-spp@un.org)). Results should refer to the last monitoring period, or should present the evolution of SPP over time, from the beginning of the monitoring to the last monitoring period. Please include the web link(s) from which monitoring reports can be downloaded, if available, or to a relevant presentation providing details of those results.

## F. Knowledge and experience sharing: Good practice, achievement and resources to share

### F1. Are there good practices, or national/federal government achievements in the field of SPP implementation which you would like to share with peers?

If so, please describe shortly that practice/achievement and kindly provide web links to relevant documents or web pages which may provide further clarifications or details, regardless of the language used.

### F2. Are there any examples of good practice from other public authorities in the country, for example, at a subnational level (i.e. regional or local levels) which you would like to share?

If so, please provide a short description of those examples and web links to relevant information which may provide further clarifications or details, regardless of the language used.

### F3. Is there any material of interest in the field of SPP implementation which you would like to recommend or share with peers, such as case studies, publications, articles, etc.?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, kindly provide the link for the said case studies, publication, articles, etc., if available.

### F4. With regard to addressing the COVID-19 crisis, are there specific Sustainable Procurement initiatives, strategies, or actions which you have undertaken to cope with the impacts of the crisis in relation to public procurement?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, kindly indicate the specific Sustainable Procurement initiatives, strategies, or actions you have undertaken to cope with the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis in relation to public procurement. (E.g., by

developing new criteria for the procurement or recycling of sanitary masks, by changing the focus of procurement spend to support different economic sectors hit by the crisis, by switching to online training sessions, etc.)

### F5. Are there any barriers or difficulties you are facing regarding SPP implementation?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, which of the following are the largest barriers to SPP implementation? Choose all that apply

#### Barriers to SPP Implementation

- Competing procurement priorities
- Insufficient monitoring, evaluation and/or enforcement of SP policies
- Lack of a clear definition of sustainable goods, services and/or supplier operations
- Lack of credible ecolabels and sustainability standards
- Lack of expertise on SP implementation
- Lack of external pressure from stakeholders/ no activism campaigns
- Lack of external recognition for SP implementation
- Lack of inclusion of SP in staff performance and promotion reviews
- Lack of information on the sustainability practises and operations of suppliers
- Lack of inter-agency cooperation
- Lack of mandatory SP rules/legislation
- Lack of measurement of economic/business outcomes from SP implementation
- Lack of measurement of environmental and/or social outcomes from SP implementation
- Lack of personal commitment to SP by staff
- Lack of policy commitments/goals/action plans
- Lack of relevant SP criteria and specifications
- Lack of strong political and organisational leadership on SP
- Lack of sustainable goods and/or services to purchase
- Lack of tools available that measure life-cycle costs
- Lack of training of procurement staff in SP
- Little or no visibility into supply chains
- Perception that procurement is administrative, not policy-driven
- Perception that sustainable goods and/or services are more expensive
- Perception that sustainable goods and/or services are of lower quality
- Others, please specify.

**F6.** If so, is there any support you would like to receive in terms of resources, capacity building, information, etc. in addressing any of these barriers?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, please specify:

**F7.** Are there any other details relating to SPP implementation (national/federal government scope) which you would like to add, which may not have been addressed in previous questions?

- Yes  
 No

*If so, please provide a short description of what you wish to mention and web links to relevant information which may provide further clarifications or details, no matter what the original language of the information may be.*

## A1.3 SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise

### Development of 12.7.1 methodology

The SDG Indicator 12.7.1 methodology aims to evaluate the 'number of countries implementing a sustainable public procurement policy and action plan' (official designation of SDG Indicator 12.7.1). In order to do so, the methodology offers a means to calculate an index defining the level of implementation of SPP in a single country, which will further allow it to assess the number of countries implementing SPP policies and action plans.

The first draft of the methodology was developed in 2016 and the results of the *2017 SPP Global Review* provided elements to further refine the 12.7.1 methodology and better understand how indicator 12.7.1 could be measured. The indicator was pilot tested between 2019–2020 to assess the degree of SPP implementation in a given country, via the calculation of a score based on the information and evidence provided by national and subnational governments.

Evaluation is based on six specific sub-indicators, which together constitute a SPP Implementation Score. The sub-indicators are:

- ◆ Existence of a SPP action plan/policy, and/or SPP regulatory requirements.
- ◆ Public procurement regulatory framework conducive to sustainable public procurement.
- ◆ Practical support delivered to public procurement practitioners in the implementation of SPP.
- ◆ SPP purchasing criteria/buying standards/requirements.

- ◆ Existence of a SPP monitoring system.
- ◆ Percentage of sustainable purchase of priority products/services.

To determine whether a particular country is considered compliant with the indicator, a specific threshold above which a country is considered as having a sound SPP policy or action plan was set. Moreover, the governments were asked to provide evidence for most sub-indicators, such as policy documents, enabling legislation, training contents, etc. (the full list of documents which can serve as evidence is proposed in the [methodology](#)).

To facilitate data collection from national and subnational governments, the methodology was translated into an [Excel®-based questionnaire](#), also acting as a calculator of the afore-mentioned SPP implementation score.

In order to minimise data gaps, UNEP developed this methodology in close consultation and collaboration with the departments in charge of SPP policy design, implementation and monitoring which will be the main contributors to the data collection effort.

Finally, the index can be used not only to report on SDG Indicator 12.7.1, but also to benchmark the performance of countries. It will serve as a maturity model which will motivate countries to progress and will help them identify gaps and areas in which they should concentrate to enhance their SPP strategies.

In preparation for the official launch of the first Indicator 12.7.1 data collection exercise, representatives from more than 70 countries were contacted between September and November 2020, to identify relevant focal points for the SDG 12.7.1 data collection.

As a result of this process, 55+ national governments and 8 subnational governments (reporting independently from their national government) organized a specific team or designated a relevant focal point to report on SDG 12.7.1 Indicator, receiving the excel-based questionnaire and instructions in October 2020. Completed reports were collected from December 2020 to January 2021, after which requests for additional information or clarifications were made by the UNEP coordination

team in January/February 2021 before the final results were provided to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) early March 2021.

In total 40 submissions were received from national or federal governments. Based on the defined methodology and maturity levels, 33 reports on national or federal governments' SPP implementation were deemed compliant with the methodology requirements (maturity levels 1 to 4) and considered in the final measurement of SDG Indicator 12.7.1. The outcome and general conclusions drawn from the data and information provided are presented in a 2020/2021 Data collection for SDG Indicator 12.7.1 [report](#).

**Figure A1.1.** List of national governments that participated in the National Government Questionnaire and the SDG Indicator 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise, 2017 and 2021

Countries	2017 National Government Questionnaire	2020 SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise	2021 National Government Questionnaire
Antigua and Barbuda	√		
Argentina	√		
Austria	√	√	√
Belarus			√
Belgium	√	√	√
Belize			√
Brazil	√		
Bulgaria		√	
Cambodia			√
Canada	√	√	√
Chile	√		
China	√	√	√
Colombia	√	√	√
Costa Rica		√	√
Croatia	√	√	√
Cyprus		√	√
Czech Republic	√	√	
Denmark	√	√	√
Dominican Republic	√	√	√
Ecuador			√
El Salvador			√
Finland	√	√	√
France	√	√	√
Germany	√	√	
Honduras	√	√	
Hungary	√		
Indonesia	√	√	√
Ireland	√	√	√

Countries	2017 National Government Questionnaire	2020 SDG 12.7.1 Monitoring Exercise	2021 National Government Questionnaire
Israel	√		√
Italy	√	√	√
Ivory Coast	√	√	
Japan	√	√	
Jordan	√		
Korea Republic of	√	√	√
Latvia		√	
Lithuania		√	√
Malaysia	√		
Malta		√	
Mauritius		√	
Mexico	√	√	√
Moldova			√
Mongolia	√		√
Netherland	√	√	√
New Zealand		√	
Norway	√	√	√
Panama		√	√
Paraguay	√	√	√
Peru	√		√
Philippines		√	√
Poland	√	√	√
Portugal		√	√
Senegal			√
Singapore	√		√
Slovakia	√		
Slovenia		√	√
Spain	√		
Sri Lanka			√
Sweden	√	√	
Switzerland	√		√
Thailand			√
Trinidad & Tobago			√
Tunisia		√	√
Uganda			√
Uruguay	√	√	√
USA	√	√	√
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45</b>

## A1.4 Expert interviews

UNEP worked with the research team to identify public sector and private sector Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) experts to interview. Regional diversity and representation were important criteria for generating the list of potential interviewees, as was gender diversity, and that the interviewee was able to provide a global perspective on SP. Related to in-

terviews of private sector organisations, the research team sought to balance interviewees from large or innovative business organisations with an in-depth knowledge of SP practises inside private organisations, and interviewees from support organisations and networks with a broad perspective on SP across multiple private organisations.

### Public sector interview protocol and questions

The research team contacted potential interviewees and explained the desire to learn more about their perspectives on implementation success, potential challenges, and opportunities for the future in SPP. The potential interviewee was informed that the process was expected to last one hour and that interviewers would take notes during the interview. If the potential interviewee was available and agreed to the request, an interview was scheduled via vid-

eo call or telephone. Interviewees received the questions in advance. Interviews were conducted between May and June of 2021. After the interview, transcribed notes were sent to the interviewees for their approval. In addition, any use of a direct quote in the *2022 SPP Global Review* that was not anonymous required their explicit approval.

#### Public sector interview questions

- ◆ Do you see sustainable public procurement as a policy on its own or more as a supporting instrument to other policies? If you regard SPP as a supporting instrument, what are the main policies that sustainable public procurement can support and influence (e.g., climate change, social equality, sustainable consumption and production)?
- ◆ SPP is a target for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 12. Do you think SPP can also be a driver to achieve other SDGs? If so, which of the SDGs might SPP affect in a significant way?
- ◆ What are the key drivers or main justifications for organisations to implement sustainable public procurement? Have these drivers/justifications changed over time?
- ◆ In what ways does sustainable public procurement implementation differ across regions across the world? In what ways does sustainable public procurement implementation differ across levels of government?
- ◆ What do you believe are the most important instruments/ measures to promote sustainable public procurement implementation? In what ways do these instruments/ measures differ across the world? In what ways do these instruments/ measures differ across different levels of government (central to local)?
- ◆ What are the primary barriers to sustainable public procurement implementation? In what ways do these barriers differ across the world? In what ways do these barriers differ across different levels of government (central to local)?
- ◆ What solutions might address some of these barriers?
- ◆ What are the key "enabling conditions" to implement sustainable public procurement? How do these "enabling conditions" differ for regions/ countries with low SPP implementation? What easy wins might you suggest for regions/countries with low SPP implementation to increase SPP use?
- ◆ What new trends do you see in sustainable public procurement? In what ways do these trends differ across the world?
- ◆ How would you like to see international organisations and initiatives like the United Nation's One Planet Network, etc. help support SPP implementation?
- ◆ In a perfect world, what would SPP look like?
- ◆ What effect do you believe COVID-19 has had on countries' efforts to promote sustainable public procurement? Do you believe the pandemic will encourage more countries to take greater action on their public procurement policies or will it hamper the on-going initiatives that promote SPP?
- ◆ Do you know of any examples of innovations in sustainable public procurement that should be highlighted in the UN's Global Review on Sustainable Public Procurement?
- ◆ What specific information would you like to see in the UN's Global Review on Sustainable Public Procurement?

## Private sector interview protocol and questions

### Private sector interview questions

- ◆ Can you quickly describe your organisation?
- ◆ What challenges of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) are your organisation currently facing?
- ◆ In terms of trends, how have challenges evolved in your industry/for buyers over the past three years?
- ◆ Has the pandemic highlighted/downplayed some concerns?
- ◆ What drivers/factors facilitate the implementation of sustainable procurement in your organisation? In your industry?
- ◆ What barriers hinder the implementation of sustainable procurement in your organisation? In your industry?
- ◆ Do you see any evolution regarding facilitating factors/barriers over the past 3 to 5 years?
- ◆ What is the impact of public SP policies on your organisation? In your sector? On responsible procurement more generally? Could you name a few public SP policies that have an impact on private sustainable procurement?
- ◆ What kind of public SP Policies could help promote SP in your organisation/industry?
- ◆ What are your current well-established practises in SP?
- ◆ What new or innovative practises emerged over the last three years?
- ◆ What are the environmental, social and economic outcomes of sustainable procurement in your organisation? In your industry?
- ◆ How do you measure those outcomes?
- ◆ Do you have any numbers that reflect those outcomes?
- ◆ Would you like to add some elements or a comment to complete our understanding?

Recruitment of private sector interviewees occurred with the help of international support organisations and networks focused on SP in private organisations, including Ecovadis, Ecocert, Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council, Global Compact, ICLEI, Action Sustainability, Sustainable Purchasing, IISD, Golocal, EPA, KEITI. The research team developed a call for participation in the *2022 SPP Global Review* distributed to experts on SP in private organisations. The call asked for participation in a one-hour semi-structured interview. It provided clear information about the *SPP Global Review*, its outcome, information disclosure, and topics to be explored during interviews.

Interviews were conducted in June and July of 2021. Interviewees received the interview guide (see below) in advance of the interview. During interviews notes were taken, and when interviewees explicitly agreed, interviews were recorded and transcribed. In addition, any use of a direct quote required their explicit approval.

Interviews followed a semi-structured methodology deemed helpful to explore and gain deeper knowledge on complex phenomena. Accordingly, if topics to be discussed during the interview were established in advance, questions sometimes varied to allow deeper exploration of specific dimensions of those topics.

## List of interviewees

### Experts and practitioners interviewed for expertise about public sector and intergovernmental organizations

1. Erika Bozzay (OECD, France)
2. Sarah O'Brien (Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council, USA)
3. Helena Fonseca (Organisation of American States, USA)
4. Carsten Hansen (UNDP, Thailand)
5. Sanjay Kumar (Ministry of Railways, India)
6. Farid Yaker (UNEP, France)
7. Philipp Tepper (ICLEI, Germany)
8. Sope Williams-Elegbe (African Procurement Law Unit, Stellenbosch University, South Africa)
9. Jenny Chu (Asian Development Bank)
10. Vessy Haralampieva (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)
11. Moctar Hassane (African Development Bank)
12. Hunt La Cascia (World Bank)
13. Elhadj Malick (Islamic Development Bank)
14. Eliza Niewiadomska (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)

15. Ian Nightingale (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank)
16. Adriana Salazar-Cota (Inter-American Development Bank)

### Experts and practitioners interviewed for expertise about private organisations:

17. Liesbeth Casier (International Institute for Sustainable Development, Global)
18. Heather Ducharme (Nature and Co, Global)
19. Tom Hoyne (Kicking Horse Coffee, Global)
20. Philippe Lanthier (Energir, Canada)
21. David McClintock (Ecovadis, Global)
22. Shaun McCarthy (Action Sustainability, UK)
23. Catherine Pilon (Laboratoire Druide, Global)
24. Krista Pineau (Ecocert, Canada)
25. Ross Primmer (Siemens, UK)
26. Michèle Roy (independent expert, Canada)



The 2022 Sustainable Public Procurement Global Review examines the state of sustainable procurement policies and practices undertaken by national governments, private enterprise and intergovernmental organizations worldwide. Building on the findings of the previous editions published in 2013 and 2017, as well as on the results of the first data collection exercise on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 12.7.1 (*number of countries with sustainable public procurement policies and action plans*), this report aims to track global progress in sustainable procurement and to deepen the collective understanding of the current barriers, needs, opportunities and innovations in this important area.

