The NSDS Guidelines web site is structured along six major headings (Introduction, Essential Steps, Design Phase, Implementation, Specific Issues, and Documents).

Three of these headings (Essential Steps, Design Phase, and Implementation) are related to the generic NSDS design and implementation activities, and are subdivided according to sub-activities involved in the process. The NSDS design activity includes two types of processes (i) Design carried out at a specific moment in time (sequenced processes) and (ii) Essential which are to be considered running during the overall design process.

Implementation is a continuous activity following the design of the first strategy. The design of a second strategy itself occurs on a shortened period of time and starts preferably with the assessment of the finishing NSDS cycle. Essential Steps are still running during the implementation phase.

Specific issues present, in general terms, situations that have been identified as requiring special attention as they have been often improperly dealt with during the first round of NSDS (Next NSDS, Fragile states and small island states, Sectoral strategies, Infra-national Strategies, Regional strategies, Other Issues).

The Documents section intends to be a repository of relevant resource documents that could be referred to in other parts of the site; they are classified according to the activities identified for the design of an NSDS and further categorised into whether they are tools, norms or good practices.