



3R Portfolio

- Good Practices to Promote the 3Rs -

Country: UK

Major Activities

1. Increasing action on Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Development of a **UK framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production** setting out scope for further action and priorities for the future. The framework, entitled 'Changing Patterns' brings together the economic and environmental case for action to tackle sustainable consumption and production (October 2003).
- Inclusion of Sustainable Consumption and Production as one of the four key priorities in the new **UK Sustainable Development Strategy** (UK SDS). This sets out our strategy to progress sustainable consumption and production including action on all aspects of the 3Rs such as products, production, eco-design, consumption, innovation, business partnerships and waste (March 2005).
- Review of our **Climate Change Programme** to examine progress so far and explore scope for further action (Spring 2005).
- Working with our EU partners on a framework of Directives that provide opportunities for encouraging producer responsibility, reducing resource use, and promoting the recycling and reuse of waste. Some of these (e.g. Packaging, End of Life Vehicles, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment directives) provide opportunities for encouraging producer responsibility and reducing resource use. Others (for example, the Landfill Directive) encourage the recycling and reuse of waste to divert it from landfill. We support proposals to simplify the **Waste Framework Directive** (WFD) as a means of clarifying the existing legislative framework and promoting consistent and proportionate risk-based regulation.
- Setting out our vision for **Sustainable Waste Management** and how to engineer a step change in the way we think about waste in the Government's Waste Strategy 2000 (under revision in 2005), the Strategy Unit report "Waste not Want not" (2002) and the Government response to that report.
- Development of **EU Thematic Strategies on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Waste** which will set the future direction of on resources and waste policies (Summer 2005).

2. Targets for waste reduction/recovery

- To recycle or compost at least 25/30/33% of household waste by 2005/10/15.
- To reduce the amount of industrial and commercial waste sent to landfill to 85% of that landfilled in 1998 by 2005.
- Targets for businesses producing packaging waste of 59/60% recovery and 19/55-80% material specific recycling in 2003/2008. By 2010/13/20 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 75/50/35% of that produced in 1995.

3. Sustainable Products – Cutting out problems at source; ensuring environmental impacts are not “designed in” before they are put into use

- Our **Market Transformation Programme** works in partnership with business, consumers, experts and policy makers to identify the key issues that affect the resource efficiency of products, systems and services and develop a consensus on the potential for improvements (1997; www.mtprog.com).
- The proposed **European Directive on the eco-design of Energy Using Products** (EUP) will enable energy efficiency and other eco-design requirements to be established for energy using products. Its objective is to improve environmentally relevant product characteristics (such as energy consumption) quickly and efficiently.
- The development of a **UK Sustainable Design Forum** will bring together expertise

to educate in eco-design and promote best practice tools and approaches which can be adopted by designers (Summer 2005).

- The UK has fully ratified the **Basel Convention** on the Control of Transboundary movements of hazard wastes and their disposal, as well as the Basel ban amendment prohibiting the export of hazardous wastes from OECD countries to non-OECD countries. Together with establishing a framework for controlling movements of hazardous and other wastes across International Frontiers, the Convention seeks to minimise hazardous waste production wherever possible and has developed mechanisms to encourage the “environmentally sound management” of waste. (The Convention entered into force in 1992, and is ratified in the EU through the Waste Shipments Regulation)

4. Sustainable Production – Measures to drive greater efficiency and value with less resource use, pollution and waste by, for example, promoting energy efficiency and encouraging waste minimisation and recycling

- **Climate Change Levy:** A tax on the use of energy in industry, commerce and the public sector, with offsetting cuts in employers’ National Insurance Contributions and additional support for energy efficiency schemes and renewable sources of levy (April 2001).
- **Climate Change Agreements:** Negotiated agreements between business and Government set energy-related targets. Companies meeting their targets will receive an 80% discount from the Climate Change Levy.
- **Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS):** The EU ETS has been introduced across Europe. It works on a “Cap and Trade” basis. EU Member State governments are required to set an emission cap for all installations covered. Each installation is then allocated a number of tradable allowances (January 2005).
- **Landfill Tax Regulations:** Aimed at diverting waste away from landfill by charging extra (on top of normal landfill fees) for the disposal of waste. It is designed to encourage business to produce less waste and use alternative forms of waste management (1999). Landfill tax on active waste is set to increase annually by at least GBP3 a tonne from GBP18 a tonne in April 2005 on the way to a medium to long term rate of GBP35 a tonne.
- **The Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme:** Allows Local Authorities flexibility in their waste management strategies while achieving national targets for landfill reduction.
- **Waste Implementation Programme (WIP):** A substantial programme which aims to increase awareness of waste issues, support Local Authorities both financially through schemes such as the Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund and through best practice advice, sponsor research into waste minimisation methods, and sponsor the work of the **Waste Resources and Action Programme**.
- **Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP): funded via WIP,** aims to accelerate resource efficiency by creating efficient markets for recycled materials and products, while removing barriers to waste minimisation, re-use and recycling (2001; www.wrap.org.uk).
- **Aggregates levy:** An environmental tax on the commercial exploitation of aggregate (sand, gravel and rock). It reduces demand for primary aggregates by increasing their cost and makes the use of recycled and secondary materials more viable. The **Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund** uses the revenue from the aggregates levy to promote environmentally friendly extraction and transport and reduce the local effects of aggregate extraction (April 2002).
- **Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC):** Aims to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole by, in particular, preventing or, where that is not practicable, reducing emissions into the air, water and land.
- **National Industrial Symbiosis Programme:** Aims to improve resource efficiency and minimise waste by identifying and using synergies and linkages between cooperating industries (www.nisp.org.uk).

5. Consumption – Encouraging more efficient and different consumption patterns so that consumption from rising incomes is not accompanied by rising environmental impacts or social injustice.

- **‘Environment Direct’** – is a planned new information service which will offer public advice on the impacts of different goods and services and how to make the most sustainable consumption choices. It will fill an information gap for both individual consumers and procurement professionals, and expose the whole supply chain to information about the performance of goods and services.
- The government is also supporting (through WIP and WRAP) a number of **household awareness campaigns** at national and local levels to encourage householders to recycle more. We are looking at ways in which we can meet the challenge of shifting people’s consumption choices through a variety of mechanisms whilst maintaining their quality of life.
- Our **Environmental Action Fund** supports voluntary organisations with community level projects which influence behaviour and will deliver sustainable consumption outcomes.
- We are establishing a **business-led Sustainable Procurement Task Force** to develop (within 12 months) a draft national action plan for Sustainable Procurement (Spring 2005).
- Our **Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate** sets out a variety of targets for improving our environmental and social performance. Our commitment should help lead the way in changing the behaviour of others (Summer 2002).
- A **Round Table on Sustainable Consumption** is trying to build consensus around a practical vision of where and how we might aim to move UK consumption patterns, and of the implications for the traditional business model (Summer 2004).

6. Innovation for a sustainable future

- **The EU Environmental Technologies Action Plan** aims to exploit the potential of environmental technologies to improve both the environment and competitiveness, thus contributing to growth and possibly creating jobs (January 2004).
- Our **Innovation Report “Competing in the Global economy: the innovation challenge”** looks at the contribution that innovation can make to driving up UK productivity. Building on progress made in previous innovation-focussed white papers it proposes action on those policies that will encourage UK businesses to increase their investment in new products and services with the aim of continuously increasing the value added (December 2003). Our new **Innovation and Growth Team on materials** will be key to delivering commitments in this report (November 2004).
- To further stimulate innovation we will:
 - Integrate sustainable development throughout the Department for Trade and Industry’s (DTI) technology strategy
 - Provide financial support (up to GBP2 million) for a **Resource Efficiency and Waste Knowledge Transfer Network** – a UK gateway for information and expertise and a focal point for business, government and academia to come together and provide integrated solutions
- Defra’s **Evidence and Innovation Strategy** will also help deliver an improved, coherent and fit-for-purpose set of evidence and innovation activities that are better aligned with key policy goals and longer-term strategic direction of Defra, and which deals more effectively with the many issues which cut across Defra’s policy Directorates.

7. Business – Enabling business to become more sustainable

- **The Operating and Financial Review (OFR)** will provide an enabling framework so that listed companies consider sustainable development issues alongside financial information (April 2005).

- **The amendment to the 1995 Pensions Act** requires pension schemes to state the extent to which they consider social, environmental or ethical issues in their investment strategy (2000).
- The **Pioneers Group** is a best practice forum that aims to accelerate the development and implementation of sectoral sustainability strategies (www.pioneersgroup.co.uk). Work in this area will intensify with the new **Sectoral Sustainability challenge** to support selected collaborative projects focused on taking forward sectoral or supply chain initiatives (Summer 2005).
- A new **SCP Business Taskforce** will work with Government on furthering SCP by providing a business view on practical actions that can help deliver in priority areas (Spring 2005).
- **Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme:** A GBP284m programme to help businesses become more efficient with their resources and make the most out of their waste. Revenue generated through increases in the Landfill Tax is recycled to provide new support to business that specifically targets waste minimisation, the diversion of waste away from landfill and improvements in resource efficiency. (Announced November 2004; Commences April 2005).
- **Carbon Trust and Envirowise:** Two independent bodies funded by the Government. The Carbon Trust aims to help business and the public sector reduce carbon emissions now and capture the commercial opportunities of low carbon technologies. Envirowise offers UK business free and independent advice on practical ways to increase profits, minimise waste and reduce environmental impact (www.thecarbontrust.co.uk; www.envirowise.gov.uk).

8. Data – Monitoring and Evaluation

- The **Municipal Waste Management Survey** will be replaced in 2005 by the computerised Waste Data Flow system to allow faster and more accurate data collection of municipal waste statistics.
- A **National Waste Data Strategy** to collate timely and accurate waste data across all waste streams in a central database is planned for implementation in 2006.

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