

## SDC Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) assessment

**Organisation:** Cabinet Office  
**Title of SDAP:** SDAP - Making government work better

**SDAP Publication date:** May 2009  
**SDC Assessment date:** June 2009

Please see "SDAP assessment methodology paper" for background to the assessment process, and for full details of how the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has assessed, scored and rated this SDAP at the following webpage: <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sdap-tracker.html>.

### SUMMARY

**Coverage**

**Strategic planning**

**Actions**

**Ownership, engagement and delivery**

**Monitoring, review and reporting**

**OVERALL**

Score	Rating
2/4	
6/12	
10/12	
4/6	
3/6	
<b>25/40</b>	

### ISSUES AND RISKS

This SDAP is a strong indication of the Cabinet Office's commitment to delivering its core functions sustainably. In particular, it is encouraging to see plans to explore embedding sustainability into Capability Reviews and the personal objectives of staff. Such plans should be seen as part of a broader aim to mainstream sustainable development within government and the wider public sector, and the SDC would like to see the Cabinet Office strengthen its role here in order to achieve its purpose of 'making government work better'.

The SDAP has also laid out some important intentions towards mainstreaming sustainability throughout the work of the Office of the Third Sector (OTS). However, there could have been far greater recognition of the role that OTS has across government, to ensure the third sector has a voice within government. How, for example, will the Cabinet Office work to ensure that third sector experience and expertise is sufficiently utilised in policy making across government? A future SDAP could make clearer how this is being achieved, and also set more ambitious actions for engaging other departments in the work of the OTS.

### CO'S RESPONSE

"The Cabinet Office welcomes the Sustainable Development Commission's assessment of its Sustainable Development Action Plan for the period 2009-2012. There is a great deal of work underway within the Department on a number of areas which will have a positive impact on sustainability both domestically and across the wider Government; particularly around the green ICT agenda and carbon reduction. The Department will seek to provide greater coverage of these significant endeavours in future SDAPs and we are confident that, as a result, future assessments will reflect our efforts. The Cabinet Office will be reviewing and updating this 3-year SDAP throughout its lifespan and will use these opportunities to bolster the document and incorporate the SDC's recommendations, particularly ensuring that the work of the Office of the Third Sector is given greater prominence as well as providing greater detail of how the document impacts upon the Department's Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies. The Cabinet Office looks forward to working alongside the SDC in the future to achieve its sustainability goals." (Cabinet Office, July 2009).

<b>COVERAGE</b>				
	<b>Score</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
1. Does the SDAP state clearly the period of time that it covers?				<b>X</b>
2. Is it clear how the SDAP relates to the wider departmental family, and is SDAP coverage of the departmental family adequate?	<b>X</b>			

<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>				
	<b>Score</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
3. Does the SDAP set out the organisation's strategy for contributing to the aims, objectives and commitments of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy?			<b>X</b>	
4. Does the SDAP articulate the relevance of the five sustainable development principles to its core business, and set out how they are/will be mainstreamed and inform work?			<b>X</b>	
5. Is it clear how the SDAP will contribute to the organisation's high-level strategic objectives, including any Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs)?	<b>X</b>			
6. Does the SDAP have clear objectives, and does it articulate clearly how these objectives were selected and provide a rationale for any gaps e.g. in the coverage of core business areas?			<b>X</b>	
7. Does the SDAP link to other corporate plans or strategies?				<b>X</b>
8. Does the SDAP include any commitment to work with other organisations or government bodies to deliver joint commitments, actions or initiatives?			<b>X</b>	

<b>ACTIONS</b>				
	<b>Score</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
9. Does the SDAP articulate how the sustainable development principles and priorities are/will be integrated into its policy and decision making, set out specific actions to achieve this, and explain how these actions have been selected?				<b>X</b>
10. Does the SDAP include explicit actions to improve the sustainability of the organisation's procurement activity (linking to SPAP commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?				<b>X</b>
11. Does the SDAP contain specific actions which demonstrate how the organisation will drive forward the sustainability of its operations (linking to SOGE commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?				<b>X</b>

12. Does the SDAP contain actions relating to people, such as actions to engage staff in sustainable development, develop their skills and capability to support delivery of the SDAP, and to improve their general well-being in the work place?			<b>X</b>
13. Are the actions outcome-focused?		<b>X</b>	
14. Are the actions SMART?		<b>X</b>	

**OWNERSHIP, ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY**

	<i>Score</i>		
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
15. Is it clear how the SDAP will be communicated to staff and stakeholders, and how the organisation will ensure they have the capability to put the SDAP's key messages to work?		<b>X</b>	
16. Are the governance arrangements for supporting delivery of the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups), and is it clear who has overall responsibility for its delivery?		<b>X</b>	
17. Has the SDAP been signed off by a Minister, Permanent Secretary or Chief Executive, and has s/he provided a foreword?			<b>X</b>

**MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING**

	<i>Score</i>		
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
18. Does the SDAP present links to the previous SDAP (where relevant) or to the historical context of sustainable development in the organisation (if this is the first SDAP that the organisation has produced)?		<b>X</b>	
19. Are the methods and structures for monitoring and reviewing the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups, stakeholder engagement), and is it clear who the findings will be reported to?		<b>X</b>	
20. Is it clear how the outcomes of internal SDAP monitoring/review will feed back into the SDAP process, including a commitment to update the SDAP within its period of coverage, where required?		<b>X</b>	